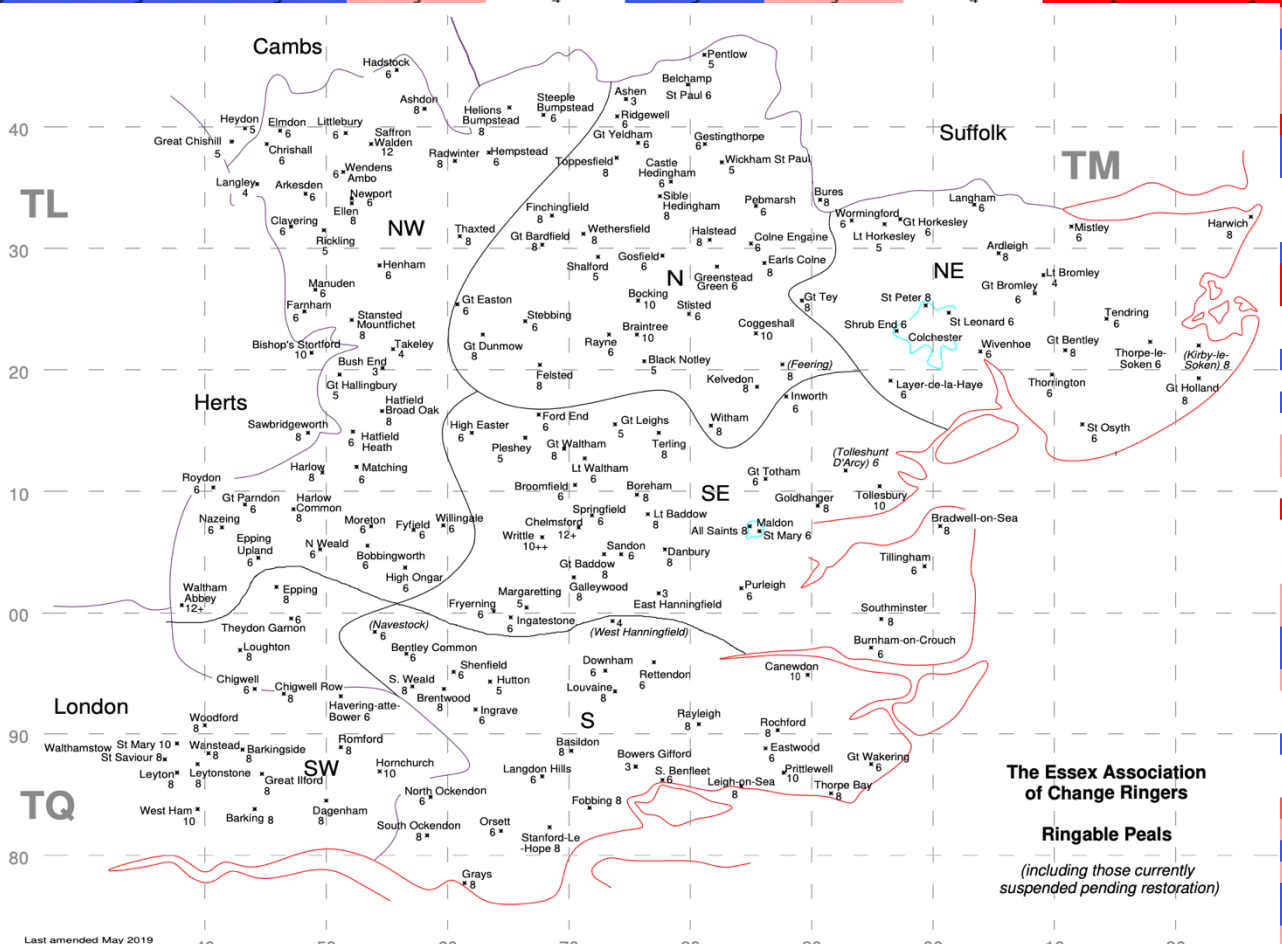


EACR Bequests Project Membership Survey

Cathy Booth – 4th May 2022



EACR Bequests Project – Membership Survey

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Executive Summary

This document summarises the results of a survey of bell ringers in the Essex Association which will help the Association decide how to use and make decisions about two bequests amounting to £380,000.

The Bequests workgroup had identified ten outline principles as being important to how the bequests would be used. The survey concludes that the following principles were deemed to be the most important:

- Investment for the future of ringing in Essex
- Investment in recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of young ringers
- Training to increase the general ringing ability in Essex

The survey also concludes that an Investment Committee should run projects across the whole association using funding rounds e.g. through grants based on an application form. Some further suggestions for the process were put forward including a retrospective evaluation of each project to inform future decisions.

Survey respondents put forward 135 ideas on how Donald Heath and David Cobb, who left these bequests, could be remembered. Many suggested inscribing their names on a bell or even more popularly putting their names on a plaque. Alternative ways to remember them if the bequests were not spent on physical projects included using their names in connection with an award, competition, or scholarship. It was deemed important to establish how they might have wanted the money to be spent. A further idea was to aim to increase neurodiversity in ringing as Donald had been autistic.

The remainder of the survey was to elicit ideas on how the money could be spent. 643 ideas were put forward. An aim of this report is to make reading the list of these ideas digestible by putting the common ideas into themes. However, to identify all desirable and feasible projects, the unique one-off ideas and comments listed as verbatim in Appendix D, should also be reviewed.

The main ideas put forward to recruit, retain and develop the skills of young ringers included giving demonstrations and presentations to schools and youth groups, aiming to integrate bell ringing into school curriculum, and making use of awards (e.g. Scout badges, Duke of Edinburgh awards). Whilst many survey respondents suggested that the young should be consulted about this question, only 11 survey respondents were aged 34 or under.

A substantial number of ideas were put forward about training. These included expanding the existing courses and training days, together with the provision of training in local towers or hubs. It included making more extensive use of simulators, sound control and dumb bells, establishing local ringing centres and encouraging the take up of the ART (Association of Ringing Teachers) structured approach to training and provision of leadership courses. A requirement for more teachers was identified as was encouraging the young to teach and providing travelling expenses for tutors and helpers.

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The principle ‘new or improved bells or installations’ was not deemed to be as important and whilst there was a wide range of ideas for restoration projects, others voiced the opinion that the money should not be spent on bells. However, many respondents suggested that there should be improvements to (some) towers to make them more attractive and easier to teach people in. There was also support for the professional inspection and maintenance of bells – including the creation and maintenance of a database to record the condition of the bells in each tower and a need for more steeple keeping training.

Many ideas were put forward on how to improve recruitment including engaging with the wider community for example with the use of a mobile belfry and/or having more open tower days. There were also many ideas focused on communication and PR including the creation of new publicity materials. Respondents also proposed increased use of technology/ social media and a revamped Association website.

Whilst most respondents did not favour a single ringing centre for Essex, some suggested reviewing the experiences of the bell ringing centres of Worcester, Birmingham, Norwich, and Tulloch.

A substantial number of the ideas proposed keeping things at a local level and/ or that provision must be at centrally located places with good public transport links. The cost or difficulty of travelling, especially for the young and old, was identified as a problem, with a solution of expense reimbursement or the purchase of a minibus.

Many of these ideas require not just money but people to carry them out and paying for professional or administrative help was frequently suggested.

In conclusion, the survey provides a clear steer on the most favoured principles (i.e. young people and training) and the way decisions should be made. There were a very large number of ideas on how to remember the donors and how to spend the money. Subsequent processes are required to flesh these ideas out into workable project proposals and to evaluate these.

Background and Survey Objectives

Two bequests amounting to £380,000 have been left to the EACR. The Association's bequests' workgroup set up the survey on which this report is based. The objective of the survey has been to obtain feedback from the EACR members to help them fulfil the workgroup's aims:

- Consider the general views of the membership about how we should manage these bequests
- Confirm the outline principles are right
- Consider how to manage spend against these bequests – planned projects/grants
- Engage wider association membership in these decisions
- Continually review to ensure possible options are considered

Methodology

The survey was comprised of the following sections:

- Rating each of the 10 outline principles that the workgroup had defined to decide how the money will be used
- Selection from a list of possible spending decision-making options
- Solicitation of ideas on how to remember the bequests' donors
- Solicitation of ideas for specific projects to be explored under 6 main headings

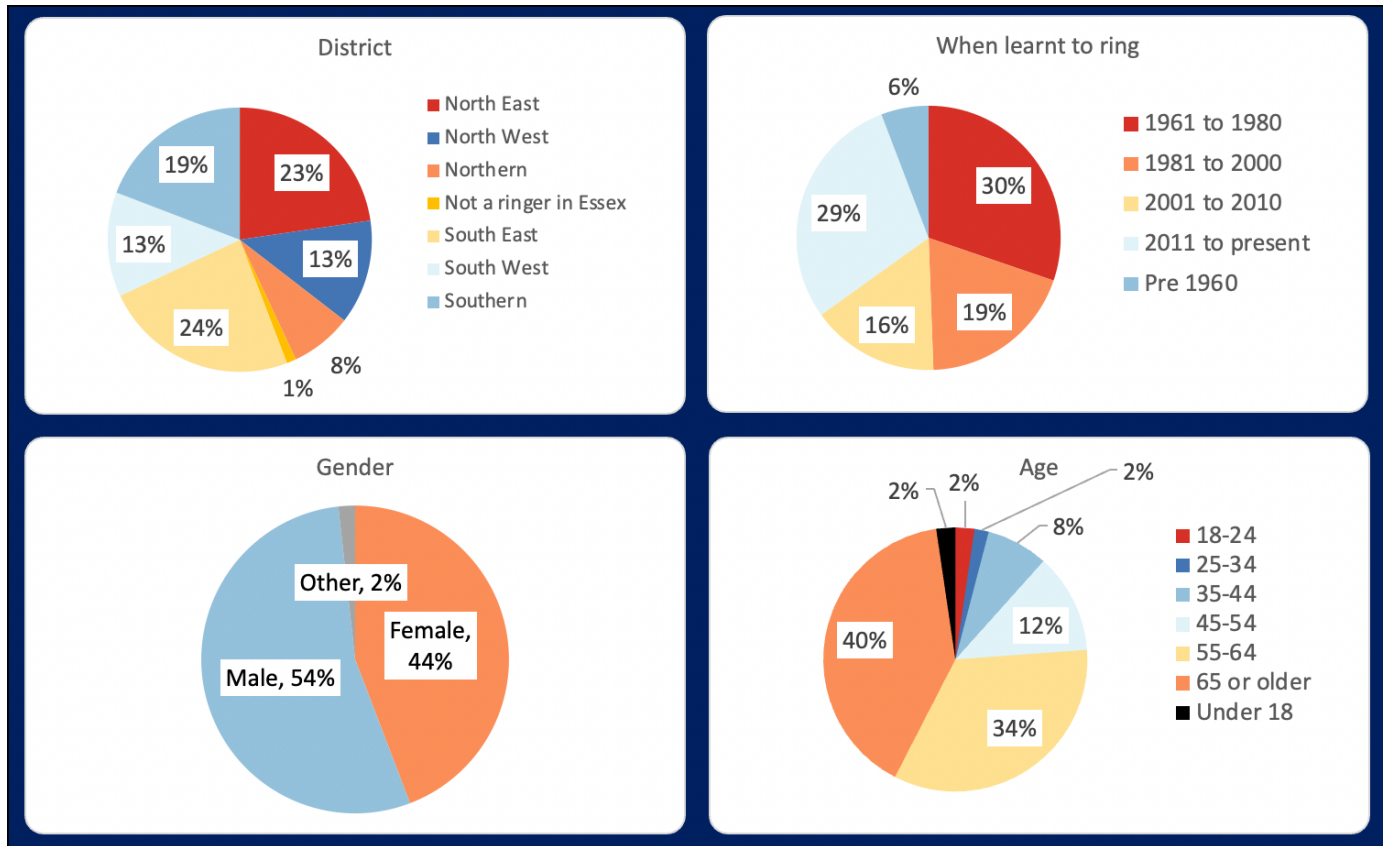
The survey was circulated to the members of the Essex Association via the district secretaries and the membership newsletter during the period 14th – 26th of April using Google Forms. Allowance was made for people without access to a computer. This was through district secretaries who were provided with a version that they could print for their members to complete and post to Beth Johnson. Beth input the 5 paper responses to the electronic questionnaire.

Quantitative data analysis has been carried out on the rating and selection questions. This gives feedback on the members' views of the outline principles and informs the spending decision-making process.

Themes have been extracted based on an analysis of the qualitative data (free form answers). All responses are listed verbatim in the appendices including individual unique ideas that are not otherwise referred to in the main report.

Survey respondents

170 (17%) of the 1033 members of the Association and 2 people who were not ringers in Essex completed the questionnaire. The 172 respondents can be categorised as follows:



By district

	Responses	(*)
North East	39	31%
North West	22	10%
Northern	13	10%
South East	41	17%
South West	22	17%
Southern	33	16%
Not a ringer in Essex	2	-

By when learnt to ring

	Responses
Pre 1960	10
1961 to 1980	52
1981 to 2000	33
2001 to 2010	27
2011 to present	50

By gender

	Responses	(*)
Female	76	16%
Male	93	17%
Other	3	-

By age

	Responses
Under 18	4
18-24	4
25-34	3
35-44	13
45-54	21
55-64	58
65 or older	69

(*) % of the total number of members in that district or of that gender.

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From these details of the survey responses, we can see the following facts:

- Males and females completed the questionnaire in the same gender proportion as the membership
- At least 10% of members from each district completed the questionnaire.
- 30% of respondents learnt to ring between 1961 and 1980 and 29% in the last 11 years
- 74% of the respondents were over 55, which reflects the high age profile of the members (see appendix E).

The relative importance of the outline principles

This survey provides an indication of the relative importance that the members attach to each of the outline principles, previously identified as being important in how the money is used. There is strong agreement with the principles of investment for the future of ringing in Essex and in recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of young ringers.

The 10 outline principles were listed as a series of questions with the following introduction and format:

Principles

The following outline principles have been identified as being important in how we use this money. Please indicate how important you think each one is from 1-5, where 1 is least important to you and 5 is most important.

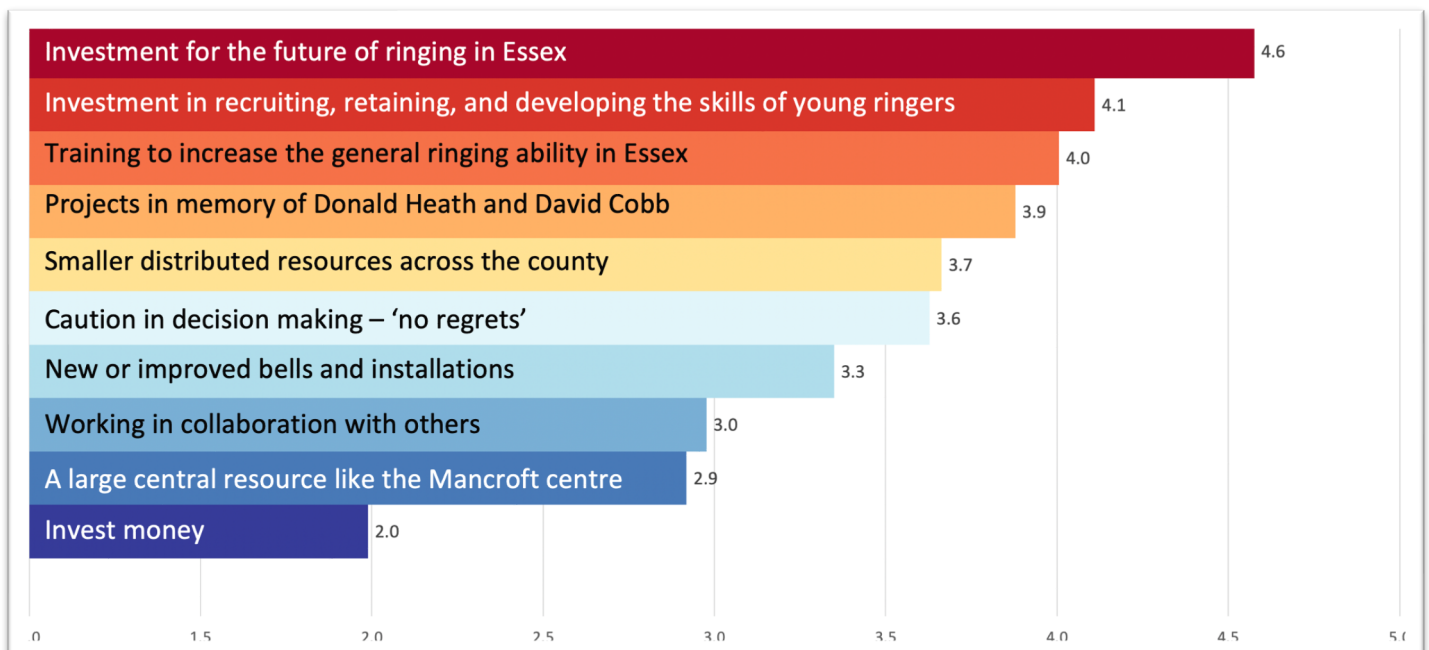
1. Investment for the future of ringing in Essex *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Least important Most important

The following chart shows the average rating for each of the 10 outline principles



EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

Outline principle	Lowest (*)	Average rating	Highest (*)
Investment for the future of ringing in Essex	4.4	4.5	4.9
Investment in recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of young ringers	3.8	4.1	4.3
Training to increase the general ringing ability in Essex	3.5	4.0	4.3
Projects in memory of Donald Heath and David Cobb (who left us their generous bequests)	3.5	3.9	4.1
Smaller distributed resources across the county that are easier to access (e.g. multiple smaller training centres)	3.2	3.7	4.0
Caution in decision making to ensure that all decisions are “no regrets”	3.3	3.6	3.9
New or improved bells and installations	2.8	3.3	3.8
Working in collaboration with others (e.g. other charities or the church)	2.8	3.0	3.8
A large central resource that everyone can use (like the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre – mrdc.org.uk)	2.6	2.9	3.5
Invest the money in a long-term investment and only spend the money generated by it and not the capital	1.7	2.0	2.3

(*) The lowest and highest average ratings denote the lowest and highest average ratings given by a district. The average rating given is across all responses. The shaded areas denote being at or below 3.5 and 2.5 to indicate where the average rating is neutral or least important respectively.

From the above the following is noted:

- The average respondent would prioritise spending on projects as follows:
 - Recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of young ringers
 - Training to increase the general ringing ability in Essex
 - Smaller distributed resources across the county
 - New or improved bells and installations
 - A large centre resource like the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre
- There is strong agreement with the principles of ‘investment for the future of ringing in Essex’ and in ‘recruiting, retaining, and developing the skills of young ringers’
- There was broad agreement with the principles of ‘projects in memory of Donald Heath and David Cobb’ and ‘caution in decision making’ whilst ‘working in collaboration with others’ was seen as less important.
- Respondents were in favour of spending rather than saving capital.

Further analysis can be provided on the ranking given by gender, age, or by when the respondent learnt to ring.

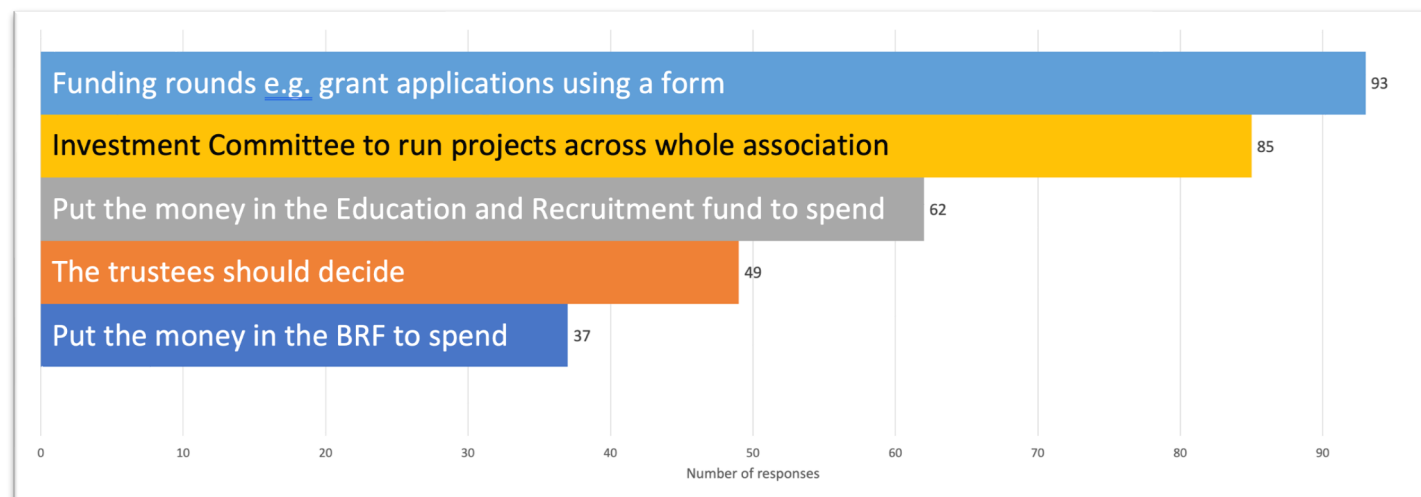
The spending decision-making process

This survey concludes that the EACR should have an Investment Committee to run projects across the whole association by using funding rounds such as grant applications using a form. This is based on the answers to the following question:

How should EACR make decisions on spending (select all that you think should apply)?

- Funding rounds e.g., grant applications using a form
- Investment Committee to run projects across the whole association
- The trustees should decide
- Put the money in the Bell Restoration Fund and ask them to spend it
- Put the money in the Education and Recruitment fund and ask them to spend it
- Other

The number of responses to this multi-select question is illustrated as follows



Funding rounds e.g., grant applications using a form	93
Investment Committee to run projects across whole association	85
Put the money in the Education and Recruitment fund and ask them to spend it	62
The trustees should decide	49
Put the money in the Bell Restoration Fund and ask them to spend it	37
Other	26

The following paragraphs highlight the themes of the ‘Other’ responses to this question.

1.1 Consider different options on who should decide

Thirteen respondents put forward alternatives on who should make the spending decisions. Three respondents suggested a new dedicated committee or action group, 2 respondents suggested that each district be given a sum to decide on at a local level whilst 2 others suggested surveying the members. There were 6 other alternative suggestions on who should decide - 3 mentioning the bell restoration fund - see Appendix B (see page 26).

1.2 Review ways to carry out the process

Nine respondents commented on the decision-making processes:

- They should be transparent (2 respondents), accountable (1 respondent)
- Have clear eligibility rules (1 respondent)
- Be a challenge to get funding (1 respondent)
 - Full cost-benefit analysis - business case and value for money statement (2 respondents)
 - Demonstrate local support (2 respondents)
 - Seek grant and local community money first (2 respondents)
- Not result in admin/ bureaucracy paralysis (1 respondent)

Two further respondents referred to a retrospective evaluation of each project to inform future decisions.

1.3 See the advice given on what the money should be spent on

Eight respondents put forward approaches to spending the money, which were all different (see Appendix B – page 27) with the exception that 2 respondents agreed that money should be used to help with existing struggling projects.

1.4 Be more generous with grant applications

Four respondents wanted the BRF to be more generous than at present.

1.5 Invest the money

Two respondents referred to investing the money.

Remembering the donors

The survey concludes that most respondents to the questionnaire believed that the donors should be remembered by using their names, although there were many different suggestions on how this might be done, the most popular being a plaque. This conclusion has been reached by analysing the responses to this question:

How best can we ensure that Donald Heath and David Cobb are remembered through the use of their bequests?

The following paragraphs highlight the themes of the responses:

1.1 Use their names

Most respondents recommended that something was named after Donald and David. Either for every project that was financed by the bequests, just the larger projects or one specific project. There was mention that it should be a project big enough to continue to support their names in the years to come.

Respondents suggested naming various types of projects after the donors including one or more ringing centres, a grant to maintain a ringing centre or a mobile belfry. Bell inscriptions and restorations were also mentioned, as were records of the gifts to be reflected in projects/ towers where they rang.

Other respondents suggested a trophy or awards to be given out in their names, which might be for achievements in recruitment, training or otherwise assisting ringing in Essex. Some mentioned a bursary or scholarship for training in their names, maybe for young people.

Some proposed a striking competition, in the name of the donors – either a traditional striking competition or one which rewarded progress.

It was also suggested that their names could be entered into the annual report under a bequests section, they could be recognised on the website, have a method named after them or have an annual peal rung for them.

1.2 Put their names on a plaque

The use of plaques was frequently mentioned. Respondents thought the plaques should be either for one project, for projects with substantial cost such as a central ringing centre, for every project the money finances or for the towers which benefit. The plaque would be placed in ringing rooms, next to the tower entrance door or on a mini-ringing. The plaques could be in the form of a ‘very nice cast bronze plaque’ as used in the USA and/or say ‘This project was funded by...’ in the same way as the National Lottery.

1.3 Establish how they would have wanted the money to be spent

Several respondents referred to determining the wishes or ringing related passions of the donors, maybe consulting friends and family to elicit their views, whilst others suggested that if they had not specified this themselves, then the assumption was to ensure “people keep ringing”.

1.4 Remember them in the towers or areas that they rang in

Some respondents suggested that their bequests were particularly remembered (1) in their local tower with a plaque or (2) in the area they rang in with a project or bell.

1.5 Increase neurodiversity in ringing or provide training for people with disabilities

There was some mention that as Donald had been autistic the money should be spent on training those with disabilities, increasing neurodiversity in ringing and/ or supporting those with autism.

1.6 Review the one-off ideas and other comments

There were several ideas and comments that were only mentioned once. These are listed in Appendix C (see page 32).

Themed ideas

The ideas were elicited by 5 questions:

- What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve recruitment?
- What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve the quality of our bells and ringing equipment?
- What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to focus more on younger ringers, or other specific groups?
- What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve education and training?
- What other ideas do you have for projects we can spend money on?

The following sections summarise the resulting 643 ideas and comments, which are all listed verbatim in Appendix D (see page 33).

Note that as respondents frequently referred to the same idea under multiple questions and / or mentioned an idea that had been more frequently given in another section, the ideas listed in Appendix D, and summarised below, may have been given in response to a different question.

1 Youth

What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to focus more on younger ringers or other specific groups?

1.1 Partner with youth organisations, schools, and universities

– Schools and youth groups

Several respondents suggested forging links with local and especially church schools, youth groups (including Brownies, Cubs, Guides and Scouts) and 6th form colleges. One respondent suggested providing information to senior schools, age 13. Another suggested working with schools to recognize bell ringing as a form of community service which can be used on CVs and job and university applications.

Several respondents talked about giving presentations or demonstrations - having a 'road show' that visits schools and youth groups. Some suggested the use of a mobile belfry for the demonstration and 'give it a try' event. The work of Beth Johnson and David Sparling was mentioned in respect of outreach projects in schools and universities.

A further set of respondents advocated providing a pack of curriculum-linked lesson plans and resources for schools so that they could incorporate learning about bell ringing as part of their curriculum.

One respondent suggested inter-school bell ringing competitions like those they had for rugby!

– Link to Scout / Guide badges/ DoE awards

A very large number of respondents suggested exploiting the scout and guide proficiency badge scheme and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

– Target university students

Several respondents suggested targeting the universities in Essex to recruit younger people – 2 suggesting that a student bell ringing society be set up.

1.2 Ask the young

Several respondents thought that young ringers should specifically be asked for ideas to recruit their peers. One respondent suggested that there be a young ringers event where existing ringers bring their friends and other potential recruits - with Youth Workers assistance.

1.3 Increase social media presence

Several respondents referred to increased use of social media while a couple suggested investing in a young social media officer.

1.4 Provide more ringing outings & social events for younger ringers

A few respondents suggested more ringing outings and social events aimed at younger ringers (one mentioning the under 30's). These would be taking place at different places across the county to encourage more young ringers to take part in them.

1.5 Develop and use technology

A few respondents suggested developing and using technology to recruit and retain young ringers including the following ideas:

- Inviting small school groups to watch a bell ringing computer app being played
- Make use of more technology such as Ringing Room and develop computer programs with engaging graphics to help with learning
- Use of Minecraft in social media

1.6 Provide after school, weekend activity clubs or courses during school holidays

A few respondents suggested running courses for young people during school holidays or weekend or after school activity clubs.

1.7 Encourage young ringers to teach

Two respondents suggested encouraging young ringers to train to teach bell ringing.

1.8 Refer to the Communication and PR section (see page 17)

Several of the ideas noted under Communication and PR are also related to young people.

1.9 One-off ideas and other comments

There were many other one-off ideas and comments (see page 35). In particular, many respondents were concerned by the focus on young people to the exclusion of other age groups.

2 Training

| What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve education and training?

2.1 Expand the provision of courses

Many respondents suggested building on and expanding the existing training provisions; more courses for each level, weekend training sessions - either frequent shorter ones or for intensive training. Training days to be more organised, targeted and to have follow-up sessions.

Many respondents referred to the provision of the Essex Ringing Centre course. Whilst some respondents wanted it to be run more frequently, others wanted to expand on its provision by holding more, shorter, smaller and locally focused courses.

Many respondents also referred to ART (the Association of Ringing Teachers) – wanting training to be 'professional' and 'structured' based on the ART approach with more people training as ART teachers. ART teaching was particularly mentioned in conjunction with offering short introductory taster courses to non-ringers at an introductory level as well as monthly group district sessions for basic skills development.

Several respondents suggested leadership training courses and mentorship including how to get the best from a group of ringers with mixed abilities and mindsets.

Whilst some thought there should be specific practices for beginners and training which had more focus on handling, others wanted access to training for those whose ability surpasses the basics – taking people from call changes to easy methods, maybe with a peal or quarter peal to aim for.

One respondent suggested Ringing camps like school holiday sports camps, whilst another suggested that there should be an A level or a degree for bell ringing. Another respondent specifically suggested setting up a bell ringing module as part of the Angela Ruskin University music course in Cambridge.

2.2 Provide training at local towers

Many respondents provided reasons for roving teachers to travel to local towers, for both bell handling and improver sessions. However 2 people suggested that we should not spend excessive time trying to develop ‘plateaued’ ringers.

2.3 Pay expenses to trainers and helpers

Many respondents suggested that trainers and helpers should be paid expenses, especially where they are travelling to others’ local towers.

2.4 Increase number and/ or availability of trainers

There was a recognition that more people needed to be encouraged to train as trainers to improve the availability of teachers. Several suggested that ART courses should be subsidised.

2.5 Use technology

The use of technology was advocated in the context of training:

- Computer systems in more towers (‘as at Prittlewell’)
- Online videos and interactive training like Ringing Room
- Use of Zoom or online training for people to ‘grasp principles’

2.6 Towers to band together for larger initiatives

Three respondents suggested tower cluster groups for recruitment and teaching or to enable ringing of (more advanced) methods.

2.7 Host open days or drop-in sessions for training purposes

Two people advocated tower open days for training purposes although whilst one saw this as a fund raising opportunity the other believed that funding would be required.

2.8 All training to be at least partially paid for by the student

Two respondents believed that students should be asked to contribute to ‘buy into’ their training.

2.9 Benchmark other associations or training centres

Two respondents advocated learning from other associations and training centres such as the Worcester and Mancroft.

2.10 Hold local mid-week training/ practices

Two respondents mentioned local mid-week afternoon practices.

2.11 Consider one-off ideas and other comments

There were also many individual one-off ideas and comments – see appendix D (page 40).

3 Ringing Centre(s)

3.1 Set up a centralised ringing centre

Many reasons were put forward for setting up a central ringing centre – with many advocating Essex university as the location, although 2 respondents mentioned generic university locations and one respondent suggested Writtle, another a tower that Donald has strong connections with. One respondent suggested that it should be in a building other than a church.

Some respondents suggested that ideas should be taken from the Mancroft Discovery Centre, Birmingham school of bell ringing and the Tulloch Ringing Centre.

3.2 Provide local ringing centres

A similar number of respondents put forward reasons for setting up local ringing centres, maybe one or more in each district to be coupled with local recruitment. Two respondents suggested restarting the Ardleigh ringing school.

One respondent suggested that there was an online central booking system and another having drinks and refreshments available.

One respondent suggested district training centres close to or within university campus and another suggested that the district hubs should be overseen by the Association. Yet another suggested that there should be regular ringing schools across the Association like the Birmingham School of Bell Ringing.

3.3 Set up 2 or 3 ringing centres

Justification was also put forward by some respondents for having 2 or 3 ringing centres either serving different parts across Essex or specifically in the places that ‘Don and David rang in’.

3.4 Set up a main ringing centre with local ringing centres

Some respondents advocated a new central resource like the Mancroft together with smaller local training centres.

3.5 Fund a training manager for the ringing centre(s)

Whether suggesting a central ringing centre or smaller distributed training centres, several respondents advocated funding a training manager or administrator.

4 Bells

What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve the quality of our bells and ringing equipment?

4.1 Install computerized teaching aids, sound control, simulators, and dumb bells

Several respondents referred to computerised training equipment or up-to-date training technology. Specifically, many respondents mentioned more widespread provision of simulators in local towers, some stating the need for an enthusiastic adopter to drive usage. One noting the benefit of installing a simulator in conjunction with a camera amongst the bells. Some suggested a portable simulator which might be loaned out. They also suggested dumb bells either in local training hubs or in ‘many’ towers.

Some mentioned the need for sound control in towers, with simulators being mentioned as a way this can be achieved.

4.2 Make bells easier to ring

In the case of bells that are known to be difficult to ring, some respondents suggested work to improve the ‘go’ of the bells such as the provision of rope guides or upgrading fittings to make them easier to handle. One respondent suggested grading the ‘go’ of all ringable bells in Essex in the annual report, ensuring that they were put into ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ ringing order. One respondent suggested re-hanging especially difficult bells and another possibly reducing the weight of some rings. Others said to focus these resources where there was an existing band that had ‘difficult’ bells, or only on projects in towers with bands actively growing and already recruiting new members.

4.3 Make ringing chambers more inviting

Several respondents suggested making ringing chambers more attractive and welcoming which might be through redecoration, comfortable chairs, whiteboards, and/ or improved heating.

4.4 Survey all towers and carry out remedial work

To ascertain, record and remediate the condition of the bells, several respondents suggested a survey or audit be undertaken with one or more professional experts, or a team of volunteers, to carry out inspections. This might be an ongoing process, to build up a database where the condition, potential and prioritisation of remedial work were recorded. The prioritisation might be for those towers where there is a band or the potential to have a band, or to ensure that every District has suitable bells for training and learning.

As well as the condition of the bells in each tower, the database could also record how often they are rung and what support is required for teaching ringing at that tower.

4.5 Provide free and easy access to advice & maintenance of tower bells

Some respondents suggested that there should be easy access to a professional. This paid professional bell ‘fettler’/ maintenance person (and apprentice?) would cover all towers, give advice, carry out inspections and complete more specialised tasks.

4.6 Beef up steeple keeping

Several respondents suggested that more steeple keepers were required, perhaps forming a dedicated bell restoration group who would be given expenses to help where there are insufficient ringers to look after any bells in Essex.

There appears to be a need to train more steeple keepers and training was suggested in the form of training courses, local district or area seminars, and even a bell ringing maintenance YouTube channel.

4.7 Provide advice and support for new project leaders undertaking restoration projects

Two respondents suggested support for those undertaking restoration projects such as assistance with applying for grants.

4.8 Spend money on major projects including restorations

Several respondents suggested more generous funding for restoration projects whilst others suggested additional funding for projects which are currently struggling.

4.9 Don't spend money on bells

Several respondents put forward arguments as to why the money should not be spent on bells or that restorations should be paid from via the existing bell restoration fund.

4.10 Reopen/ maintain towers where there are no ringers

Several respondents suggested that towers with no ringers should be maintained or reopened, whilst one person suggested this should be done where the incumbents are keen for their bells to be restored and rung.

4.11 Don't spend money on churches likely to be closed in the next decade

Two respondents suggested that money should not be spent on churches that are at risk of being closed in the not-too-distant future.

4.12 Spend money on Improving access to towers

Two respondents suggested improving access to towers, maybe converting them to ground floor rings.

4.13 Spend money on ropes, muffles etc

Two respondents suggested that there should be help with bell ropes, muffles etc with maybe a discount from a bulk order.

4.14 Spend money on specific towers

Some suggested that money should only be spent where the bells are still ringable, where issues have been flagged, where there are long-standing or regular ringing practices or where there is sufficient interest in developing a new band.

4.15 Spend money on named towers

17 existing or potential restoration projects at named towers were put forward – see Appendix D (page 49).

4.16 Other comments

Other one-off comments were raised – see Appendix D (page 50).

5 Recruitment

| What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve recruitment?

5.1 Engage with the wider community

– Acquire and tour with a mobile belfry

A very large number of respondents recommended acquiring a mobile bell tower with mention made that they could tour around town centres, village fetes and provide wedding bells at venues which do not have bells. Many also suggested taking a mobile belfry into schools, scout camps or disabled groups.

– Focus on young ringers

See the section titled ‘Partner with youth organisations, schools, and universities’.

– Have more open tower events

Many respondents suggested more or regular open tower days, whether as part of national, county or district tower events or regular open local events held in conjunction with town events or village fetes. The open tower days would be (1) to demonstrate ringing (2) as a ‘meet the ringers’ and (3) to let people have a go at pulling a rope. A bursary for ‘open towers’ would help with advertising and acquiring ART material.

– Attend local events with loaned publicity material

Several respondents suggested having a stall at events such as a show, fete, county fair, freshers fair etc. away from the church or at local church open days and fetes. A few also suggested attending with banners, leaflets and posters – maybe as resources that could be borrowed such as pull-up banners.

– Work with Autistic charities

A few respondents suggested that as Donald was on the Autistic Spectrum, Autistic charities should be contacted to promote bell ringing and to recruit ringers.

– Give talks and demonstrations to interest groups, schools etc

Two respondents suggested that ringers give talks and demonstrations to interest groups, uniformed and other groups.

– Put a dumb bell in places open to the public

Two people suggested that a dumb bell be installed in places open to the public such as a public library, community centre or high street shop on a short-term lease. The dumb bell would have bookable sessions on certain days.

– Note other ways to engage with the community

There were other innovative ways that respondents had suggested to engage with the wider community. See appendix D (page 53).

5.2 Focus on communication and PR

– Create assets for publicity

Several respondents suggested that assets were created for publicity purposes:

- Slides and handouts to support speakers at events or modules of information that can be tailored for younger or older audiences.
- Films or videos, which might be short to put on social media platforms or to be shown at schools or centres for people with disabilities who would be able to ring. These could be professionally developed on one of the following topics:
 - Promotion of bell ringing covering bell ringing and the outings/ social side of it
 - A young person's blog of their training journey
 - A striking competition and the build-up to it
- A bell model such as a motor-controlled bell rope with no bell connected, a portable simulator with developed computer programs, and accompanying presentations, to be demonstrated to youth groups.
- Marketing materials for towers to use – such as posters and leaflets

– Advertise bell ringing

Several respondents suggested advertising in local magazines, delivering leaflets, displays in empty shops and local Facebook pages. For recruiting the young, targeted advertising to promote what's 'cool' about bell ringing or even short exciting stories in the form of Manga stories in magazines, (how bells were used by the young person to come to the rescue).

– Increase media interaction

Several respondents suggested that bell ringing needed a higher media profile, working with local papers and radio.

– Engage a publicity professional

One respondent suggested a strong public relations officer to keep bell ringing in front of the public.

5.3 Study other successes & failures

Three respondents suggested either learning from other Guilds and Associations about successful recruitment projects or studying towers within the county to ascertain why certain towers do not have bands or learners. Determining how existing ringers were recruited could help to target marketing.

5.4 Improve visibility in the church

Two respondents suggested engaging more with members of the church – either with a video link so that people could watch the ringing from their pews or by inviting them to visit the bell tower.

5.5 Organise social events

Two respondents suggested organising other social events (not just a dinner).

5.6 One-off ideas and other comments

There were several other suggestions and opinions – see appendix D (page 54)

6 Travel and accessibility

6.1 Ensure training facilities are in places with good transport links

Many pointed out that training facilities need to have good public transport links, be spread out to be near to the ringers and/ or to be otherwise easy to travel to.

6.2 Provide (free) transport to ringing centre(s), other towers and for outings

Some suggested that there was free transport for those unable to drive or without their own transport ie the young and older ringers, who could then help other towers. Two respondents suggested that the money be used to purchase and run a minibus.

6.3 Reimburse travel expenses

Several respondents suggested that the travel expenses of young ringers was met by a travel bursary. This could be used for travel to towers and training facilities within the county as well as to young ringers' events in other parts of the country.

7 Other ideas

| What other ideas do you have for projects we can spend money on?

7.1 Improve the Association's website

Several respondents suggested a strengthened online presence including a professional rebuild to include interactivity, an online forum to see the events of other towers including where short of a ringer and reference material on specific ringing methods and principles.

7.2 One-off ideas

There were many one-off other ideas which are listed in Appendix D (see page 58).

Appendix A: The EACR Bequests Survey

EACR Bequests Survey

We have been left two generous bequests by Donald Heath and David Cobb, amounting to approx £380,000. The Association needs to decide how to use this money, and we need your help to make these decisions. Thank you for using this survey, which should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

The survey will be closed on Sunday 24th April.

***Required**

Principles

The following outline principles have been identified as being important in how we use this money. Please indicate how important you think each one is from 1-5, where 1 is least important to you and 5 is most important.

1. Investment for the future of ringing in Essex *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

2. A large central resource that everyone can use (like the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre - mrdc.org.uk) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

3. Smaller distributed resources across the county that are easier to access (e.g. multiple smaller training centres) * *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

4. New or improved bells and installations *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

5. Training to increase general ringing ability in Essex *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

6. Investment in recruiting, retaining and developing the skills of young ringers *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

7. Working in collaboration with others (e.g. other charities or the church) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

8. Projects in memory of Donald Heath and David Cobb (who left us their generous bequests) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

9. Invest the money in a long term investment and only spend the money generated by it and not the capital *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

10. Caution in decision making to ensure that all decisions are "no regrets" *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

11. How should EACR make decisions on spending (select all that you think should apply)? *

Tick all that apply.

- Funding rounds e.g. grant applications using a form
- Investment Committee to run projects across whole association
- The trustees should decide
- Put the money in the Bell Restoration Fund and ask them to spend it
- Put the money in the Education and Recruitment fund and ask them to spend it Other:

EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

12. How best can we ensure that Donald Heath and David Cobb are remembered through the use of their bequests?

Ideas

Please tell us about specific projects that you think we could explore - we don't need lots of detail, it's just the ideas that are important

13. What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve recruitment?

14. What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve the quality of our bells and ringing equipment?

EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

15. What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to focus more on younger ringers, or other specific groups?

16. What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve education and training?

17. What other ideas do you have for projects we can spend money on?

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Please let us know a bit about you

18. What is your age? * *Mark only one oval.*

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or older

19. What year did you learn to ring? * *Mark only one oval.*

- Pre 1960
- 1961 to 1980
- 1981 to 2000
- 2001 to 2010
- 2011 to present

20. What gender do you identify with? * *Mark only one oval.*

- Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary Other:
-

21. What district do you ring in *

Mark only one oval.

North West

Northern

North East

South East

Southern

South West

Not a ringer in Essex

22. If you would like us to be able to contact you to discuss your idea, please provide your email address.

Appendix B: The spending decision-making process

This appendix contains the verbatim answers of the respondents grouped by theme.

How should EACR make decisions on spending (select all that you think should apply)?

- Responses given under the heading 'Other'

Consider different options on who should decide

- From a new separate committee
 - new forward-looking group to manage actual spending.
 - There should be a separate committee that deals with spending the bequests
 - Could consider new active group focused on attracting younger ringers
 - I think the challenge is to both increase the number of ringers and individual skills. A corollary of this is attracting younger ringers. In this context both the Bell Restoration & Education funds may be applicable & need facilities and education. We could consider a new active group (not simply a committee) focused on specifically addressing this goal. By active they may lead projects, encourage local projects with practical support etc.
- Some spending decisions to be at the district level
 - Give each district a sum that can be used based on local knowledge / need.
 - Agree a proportion to be distributed to Districts for projects to be decided at local level.
- Survey the members
 - Survey members to decide.
 - ask members for priorities to keep ringing alive
- Combine all our funds, redraw the rules for the BRF increase the amount we give projects. Once the money has gone address how we replenish.
- Management committee should make decision following applications
- Assuming it is not already adequately funded, put at least some (modest) amount in bell restoration fund.
- Sub committee from Bell restn and edctn & rcrtmnt
- A well thought out selection of all the above.

Review ways to carry out the process

- needs to be a transparent process with clear rules on what is eligible and what isn't
- If the bequests were given too easily to improving towers there is risk that the training and retention of ringers will not follow. There should be challenge in getting funding such that those who try hard win because those who try hard are more likely to try hard at managing ringing after the improvements. Towers should firstly seek grant and local community funding.
- Visibility over decisions, but don't become paralysed in admin / bureaucracy
- Funds used in a practical way with accountability and evidence of local support and involvement.
- All significant expenditure should be supported by a proper business case not just an application form. A full cost/benefit analysis is required including an investigation into the long term benefit/viability/accessibility of the target of the funding
- Larger projects with detailed business cases and value for money statements
- Each District should review its towers and decide if any would benefit from rehang, augmentation, training equipment (i.e. they have enough keen ringers or interest AND enough teaching support) and bring forward one or two projects for initial consideration by the Trustees and then if agreed build a detailed proposal which must include parish approval.
- There need to be measures in place to judge success or failure - EACR cannot just chuck money at proposals.
- Any idea would need suitable follow up provisions in place."

See advice given on what the money should be spent on

- Help existing struggling projects
 - Help with existing projects struggling to meet payments
 - Perhaps looking at current projects that are struggling with rising costs due to Covid etc. could be given some priority at this time.
- The bequests should benefit the whole county.
- The money should be used to support the smaller less wealthy parts of the association rather than concentrated around Chelmsford and the SE where there is more affluence and therefore it is easier to raise funds. Places like Harwich really struggle with difficult bells and problems raising money to do anything about the bells due to high unemployment and a poorer population.
- Don't fritter the money away on multiple projects. Go for education and training, pick THE project as certainly as you can, and 'go for it'.
- Spend 50% of the amount on a ringing centre at Essex University and promotion. The rest can be applied for via requests from local churches who need help
- I would like to see one good memorial, maybe a new bell dedicated to them, with the rest spent on growing the Exercise.
- It would be great to have a centre for learning and training but also where bells are in need if restoration or replacement have a fund that could be used. Both the trustees and an investment committee works be good to ensure best use.
- NOTE TO QUESTION RE CAUTION: Be brave - if split over many projects/ideas some will fail. trying to avoid all risk will mean we miss some good ideas. "

Be more generous with grant applications

- Consider increasing the funding to 15% for association projects
- Widen what towers can request funding for.
- Greater generosity with grant applications for tower work for example if it is preventing the use of the bells.
- Put more money into the BRF and make barrier to entry less stringent.

Invest the money

- Investment officer to manage money
- I think individual churches know if their bells needs improvement. Would be good to have some of the money invested so that it can help as and when required.

Appendix C: Remembering the donors

This appendix contains the verbatim answers of the respondents grouped by theme.

| How best can we ensure that Donald Heath and David Cobb are remembered through the use of their bequests?

Use their names

– On something

- On anything associated with their bequests
 - That their names are prominent and must be used whenever training is done, or work is done, using their resources, much as the ringing course is a living memorial to Frank Lufkin
 - Ensure whatever the money is spent on it is done in their memory
 - Naming the initiatives after them.
 - Their names should appear on anything associated with their bequests
 - Their names should be attached to any new project
 - Restoration projects that enshrine their names into the future.
 - Permanent or time limited
 - • All projects that benefit should include a permanent or time limited acknowledgment,
 - All projects recognised with appropriate locations that benefitted
 - Name the portion of money donated or the item bought with their names
- One large project
 - Pick one large project each to name after them
 - A major installation in their districts in a church that has a reasonable prospect of still being in regular use in 15 years time. This need not be a bell restoration, it could be a teaching resource including a room.
 - Name an installation in their memory
 - A project big enough that it will continue to support their names in the years to come.
- On 1 or all of the (larger) projects after them
 - one or two real good quality initiatives we can all be proud of.
 - Name one or all of the projects after them
 - Name initiatives after them(?)
 - Use their name in any (larger?) projects.
 - "Specific tangible projects to which their name can be attributed.
- Name something after them

– Ringing centre(s)

- Ringing Centre
 - If you do a center name it after them ,
 - The Heath-Cobb Ringing Centre.
 - Named resources such as the Donald Heath Ringing Centre, the David Cobb installation etc
 - Ringing centre named after them
 - If there was a centre like Mancroft it could be named after / dedicated to Donald and David -eg. The Heath Cobb Ringing Centre
 - Name ringing centre after one benefactor and an annual grant after the other
 - A permanent ringing school that all ringers, learners and more experienced can benefit from. (*)
- Ringing centres
 - Name training Centres after these ringers.
 - That will very much depend on the types of projects run. Local or Association Training facilities could carry their names and all have plaques recording how they came about.
 - Name ringing centres after them.
 - Whether its central or on a district level it should be the Donald / David Ringing center at
- Ringing Centre or centres
 - Could name a ringing centre(s) after them
 - Their names to central or smaller local training resource.

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- Training centre or new bells
 - Large projects, either a training centre or new bells could be named after them?
 - Recruitment efforts, backed by attractive training facilities, are an excellent way of remembering both them and their generosity
- **Bell inscription or restoration**
 - New bells or restorations bearing their names
 - Augmentation with name on bells
 - Additional bells cast and inscribed in memory like the treble at Layer in memory of Fank Lufkin
 - New bell dedicated to them
 - At the least, a new bell dedicated to each
 - Cast a bell or bells in their memory
 - a bell dedication
 - Name a bell after each of them!
 - A bell inscribed in their memory
 - If there are new bells being cast for a tower they could be dedicated."
 - In their district
 - Replace at least 1 bell needed within the district/s in which Donald and David rung. The bell to have an inscription that includes their name on the bell.
 - some sort of permanent memorial such as a bell
 - Bell restoration schemes
 - BY USING SOME OF THE MONEY TO SAVE BELL AND TOWERS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD BE LOST TO RINGING FOREVER.
 - Express grateful thanks to them when towers have their bells refurbished.
- **Mobile belfry**
 - Commission an EACR Charnborough type mobile belfry, named in their memory and used at every opportunity to promote ringing and recruit through out Essex and beyond.
- **Awards**
 - Trophy or awards for achievements such as in recruitment or training
 - perhaps something like a trophy in their name which can be given for achievements in furthering ringing/recruitment on a yearly basis. Or both!
 - Perhaps some kind of training award or certificate with their names n
 - A trophy in their name to be awarded to those who make an outstanding contribution to ensuring ringing continues - nominations every year. This less about being a talented ringer and more about helping recruit, retain and encourage ringers in Essex.
 - Ringing awards made in their names
 - an award in their name for persons proving most assistance to Ringing in Essex each year.
 - With a joint Annual Cup or Sheild awarded yearly
 - Awards given at the annual dinner for various categories?
 - Awards for young ringers.
 - Bursary for young person
 - "A bursary in donors' names for those young people who show promise to attend coursed free of charge(age limit applied)
 - Awards to young ringers .
 - A named scholarship for Younger members to the ringing course.
 - Training scholarships
 - "Scholarships in their names for the Essex Ringing Course for Essex based ringers.
- **Competition(s) - striking or recognising progress**
 - maybe a new competition on 8 bells open to all named after them.
 - Dedicate striking competitions in their name
 - Ringing competition (infer that it would be named after them)
 - Ringing competition (*)
 - A new competition to recognise progress, suitably formulated so that it's not just for the super-brilliant "naturals"
 - Other competition / trophy?

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- In the Annual report
 - Their names should be perhaps entered into the report under a bequests section.
 - specific reports in the Annual Report.
- Website recognition
 - Recognition on website
- Write a new method for them
- "An Annual Peal rung for them with ringers paid to take part from part of the income generated by an investment of say –£50,000. (I don't want to ring in the peals.)"

Put their names on a plaque

- Plaques
 - Plaques where possible
 - This really depends on what the money is used for. If something physical then plaques,
 - MARK THE DONATIONS WITH APPROPRIATE PLAQUES AND MEMORIALS
 - A plaque in their names
- Every project the money finances
 - Every 'project' should have a small plaque on the wall where possible.
 - Projects where a significant amount was spent could be identified with a suitable plaque. The USA use very nice cast bronze which are permanent and attractive.
 - A small plaque showing their names at each location their money is used.
 - By making sure their money is spent on major worthwhile projects and that their names appear in the titles of any facilities the bequests financed.
 - Plaques etc recognising their contribution where building work has been done
 - Have plaques at places where the money is spent.
 - Request that anything physical in their names are commemorated eg. in plaques
 - Install plaques to commemorate their bequests wherever resources are placed.
- Towers which benefit
 - Install plaques at towers which benefit.
 - Plaques in ringing rooms where their kind legacies have been spent.
 - A plaque/board in ringing room or next to tower entrance door stating project funded by them
 - Memorial plaques in the appropriate churches and making sure the money is used in the right way for the future of bellringing.
 - Plaque in each Tower assisted
 - When we won a sum of money from the Worshipful Company of Founders an engraved plaque was placed in the belfry to record their donation. This was relatively inexpensive and records the donation in perpetuity.
 - Suggest all projects large or small should automatically include a belfry plaque appropriately enshrined with their names and the specific grant given.
 - Any large projects can be remembered on a plaque in the tower.
 - This does not have to be an inscription on a bell - plaques in ringing chamber(s) are also appropriate.
- Ringing centre
 - "If we set up the Ringing Centre like Mancroft certainly a plaque can be added, credited to them.
 - Install a substantial plaque in their memory if using their bequest for a centre or restoration project.
- Plaque on mini ring
 - Plaque on the mini ring
- On one project
 - some sort of permanent memorial such as a plaque
 - By spending their money on a specific project where they are named (plaque or similar).
- Projects with substantial cost
 - Any project with substantial cost should include a plaque mentioning them by name.

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- Bell restorations
 - Put their names on physical projects, such as bell restorations.
 - Either plaques in appropriate towers or a bell for a restoration project.
- Type of plaque
 - USA brass plaques
 - The USA have very nice brass plaques which could say " This project was funded by..."
 - National lottery type plaque
 - A visible sign such as that used by the National Lottery eg 'Part Funded by ... '

Establish how they would have wanted the money to be spent

- Did the bequests not say how they wished to be remembered? Would they have wish to be remembered? Would being remembered have been important to them? Name centre(s) after them.
- However the money is spent it should identify that this was part of their vision. Perhaps consult ringers and family to elicit their views
- Consider what they were most passionate about (aside ringing in general) - ie accuracy (suggesting Training), new ringers, quality of bells / ropes etc. But I suspect as they weren't specific, anything which assures continued ringing in Essex would have been valued by them.
- Would they actually want themselves to be remembered or were they just happy to donate the funds to promote bellringing.
- Ensure people keep ringing (obvious answer, but if they didn't specify surely this was their aim).
- Ask the next of kin for their ideas on how to commemorate the gift.
- Identify where their passion was (apart from ringing) in relation to the bells

Remember them in the towers or the areas that they rang in

- Plaque in their towers
 - framed record of gift in David and Donald's home churches
 - A plaque at their local tower(s) to commemorate their donation
 - A memorial in their local Church
 - A small memorial in the churches of the towers they regularly rung at. Shrub End and Layer de la Haye
- If there are any towers in the association that may be thinking of augmenting/towers that both have rung at, having a bell in memory of them installed.
- Projects in the towers or areas they rang
 - It would be nice to have a project in the areas where they rang.
 - By connecting their names to a project in the areas where they rang
 - Individual projects in their areas, eg Ardleigh Ringing Centre and Upminster Ringing Centre
 - Look at funding projects for towers where David and Donald rang most.

Increase neurodiversity in ringing/ support autistic ringers

- Increase neurodiveristy in ringing. Encourage more Donald's to appreciate ringing could befor them and do what it did for Donald - give him a life skill and self-esteem. Didn't know David so can't comment.
- Donald was autistic therefore investment in supporting and recruiting autistic ringers should be paramount.
- Donald Heath was an autistic ringer and a key member of St Saviours (Walthamstow) band therefore it would be fitting to not only use funds to recruit and train autistic ringers who an untapped resource but also develop the EACR's social responsibility to the community at large.
- As Donald was on the Autism Spectrum it may be worthwhile looking at seeing how the money could be spent on training for people with disabilities.

One-off ideas

- Spend asap
 - "With any significant legacy I feel strongly that here should be some physical tangible memory to the donors that they would have approved of. Whether this is a ringing centre, multiple ringing centres or an augmentation. The last thing that should happen is that this money should go in an existing und and then get spent in small amounts over a number of years. The legacies should be spent as soon as possible on worthwhile projects. Having money sitting in a fund attracting interest at 1% when materials for bell projects is probably increasing at over 10% p.a. makes no sense."
- Commemorative video
 - Ask fellow ringers about special memories associated with them and make commemorative videos to show in their home churches and associated websites.
- Reports in magazine on use of funds
- Peal board?
- Advancement of ringing through training
- Anything in education, recruitment, and retention in their names
 - Ringing was a huge and satisfying part of both Donald's and David's lives and I think that they would want others to have the same challenging enjoyment that they had and so any project in the Education, Recruitment and Retention sphere, in their names, would be an excellent way of perpetuating their memory
- Perhaps we can learn something from the way the National lottery always insists on its branding bannered across all projects. If we create a strong brand for these bequests, the grant process can insist on visibility in many ways.
- Definitely not by spending the money on general things e.g. subsidising training/courses, expenses claims which should come out of funds already in existence or any other wishy washy ideas just to fritter away the money. "

Other comments

- I answered '1' to the question whether there should be projects in memory of these 2 individuals - this is because I imagine that wasn't their objective in making the bequests and, although I agree that the source of the funding should be acknowledged (where the church allows - I understand plaques etc are no longer permitted), I think the 2 most important things are inextricably linked: 1, to keep/return bells to good order so that they are as easy/pleasurable to ring as possible as this will also help with 2, the recruitment of new ringers.
- By encouraging more people to take up this art. Bells are all very well but without ringers ...
- By ensuring ringing continues through the country.
- ensure that there is investment in terms of money, time and bell towers and ringers"

Appendix D: Themed ideas

This appendix contains the verbatim answers of the respondents grouped by theme.

1 Youth

What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to focus more on younger ringers or other specific groups?

1.1 Partner with youth organisations, schools, and universities

– Schools and youth groups

- Forge links to schools/ youth organisations
 - links to schools
 - Go into Schools and Brownie/Guide/Scouts groups etc to promote bellringing.
 - work with youth organisations
 - I'm not the expert... I guess foster links with primary schools
 - Links with schools/youth centres
 - To engage with Schools or university's or both, look to see if this is happening in the Association? it is in Ardleigh, speak with David Sparling.
 - Advertising, work with schools / youth bodies to link to recognition of community service (and use for CVs and job / Uni applications)
 - Target schools for potential ringers
 - Outreach to schools and youth organisations ensuring equality and diversity of opportunity.
 - Targeting youth groups, e.g. cubs and brownies.
 - Outreach projects in schools, colleges and universities.
 - Go into schools and youth clubs, particularly church ones.
 - Digital campaign through Church youth groups/cubs/guides
 - School approaches directly (with safeguarding principles in place). Birmingham and Simon Linford manage this some time back."
 - Forging links with Youth Organisations and schools to engage and interest young people
 - How about in schools
 - Connect with eg Danbury youth camp, Scouting and Girlguiding to encourage visits to towers , trial session, etc
 - Approaching schools and colleges ie education
 - Aa item 1. Above. The Beth Johnson model - going into schools to promote ringing.
 - Involve youth clubs and 6th form colleges
 - Contact with local schools with publicity to attract participants
 - Get into schools.
 - Information to senior schools, age 13, for bright pupils.
 - Talk/demonstrations at local schools, guide/scout groups
 - Establish links with local schools, scouts, guides
- Make road show visits
 - "See above - video blogs and school resources. 'Give it a try' events for social groups.
 - Have a 'road show' that visits schools, youth groups etc.
 - School's outreach program - a 'slick' methodology where skilled presenters from EACR can lead local ringers to tap into the limited ability of schools to engage with local activities. This may be linked to the first question in this section i.e. a part time funded position.
 - Approach schools for recruits. Give displays and presentations.
 - take demonstrations round schools
 - I think you should focus on visits to schools to promote interest in ringing. But also have the back up practical facilities locally to give the youngsters a chance to try.
 - A mixed age group to go into schools or communities to advertise bell ringing
 - See 'Acquire and tour with a mobile belfry'

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- Integrate bell ringing into the school curriculum
 - A pack of curriculum-linked lesson plans and resources for schools."
 - As previous answer, we were prior to lockdown teaching children from their local school as part of their education curriculum
 - A proper co-ordinated approach to schools, stressing cross-curricular advantages.
 - Developing the lesson plans for taking to schools. Possibly models of bells that are easy to transport.
 - School music liaison
- Organise Interschool competitions
 - I see no reason why schools shouldn't have inter school competitions as we had for rugby etc
- [Link to Scout / Guide badges/ DoE awards](#)
 - Exploit the scout / guide proficiency badge system and the D of E Award scheme
 - Scout badges, guide badges, talk to the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards
 - Scout badges, guide badges, talk to the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards
 - link with Edinburgh Awards. colleges, etc. but do not attempt a "go it alone" route to engage with younger people.
 - Could there be a project jointly with groups such as the Scouts/Guides/Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme?
 - "A Girl Guide/Boy Scout badge for ringing. Or similar award scheme - perhaps develop our own set of badges for each stage of ringing one achieves. Promote as 'community service' part of Duke of Edinburgh award."
 - "1. Working with scouts and guide groups.
 - Promote ringing a skill that can help earn the Duke of Edinburgh Awards (needs school liaison)."
 - Part of the Duke of Edinburgh award, activities for youth group.
 - Contact Duke of Edinburgh Award organisers in local schools
 - Cubs and scouts need badges. Perhaps make bell ringing one of their goals. Once hooked they will not look back.
 - Advertise to The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Scouts and Guides. The teenagers can learn to ring for the skills part of their awards.
 - By working with the DofE and scouting we would attract young people and hopefully retain some. This would be helped with social events aimed at their interests.
 - "Developing a training centre: - 1. For younger people to encourage and publicise Bellringing as an option for the Duke of Edinburgh award.
 - Cubs and scouts.
 - Bell-handling courses aimed specifically at groups like the scouts/guides to go towards the Duke of Edinburgh award
 - involve Duke of Edinburgh scheme & scouts/guides as a skill to learn
 - Work with the scouting organisation to set up projects with Brownies, Guides, Scouts etc
- [Target university students](#)
 - "Begin a society at each of the universities in Essex (Wednesday afternoon practices, no teaching for campus sport).
 - Student society?
 - Targeting schools/university of Essex to recruit younger people
 - University recruitment
 - UEA

1.2 Ask the young

- [Invest in ideas from young ringers to recruit their peers](#)
- [ask some of the young ringers! with help from the committee to guide them maybe get young ringers on board.](#)
- [Ask young ringers](#)
- [Young people are probably better placed to answer this .](#)
- [There is also a very important point for understanding things from a young ringers perspective and understanding what the real state of the situation is - Can we perhaps hold a young ringers event where existing ringers bring friends and other potential recruits? Invest in space, transport and food? This is best sought with Youth Workers assistance."](#)
- [Younger ringers...let's ask them.](#)

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- Ask the young ringers that we have what we should be doing.
- Ask our young ringers what they think can be done to encourage more young ringers.

1.3 Increase social media presence

- Social media presence (tik tok etc)"
- Consider appointing someone young to target potential young ringers via social media platforms.
- Investing in Social Media officer.
- Use social media more.
- Social media
- Social media

1.4 Provide more ringing outings & social events for younger ringers

- Hold more outings/events for younger ringers to try and encourage more from around the county to join and take part in these events/practices held.
- social events alongside bellringing that would appeal to younger ringers.
- 6. Having lots of social events planned to keep the young ringers group together.
- More involvement for ringers under 30 for outings and practices spread across Essex

1.5 Develop and use technology

- Target some schools, invite small groups interested to watch, as the younger generation is interested in computer games , push the app to not just current bell ringers.
- I think developing computer programs to help with learning and engaging graphics with help retain young learners and developing a good ringing centre at a well equipped ringing tower.
- Use tools such as Minecraft to make it less geeky and more attractive in social media that the young use.
- Use of more technology such as ringing room to encourage younger ringers.
- Young people use technology all the time and young ringers are no exception to this, so tap into this resource and make use of their input

1.6 Provide after school, weekend activity clubs or courses during school holidays

- Run courses during school holidays. Parents are always looking for things to entertain/educate their children during holiday periods, especially if it is free.
- Summer Schools to allow youngsters enough rope time to grab their interest.
- 2. Links with schools running after school clubs or weekend activity clubs.
- Summer holiday courses for youths

1.7 Encourage young ringers to teach

- 5. Encourage young ringers to be teachers.
- Train more teenagers to teach (*)

1.8 Refer to the Communication and PR section

1.9 One-off ideas

- The Kent have had some usable handbell sets donated. We could buy a couple of sets and use for training or introducing people to ringing. Similarly a stock of e-bells to loan to people and train online.
- Don't forget the young people with special needs, although challenging, they are excellent ambassadors.
- Visits to Mancroft or if we had district training centre hubs, visits to those.
- District Education Officers to be allocated funds to provide local educational awareness of ringing, advertising and social media awareness.
- Publicity, transport, improved safeguarding procedures to streamline the process but NOT to lessen its purpose,
- Call for projects from towers with active youth members.
- Awards to towers that are most successful in diverse youth recruitment.

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- 7. Having enthusiastic teachers that youngsters can relate to. Make it fun. "
- Can we learn from Birmingham's approach - we need to understand what makes young people tick and how they use media.
- Being cynical we could target churches where people come to get into good schools.
- Expert consultation on increased Young People Participation; (we don't know all the answers and others are struggling with this same issues)
- Young peoples ringing competitions
- A dedicated ringing centre for young ringers, or maybe two, to address the diverse abilities and / or geography of the County.
- A project has a defined start and an end, so project(s) are not the way to go. We need a continuum of advertising and enticement with a large support and training infrastructure behind it. Oh dear, we seem to have a two generation gap in ringers to provide that support.
- Fun learning times/quizzes to support and educate young ringers
- Young ringers to give talks to groups, for example, scouts about the art of bell ringing (not only a positive step to promote bell ringing, but good personal development for the young ringer giving the presentation).
- Get a celebrity to learn and blog their progress

1.10 Other comments

- Don't (just) focus on the young
 - I don't think we should get obsessed by young ringers - we need ringers of all ages.
 - we need to make sure we don't end up teaching loads of kids to handle of which none become regular ringers.
 - I am concerned by over emphasis on young ringers if this comes at the cost of opportunities for other ringers. Please do not exclude other generations.
 - I would not necessarily focus on younger ringers more than any other age group. A much sharper general focus on giving potential and actual recruits a good experience right from the start should (I hope!) bring in youngsters along with the others.
 - Can't answer this as I don't have enough visibility of what's going on. Young ringers are clearly important. But, while the learning rate is slower, older ringers are valuable too.
 - Young ringers are important but please don't forget the more mature new ringer that need time and resources spent on them as often these ringers will form the mainstay for the future.
 - See my earlier comment. Look, young people aren't interested and won't be unless that have a family connection, or are a bit weird. Focus on the middle aged. Expound the health benefits. Be aware that ringing is a team sport and cannot be learned via YouTube. Which is what young people/millennials (yes I'm one of those, but I fall into the weird category) usually do.
 - I think focus should not be on a specific age group but the wider spectrum.
 - Ringing needs a wide age range so recruitment should not be focussed on any particular age group, in the past folks were less mobile so young ringers stayed.
 - "Recruit older ringers too, they tend to remain as ringers.
- There are already opportunities to fund Youth projects, that should continue , it is not easy how that could be replicated to other groups.
- Beyond the excellent work Christina and Mark already do? Not a lot,
- We need to generate enthusiasm for ringing, at present it only appeals to retirees who have time on their hands, and they are generally learning too late to become effective technical ringers (their aspiration levels are generally limited by their poor learning environments and their motor/mental abilities). Other groups tend not to have enough spare time to devote to ringing and their development suffers (unless they have the aptitude to pick it up very quickly) and teaching resource is often wasted.
- The youth teams seem to be doing well and producing some very good ringers.
- " I would support any initiative that encourages young people to take up ringing.
- There are no easy answers: it depends on your church / community demographic and involvement. You can still get over 20 years useful ringing from someone who learns at 60, although I also think that future ringing leaders will come from those who learn as teenagers.
- Intensive residential courses including social activities appropriate to the specific group

2 Training

| What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve education and training?

2.1 Expand the provision of courses

– More (short) courses

- More courses for beginners
- Monthly/quarterly Saturday training sessions might be helpful in developing ringing ability if sufficient numbers are interested.
- more frequent training days (greater dates / shorter courses making attendance more likely).
- Provide more frequent courses for certain methods e.g. for a few hours at a weekend
- [Younger ringers...let's ask them.] For intermediate ringers - subsidised weekend intense courses
- Another ringing course?

– Expand/ build on the Essex Ringing Centre courses

- More courses should be created for the Essex Ringing Course as I feel as though it needs updating so that more people can be reached by it and there is then a course for everyone.
- Run more focused courses. We need more than just The Essex Course and the Training Day.
- Essex Ringing Course investment to expand current project
- I think the EACR already has an excellent training program. The three day training event is one example along with several other training events throughout the year for those that decide to take part.
- The advanced monthly practices being not surprise practices is a good start. More short training courses rather than just the Essex Ringing Course and an annual training day.
- Short basic courses along the lines of the Essex Ringing Course but on a smaller more personal scale and more frequently
- Quarterly "Essex Ringing courses"
- Day/Weekend workshops like the Essex ringing course. It's so useful as a learner to be able to practice for longer both with people and using a simulator.
- Is there potential to have a second Essex Course during the year maybe only over a day or two days?
- The Essex course is a wonderful and incredibly popular event. You have the blue print its just case of funding persons to develop it.

– Work with ART on provision of courses

- More ART courses
- ART should be an integral part of the EMC project. The teaching programme and the staffing of EMC should be based on ART. All teaching staff should be ART qualified. "Exams" and pass out based upon ART criteria.
- Much stronger focus in ensuring that training is 'professional' and competent across the whole county, helping to ensure that all new ringers get a good experience right from the start which encourages them to 'stick with it'. The ART shows the way!
- Short introductory taster courses (ART teaching based) hosted advertised to non-ringers at local level.
- I would like to see more opportunities for ringers of wide ranging ability to access in person ringing tuition. The focus should be on progression however incremental. Coggeshall-style structured teaching rather than weekly practice nights, which can lack focus and meaningful feedback.
- Monthly group/district training sessions for basic bell control skills using Kaleidoscope & LTR level 2/3 fun activities
- Encourage more people to train as ART teachers,
- We have been heading in the right direction with the increased use of ART.

– Provide leadership courses

- Work with tower captains to encourage other ringing members to take responsibility within the tower with a view to shared leadership, new ideas etc.
- Leadership refresher courses with equality, diversity and positive mentorship approaches.
- More leadership and skills training for tower captains and others at towers who are teaching lesser skilled ringers to support their development and their ability to develop others.
- Offer a fellowship in teaching and learning, which provides a more theoretical approach to getting the best from a group of ringers with mixed abilities and mindsets. Offer CPD style courses in leadership.

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- More courses to provide guidance and practical help in teaching new learners together with practical help with teaching aids (tied bells, computer programmes etc)
- **Make training days more organised and /or targeted**
 - More targeted training days.
 - More organised training days
 - More organised training days
 - More training days
 - "Structured training programmes; more single training days with follow-up sessions.
 - Specific days for training and educating
- **Concentrate on new ringers**
 - Resources for the Essex ringing course. More focus on handling to encourage people and help them progress.
 - We need to concentrate more on new ringers and meeting their needs. Having loads of 6 and 8 bell practices doesn't help or encourage them in early ringing. They are normally attended by people who don't need to practice. We need more one-to-one clinics with experience teachers who can pin point and help with handling problems, to help correct and which will enable people to progress their ringing further.
 - More specific practices for beginners, as above!
- **For those whose ability surpasses the basics**
 - Access to regular education for ringers whose ability surpasses the basics that can be easily taught and supported by most towers. Aim not only personal satisfaction for ringers but aim to improve overall ability in towers through good practice.
 - 'Moving on' ringing courses to take people from called changes to plain hunt or Bob Doubles
 - Dedicated open training sessions for learning specific easy methods especially for less experienced ringers to build confidence
- **Ringing camps like school holiday sports camps.**
- **Options for study in academia**
- **A degree or A level**
- **Set up bell ringing module as part of Anglia Ruskin University music course in Cambridge**
- **A focused training scheme, with a peal or quarter peal to aim for."**

2.2 Provide training at local towers

- **Things are improving. More targetted training parachuting into towers in need.**
- **I think most people will want to learn at their local tower (which should be encouraged to reduce carbon footprint) so this means people trained in teaching techniques across the district.**
- **For Bell handling**
 - Dedicated 'roving' empathetic trainers to take learners forward,
 - Run more bell handling clinics around the association. Most students at the course had handling issues, hindering their progression.
 - Engaging more with individual towers so that recruitment is spread more widely and locally to where potential recruits might live.
- **Run alternating clinics every month in each tower. People won't travel into big towns/cities to ring as its too expensive.**
- **Weekly training schools at multiple towers in each district that can accelerate learning for the able and detect the plateaus for those that are not. Trainers need to have enough knowledge and empathy to be honest with trainees and not waste what is a finite limited resource on those that have little hope of further development. Plateaued ringers need to be encouraged to support Sunday Service ringing but not egged on to aspirational levels that it is inefficient (in terms of teaching resources) for them to achieve.**
- **Now we need everyone, but we should not spend excessive time trying to develop those who have plateaued in their ability.**
- **A teacher provided for towers with no leader or person able to teach.**
- **For improvers**
 - More local improvers sessions held regularly.
 - More resources at local level to encourage method learning and ringing on higher numbers

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- Travelling training nights in your own Tower. David Sparling did a brilliant one for me. It inspired our band to improve and develop. Take training to the Towers. It creates interest.

2.3 Pay expenses to trainers and helpers

- To help locally
 - Need to actively support local teachers (if they ask for grants, let's give them!).
 - Where there is a need and latent ability, could we not pay expenses for experienced ringers to go into a tower or tower group (invited, of course) to provide a series of high intensity training sessions? So many struggle for lack of experienced ringers, and the strugglers are often reluctant to go elsewhere. Many experienced ringers are probably thinking twice before getting in their car now; travel expenses could help this.
 - A group of people who are able to come and help support the teaching of new ringers, plus taking them on beyond bell handling. Money could be used to pay for at least their travel.
 - The schools should be funded, paying expenses for tutors and helpers (not employed, the Association cannot afford to get embroiled in employment and its issues).
- Dedicated team of qualified trainers paid expenses +
- Expenses could be paid for tutors and helpers.
- Support ringing teachers by paying expenses, often lots of time and travel is given freely, fuel is very expensive. No complicated forms for recompense.

2.4 Increase number and/ or availability of trainers

- Train more trainers.
- Training course for people who train people to bell ring. Difficult question. It's capturing peoples fascination, the rest is hard work and practice.
- Train more teachers (*)
- Provide more specific training to experienced bell ringers on how to teach ringing at more towers
- Encourage more people to do the teaching course and make them more accessible
- Improve the availability of teachers
- Subsidise ART courses
 - subsidise ART courses
 - Grant to fund the cost of the ART modules to improve tower leadership/teaching/advertising"
 - The ART module courses to be funded by the Association to improve tower leadership and training
 - We recently attended a training session to teach bell-handling, we funded this from our wedding money. More people maybe willing to attend these training sessions if they could be funded.

2.5 Use technology

- Perhaps remote / online ringing training to aid those whose commitments make attending a regular practice difficult
- Computerised training,
- Computer systems in more towers (as at Prittlewell).
- "Technical - discuss it on line/zoom. Saves time in tower.
- Again social media could be used.
- Access to online videos (eg YouTube content) and free access to online interactive training (eg ringing room)
- virtual on line trainings to grasp principles before practical training

2.6 Host open days or drop in sessions for training purposes

- Helping towers to fund open days and volunteers if necessary"
- I have been to an open London Towers day and there is one in Surrey this Monday, I am not aware we do one in Essex. I think this is a good idea as the one I went on lone ringers came just to ring in different towers . You can sell coffee and cake along with the normal charge. As the one I went to was ten pounds for the day, we queued and there were no refreshments.
- Invest in drop in sessions at individual towers.

2.7 Towers to band together for larger initiatives

- I think more tower cluster groups need to be formally set up so towers with less experienced ringers get the support from those fortunate to have more ringers to enable adequate numbers at practice nights to support learners. The number of ringers at towers across the association varies greatly.
- encourage groups of good ringers to travel to odd towers that cannot really travel who no longer have enough people to do methods and would like to .
- Given that ringing (and therefore recruitment and teaching) is still mostly local then towers need to band together for any larger initiatives.

2.8 All training to be at least partially paid for by the student

- It's important that people commit to learning opportunities so 100% grants should always be the exception. Generally people don't value anything that's just provided for free. Prosepective ringers paid to be considered as recruits by a band in the past!
- I firmly believe that whatever education and training is put in place students should always be asked to contribute to "buy into" a course/training.

2.9 Benchmark other associations or training centres

- Has the EACR benchmarked other successful associations to see what they do?
- Is there any reliable data detailing success/failure of the Worcester and Mancroft initiatives yet? If they work, these may be good models for a substantial investment.

2.10 Hold local mid-week training/ practices

- Afternoon practices for retired/non-working ringers seem to have become more popular."
- Local mid-week training for retirees/flexible workers.

2.11 Consider one-off ideas

- Our own display boards
- Employed manager to plan and run local recruitment and courses
- I think when you are learning a method, like the Stanstead practice. Maybe another one rotating on just that one method, I struggled to learn methods . So the odd extra day would be good , I know we do one day a year but is rotation on every 4 years for the four areas in our district. You could aim it at the demand, with a lot of new ringers and with people that can not move on due to there towers restrictions. Otherwise smaller centers like Chigwell or Willingale could maybe do something or other places that do this in the district.
- See previous answer re Donald.[ie recruit neurodiverse people] We would need to improve teaching as well, to help them teach neurodiverse people.
- Mentorship scheme?
- Encourage all ringers to be part of the programme. Not everyone can teach but all can do something to support even it is only being available to ring rounds and call changes etc with them.
- Reach out to individual towers to ascertain their needs
- Focus on those who will come through. Far too long ringing training has continued to nuture people who have no natural gift for it. Rarely happens in choirs or football teams an similar organisations. Would advocate an entry level quality standard .
- The training bell the was donated by the Elliot's be made mobile so that it could be taken around Essex to demonstrate and train.
- "More ringing opportunities, more invites to more ringers, not just closed groups of ringers.
- Ensuring large towers have adequate support and resources to provide on-going training including standard set of training materials.
- Make more youth training available all over the county.
- "Purchase a mini ring and trailer and rent storage space for both. Pay expenses to those who take it to venues, set up and dismantle it, and to the instructors who provide tuition.
- Regular newsletters and one to one sessions

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- Theory courses with immediately following practical sessions to put the theory into practice. (Hiring of suitable 'classrooms' for the theory sessions)"
- Expose young people to the history of the towers and the bells as well as ringing itself.
- Clothing bursaries so people can see you are part of a team like the scouts etc

2.12 Other comments

- I am not sure this is the best way to spend the bequeathed funds as we already have a recruitment and training fund.
- In my opinion, education and training are the most important priority.
- I think lockdown demonstrated that on-line learning has only limited benefit to actual ringing
- Think this is best answered by ART

3 Ringing Centre(s)

3.1 Set up a centralised ringing centre

- Like the idea of..
 - i know we have an idea for a training centre in a college and I think this is brilliant. Definitely worth pursuing.
 - By creating a training centre that enables ringers to learn any time of the day. guaranteeing the future of bell ringing.
 - I like the idea of a centre of excellence where people can go to improve their ringing.
 - A centre of excellence would benefit new, young and existing members.
 - A centre of excellence would improve education and training.
 - A Ringing Centre pooling resources of experience and equipment
 - Develop a ringing centre.
 - Ringing centre (*)
- At Essex university
 - A ringing Centre at Essex University? We want to try and recruit young ringers.
 - A ringing centre at essex uni must be looked into but if not feasible look at Ardleigh with the links to the school.
 - "1. Build a ringing centre like MRDC at Essex University that students can use as well as other people in the area. Employ several people to work there on a rota in order to promote ringing, teach bell handling and run training courses at the centre.
 - 3. University ringing centre as above.
 - Essex University (Colchester) would make an ideal location for such an installation. As well as a training facility for existing ringers, this could also be considered a recruitment / young persons project, having access to potentially 3000 students per year. Activities specifically aimed at recruiting students could be run each year (e.g. during rag week). 600 characters!!"
 - Essex University is easily accessible by public transport. Holiday ringing courses could be run with on-site accommodation and easy parking. The Essex Ringing Course could be moved here.
 - There has already been discussion about the possibility of Mancroft Style installations. This type of resource at Essex University would seem to be an idea worthy of consideration. It would address many of the Association priorities - providing easily ringable bells, student body for recruitment drives, attracts young people by use of IT and personal challenge.
- At a university of higher education
 - My belief is that the installation of a MRDC-like facility inside a University of Higher-Education facility, together with funding for a part-time Manager could generate a regular stream of ringing talent from the student intake. The provision of 6 or 8 training bells into a existing building would cost in the region of –£25,000 - –£30,000 and so the funds available could support a number of such initiatives across the Association if a carefully selected pilot scheme was seen to be successful. The University would normally have parking, public transport and accomodation.
 - Not sure weather it should be the central place or not but I really like the idea of centers within universities, equipped with dumbbell's , laptops etc
- At Writtle
 - Invest in somewhere like Writtle, which is fairly central, accessible and which already has good facilities.
- with ideas from Mancroft, Tulloch and Birmingham
 - The Essex Mancroft Centre (EMC) project should have an integral and holistic business plan for the syllabus, the teaching methods, the staffing, staff training and qualification, how the centre would be promoted, how people will be excited by the prospect of ringing, how the staff of the centre will be suitable exciting people projecting a positive image of ringing, how the public will be made aware of the centre. The planning should be to avoid a white elephant.
 - This could be a once in a lifetime opportunity to create something like MRDC in Essex, without any single parish having to raise the money or EACR for that matter. It could be a facility which could generate its own income to enable it to be self-sufficient if managed correctly.
 - The [ringing centre] project taking ideas from Mancroft and Birmingham
 - A project like the Tulloch centre in Scotland that has two light peals of bells, catering facilities, overnight accommodation and children's play area

- A central learning project, i.e like Peter Mancroft
- 4. Using a ringing centre in a building other than a Church that is a more 'cool' place for youngsters to want to go to.

3.2 Provide local ringing centres

- Like the idea
 - Localised ringing hubs
 - Local /Hub workshops (localised Essex Ringing Course).
 - 2. Look at having several ringing centres across the Association at towers with easy bells, in good locations, with comfortable ringing rooms and enthusiastic people. "
 - making local training centres available
 - Something permanent such as ringing centres for training and improving, and not aspecific restoration or augmentation.
 - Maybe some ringing centres for recruitment and training (eg like ringing school) complete with simulators so that noise isn't an issue. To bring new ringers up to a certain standard.
 - small centres for recruitment and training.
 - Regional ringing centres.
 - A training school in each area (a clump of towers that are likely to survive church closures in the next 10-15 years) so that teachers can work together rather than working alone, with no or little backup.
- One in each district
 - Setting up training centres, at least one in each district.
 - District centralised learn-to-ring courses, where the district gangs up to get a couple of dozen newbies through over a 10-15 weeks finite period. e.g. East Herts recently did 3 x 8 slots of learners on a Sunday afternoon at Bengo after a big open day and recruitment campaign, calling in teachers from all over. It was amazing what some clever and determined work on social media and the parish magazine did to drum up new recruits.
 - Have a dedicated learning tower in each district where people can learn together through the year rather than learning at each individual tower.
 - Close to / within University campus
 - Individual district training centres, close to or within university campus easily accessible by bus/rail/car (ample parking a necessity). these could be set up quite reasonably prices in the campuses are there are often large buildings on campus that are not fully utilised, this would also encourage University students to take part. .
 - District training centres.
 - Overseen by the Association
 - To provide funding to create a "Ringing Hub tower" in each District - overseen by the Association and not left to the tower e.g. Writtle in the SED
- NE - restart Ardleigh
 - For the north-east : restart the Ardleigh ringing school (pre-Covid, it was on a Friday evening)
 - Possible financial help to assist in the scheme at Ardleigh a ART registered teaching centre to augment to ten creating a light six plus two dumb bells and all computer equipment to improve the facilities
- Couple with local recruitment
 - Installation of multiple satellite ringing training centers installed in suitable towers and locations. This could then be coupled with local recruitment drives allowing people to learn to ring without having to travel and ultimately creating new local bands.
 - 2. It is essential to have several teaching centres across the county all ready to accept any interested recruits to provide follow up training. "
 - I like the idea of a training centre but not sure about ongoing cost/upkeep. Potentially look at funding recruitment workshops in existing training centres.
- With central booking system
 - i would suggest that we do a smaller style of Mancroft but in more than one location with an online booking system and ...

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- Drinks and refreshments, fridge and microwave in ringing centres
 - See above re ringing centres. Making ringing centres comfortable places that learners will want to go to. Have drinks and refreshments available. When I rang at South Hackney we had a fridge and microwave in the tower so we could go straight from work and eat in the tower if necessary!
- Like Birmingham
 - Regular ringing schools cross the Association similar to The Birmingham School of Bell Ringing.
- General improvements to existing training centres

3.3 Set up 2 or 3 ringing centres

- We do need a couple of nice easy going (probably eights) in accessible parts of the county that are available and open for use - so we either find a greenfield site to do a really good job or significantly improve one or two other places.
- "There has already been much discussion about Mancroft Style installations. The size of the bequests would allow for consideration of more than one such installation, which should be considered due to the size of the County.
- Two separate ringing discovery centres serving different parts of Essex, equipped and run along the lines of the Mancroft Centre
- One for each of Don & David's locations + Coggeshall
 - i would suggest that installing 2 or 3 smaller training centres that could be in each of the districts that Don and David Rang in (naming each one in there name). with the 3rd being close enough to Coggeshall so that the ringing course can use it.
- 2. Perhaps two or three [ringing centres] across Essex to encourage all ages to develop skills.

3.4 Set up a main ringing centre with local ringing centres

- Local training centres PLUS new central resource - I think we have money for both
- The funds available would support a significant Association resource alongside smaller local training resources. These need to be welcoming, warm, bright spaces with good facilities and with the use of one or more training bells, need not be installed in difficult to access Churches at all.
- New ringing centre for Essex sounds a good idea, or possibly one per district if this doesn't split the money up so much it becomes ineffective
- Something similar to the Mancroft Ringing Discovery Centre and also smaller, more local, initiatives

3.5 Fund a training manager for the ringing centre(s)

- Either a central or smaller distributed training centres. Fund a training manager.
- As above. We should allocate some of the funds to pay Managers to run and drive usage of training facilities that we implement as part of these projects.
- Ringing centre(s) with administrator to coordinate training.
- Ringing Centre
 - The EMC should be run professionally albeit mainly volunteer staffed.
- District training centres
 - Individual district training centres, close to or within university campus...You would need some sort of caretaker/administrator, easily set up technologically,

4 Bells

What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve the quality of our bells and ringing equipment?

4.1 Install sound control, simulators, and dumb bells

- • Provide computerised teaching aids, sound control, simulators, and dumb bells
 - Computerised training equipment
 - Rather than funding projects that are desperately in need of a rehang, fund small improvements to a larger number of towers. This might be ringing equipment but could also be other infrastructure, simulators, video etc.
 - Computerised training equipment which could be more easily shared ?
 - Computers for practice and training."
 - The technology in the Writtle All Saints bell tower that improves individual ringers ability to ring in time is really good. Could this be invested in elsewhere?
 - for towers that have viable band (more active ringers than bells) grants could be offered to provide AV facilities and simulators.
 - at least a few towers with up to date training technology, eg simulator, distributed platform, dumb bells, etc
 - What systems would make practice nights more interesting and reduce noise and inconvenience to the general public at the same time?
 - Grants can be done for simulators or dumbbells and other teaching aids.
 - More simulators
 - Many more simulators in the County.
 - "1.Simulators in lots of towers.
 - Simulators for any tower that applies - to show they have an enthusiastic adopter who would drive usage.
 - Ensure each tower has a simulator. (*)
 - To have enough towers throw out Essex set up with simulators etc etc to aid with the Essex course and other courses that are held during the year.
 - Practical put simulators in active areas so training by specialist can be undertaken.
 - Simulators for towers that would benefit from one.
 - increase availability of simulators.
 - More simulators
 - More simulators in towers
 - Instal simulators in more towers
 - We have found that the installation of a simulator and a camera in the bells with a screen in the ringing room to demonstrate how bells work creates interest and also improves teaching."
 - To QUICKEN UP HANDLING for a new member becoming confident in ringing rounds and early methods with a band. Using a simple simulator set up with one bell and the simulator program adding the band. Not expensive to set up and the extra practice can be done with minimal band members
 - Dumb bells
 - Investment in dumb bells to make learning easier.
 - Installation of dumb bell ringing trainers in to towers to allow for silent rope control training locally. These will often be able to be fitted with no major modification to the tower and could make silent ringing more accessible to towers that cannot easily gain access to silence their bells.
 - ... and smaller grants available for improvements to current centres of education that we already have, installing dumb bells or simulators.
 - Installation of dumbbells in 6 towers around Essex (hubs) enabling learners to have a semi-local place they can go to.
 - Use of dumbbells. . (*)
 - It seems the state of the bells etc. is generally quite good. There may be a case for installing high grade dumb bells in many towers as a teaching aid.

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- Portable simulator, which could be borrowed
 - Purchase portable simulator.
 - have travelling simulators, Mancroft equipment,
 - Purchase simulators for towers in the district, these to be used in towers where there are teachers who have the ability and passion to make good use of the resource. A simulator/s could be available to be borrowed.
- **Install sound control**
 - Sound reduction installations.
 - Assistance in using sound control in towers so that training of ringers can take place without upsetting the local residents.
 - To muffle the noise so that they could be rung for practice more frequently
 - Provide adjustable sound-proofing measures/equipment for all towers in Essex to reduce 'neighbour annoyance' and allow for more practical sessions other than just Practice Nights.
 - Sound proofing needed in many towers
 - sound control with simulators
 - Making towers fit for purpose (digital/mechanical improvements, i.e. sound controls/simulators etc.)
 - Simulator installation with sound control.
 - Installation of sound control and simulators could increase the availability of existing installations for teaching.

4.2 Make bells easier to ring

- **Difficult bells**
 - Towers that are in need of maintenance in order to improve handling should be those looked at and money out towards so that they can continue to ring out for years to come.
 - Nothing I've not already mentioned above. If difficult bells are made easier to ring that would help with retention
 - Guides, re-hanging of especially difficult bells if there is a band to ring them
 - Known bad rings should be improved.
 - Possibly reduce the weight of some rings to make them easier to handle.
- **Provide rope guides where appropriate**
 - Rope- guides where appropriate.
 - Investment in improvements such as guides to make learning easier.
 - Guides to make bells more user friendly
 - Multiple smaller projects could be funded to improve the 'go' of bells - e.g. with work on bells and fittings such as rope guides.
 - Improve ringability of towers e.g. install rope guides or improve fittings
- **For good 'go' in ringable towers - and report in Annual report**
 - Do whatever is necessary to make the 'go' of all the ringable peals in Essex to be in 'good' or 'excellent' ringing order, and then record them as such in the Annual Report
- **Focus on towers actively growing/ recruiting**
 - Priority should be given to existing installations where there are existing band who have demonstrating some success with recruitment but the bells are difficult to ring.
 - Assist/spend money on projects at towers that are actively growing and already recruiting new members. This money could be improving the bells, installing rope guides, providing more training tools, etc paperwork or folders or training guides or bell simulators.

4.3 Make ringing chambers more inviting

- **We have said that we are not into decorating ringing chambers but why not if we can make them more inviting to new recruits.**
- **Give grants for comfortable chairs, redecoration, heating, white boards**
- **No specifics, but we should be spending on anything that would improve "go" and creating a welcoming ringing environment.**

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- "Heating in bell towers.
- Not a significant priority for me but would recommend considering the fabric of the towers to make more welcoming ringing spaces if going to spend money on infrastructure and equipment.
- Improvement of many ringing chambers.
- Having attractive training facilities should in itself be good for recruitment, better than fusty towers - that comes later.
- Focus in improving Ringing chambers to make them more welcoming and minor bell improvements.
- Help towers and bells become a bright well maintained place to ring and learn.
- Make ringing rooms more welcoming by decorating

4.4 Survey all towers and carry out remedial work

- A County wide condition survey of bell installations with appropriate follow-up
- An experienced person (like Nigel Taylor) paid expenses and time to go round all Towers over a certain length of time (and regularly) to check bells and equipment.
- build full database of condition and potential for all Essex towers
- Do a stock take of the entire association towers and see what is needed. Not any new rings for towers but to bring less well known towers up to scratch with new ropes, muffles, minor works etc.
- This should be looked at on a local level, possibly by district, to ensure that every District can provide bells suitable for learning and training.
- As above, look at individual towers and target them for help ie improve bells or support with people to teach ringing.
- Ensure all rings are inspected on a regular continuous schedule.
- Possible short surveys to see what condition our current towers are in.
- Audit of bell towers , their current status and any issues. To see what needs to be addressed.
- It may be possible to start a review of all bell installations in the county under supervision of the D.AC. adviser. Work needed on the bells could then be prioritised and funding given as necessary.
- Make a team of expert bell installers to do a detailed inspection of every bell and tower on a compulsory periodic certified basis.
- Canvass tower captains to report on the condition of their bells and when they were last overhauled and how often they are rung
- Risk assessment
- Prioritise work to towers that have a band/ potential to have a band
 - Prioritise works needed throughout the county (undertake a study), prioritise those towers who have a band/potential to have a band. For example are there towers where the bells would potentially be rung regularly for service on a Sunday if bells were refurbished/replaced. Are there towers that would attract more ringers if the bells were easier to ring/sounded better. Perhaps volunteers throughout the county could help establish a list and prioritise the towers on that list.

4.5 Provide free and easy access to advice & maintenance of tower bells

- Create a paid post (full or part time) for a professional bell fletcher/maintenance (and apprentice?) person who could cover all towers to give advice to Masters and Captains, carry out more specialised tasks
- Have regular voluntary bell inspections by bell advisors
- easy access for advice and maintenance of tower bells
- Free safety and condition inspections of towers, guidance on repairs and, in some cases, financial help.
- Take advice from belfry inspector
- Grant to fund visits/repairs by bell foundry and bell hangers
- Most towers need help with inspection and maintenance of their bells. A system of yearly inspections to help the aging ringers at the towers who find these tasks difficult and don't have the money to engage a professional.

4.6 Beef up steeple keeping

- Train more steeple keepers
 - Train more steeple keepers who know how to maintain and identify faults with the bells (*)

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- Grants and technical expert training, a young person may be?
- Resource an increased number of knowledgeable persons for an inspection, maintenance and restoration team. .
- Perhaps training for a dedicated bell restoration group, to help where there are insufficient ringers to look after bells in Essex, with associated costs, eg travel, lunch expenses.
- Training steeple keepers
- Provide Steeple keeping training sessions
 - Advertised Courses for steeple keepers.
 - Training sessions for those who may be interested in helping with bell maintenance - including non-ringers.
 - Local District/Area seminars for members who look after the Bells.
 - Bell ringing maintenance YouTube channel.
 - Tower maintenance training

4.7 Provide advice and support for new project leaders undertaking restoration projects

- A resource established to help those struggling with fundraising ie applying for grants, etc.
- Provide support / advice for new project leaders undertaking restoration projects

4.8 Spend money on major projects including restorations

- Fund existing/ struggling projects that require further funding
 - We are currently fundraising to refurbish our bells and would welcome any opportunity to apply for funds to assist with our efforts.
 - Fund existing projects that require further funding
 - Any current projects struggling to raise funds with rising costs due to Covid.
 - help struggling projects
 - Help to finish off struggling projects
 - Help towers who are struggling with their fund raising
 - "We have had our bells restored, but still need ~£25,000 from somewhere. "
 - Help more with bell restoration projects, for example interest free loans or grants to cover shortfalls for projects that are 'nearly there'. We have been chasing moving goalposts to get our bells restored for 20years. Every time we think we have enough money, the price goes up.
- Refurbishment where necessary
- Generous grant funding from the Association for restoration work and new projects.
- support major fund raising in especially the small communities.
- More generous funding of restoration projects where needed, without good working bells, ringing cannot flourish.
- Restoration of bells at churches that have insufficient funds

4.9 Don't spend money on bells

- I am not sure this is the best way to spend the bequeathed funds as we already have a bell restoration fund and grants.
- I definitely would not spend the money on bells. We've got plenty of those - it's ringers we're short of!
- i would suggest that this is an area for the restoration fund.
- Complete restorations from scratch would possibly need a different funding path and would quickly deplete current funds available. Biggest 'bang for bucks' approach. .
- I don't think the money should be used for this.
- we would go down the route of recasting and rehangng existing rings but not sure this would meet the broader objectives.
- We have more bells in towers than we can ring, so no need to spend money on these for a while
- Improvng bells by restoration should be paid for via the existing restoration fund.
- None - we need more young ringers and strong bands for them to learn in.
- Not to spend most of the money on a bell restoration that becomes a White Elephant
- I believe from this money this should be kept to a minimum especially in terms of major bell restoration.

4.10 Reopen/ maintain towers where there are no ringers

- A rope repairer, some towers do their own which is great but what about the towers that no longer have a band that have not rung. These towers will become obsolete, if no effort is put in and they could have a future or maybe one bell needs repairing. Especially to start on the churches that have weddings as there should be a future for these towers.
- maintain or reopen towers where there are no ringers in expectation of visitors or raising of new bands.
- Ensure that towers have bells that first can be rung and next that they ring well.
- Restore/reopen closed towers
- Reopening closed towers
- Where incumbents are keen for their bells to be restored and rung
 - We have 16 unringable towers in Essex (I think). We could concentrate restoration and recruitment on some of those where the incumbents are keen to have their bells restored and have their bells rung.

4.11 Don't spend money on churches likely to be closed in the next decade

- Avoiding installations in remote areas or venues that have a low prospect of continuing in being beyond the next decade.
- Caution is required as many churches are due for closure in the not too distant future and there is no point in spending money if this is likely to be an outcome."

4.12 Spend money on improving access to towers

- Access to some towers is difficult, maybe try to improve access or convert to ground floor ringing
- Ensure that all tower bells are both ringable and accessible.

4.13 Spend money on ropes, muffles etc

- The condition of the ropes at many towers is poor and one area that maybe could be focussed on and perhaps even achieve discounts from bulk orders.
- Grant to help with cost of ropes, muffles, etc

4.14 Spend money on specific towers

- Perhaps concentrate on the bells that are still ringable to ensure they remain so.
- Allow applications from towers where issues have been flagged, apportion some of the funds for this purpose.
- specific church projects"
- Upgrade individual bells as necessary.
- Where there are long standing/ ongoing regular ringing practices
 - Significant investments (eg 100% funding) into bell Maintenance, repair, restoration to existing towers where major work is needed on bells / frames etc, to towers that have long standing / ongoing regular ringing practices. This would help with the retention of existing ringers, encourage existing and new ringers to join and provide better training / teaching opportunities for learners
- Where sufficient interest in developing new band
 - Locating Towers where interest is sufficient to justify assisting getting bells into ringing order and developing new bands. Most Guilds do this to a limited degree now but publicising it is lacking.

4.15 Spend money on named towers

- Rochford
 - Use the money to sort out poor rings of bells e.g. Rochford
 - Sort out poor rings e.g Rochford
 - I believe there are rings that could be vastly improved by either rehangng or refurbishment. Rochford is a case in point but i am sure there are others.
- Gt Chishill
 - Use the money to fund existing project at Great Chishill which due to rising costs has overrun budget

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- Perhaps a plaque in the church at Great Chishill to honour their bequest
- we in Great Chishill have been raising money for 24 years.
- The tower and bells at St Swithun's, Gt Chishill are currently being restored at a cost of around 115k. We have most of the funding in place but have a shortfall and are very busy trying to raise monies to complete the project. I'm not sure of the actual amount we currently need , but would would the EACR bequest be able to help us?
- [Install a ring of bell at Upminster!](#)
- [New bell for Writtle](#)
 - I am keen on the idea of a new bell to be cast for Writtle so that they can be augmented to 12, mainly due to the fact that it is the hub tower for the Essex Young Ringers. This would not only encourage more people to ring there as they would be a 12, but also to get more young ringers/new young recruits to join as this is what is most important so that bellringing remains a hobby for all.
- [Great Bentley](#)
 - Great Bentley tower needs its bells and hardware refurbished asap
 - make difficult rings (e.g. Gt Bentley) easier to ring by novices.
- [Leigh on Sea \(S District\), regional training hub with simulator installation and replacement No 6 and No 7 bell.](#)
- [St Peters Colchester frame is in need of attention/replacement.](#)
- [Sort out Harwich once and for all. Install a new lighter ring of ten lower in the tower. That would give ten bells in the NE district and would bring good ringers to the town to help the locals develop a band. Places like Harwich will never flourish with difficult bells, a limited population to recruit from and few good ringers with a reason to visit.](#)
- [Restore the bells at Widford and perhaps use them for the centre of excellence.](#)
- [Halstead](#)
 - Install ringing simulator at Halstead as church is in centre of town & we could have more practice sessions
 - "Simulators and sound control in more towers especially where there are restrictions on ringing due to volume outside e.g. Halstead
- [Great Hallingbury and Takley augmentations?](#)
- [St Saviours](#)
 - Walthamstow St Saviour's
 - Restoration of St Saviours Bells Walthamstow where Donald was a key member
 - bequests should be used to fund restoration e.g. currently St Saviours bells are not able to be rung and are in dire need of restoration. This could be done in Donald's name.
 - St Saviours (Walthamstow) Bell Tower;
 - Refurb St Saviours bells
- [freestanding tower at St Peter's in the Forest \(Walthamstow\)](#)
- [Great Tey have a long draft and would benefit from guides. There at 8 new learners at present whose progress would be improved with guides.](#)
- [Restore bells such as Rettendon to make them easier to ring for their learners, such as a re-hang. Theydon Garnon need headstock changes because only the strongest can ring their tenor. Learners will be put off by difficulty and youngsters need easy bells.](#)

4.16 Other comments

- Boxes could maybe be standard across the district they are a bit random or none.
- Most rings are in environments protect by national heritage rules, this generally limits what can be done.
- Towers have to want help, forcing it on them (or implementing projects that have no 'pull' from the locals) is of no value and is likely to be a waste, Essex has several of examples of those.
- I've not enough expertise in this area to suggest anything constructive... I find that the demand must be there to warrant investment in physical ringing assets, however I appreciate that this is a chicken and egg scenario.
- Looking after the existing bells in Essex
- BRF grants should focus on the long-term suitability for ringing and teaching; less money for any "glory" augmentation proposals.
- A fund (certain amount)
- Please do not augment existing rings above 6 bells as we have enough churches now without ringers.

5 Recruitment

| What ideas do you have for projects that we could spend money on to improve recruitment?

5.1 Engage with the wider community

– Acquire and tour with a mobile belfry

- Suppose we had a portable ring that we could take out into the community or secondary schools to raise awareness. That would show people that we're quite normal really. However recruits need to be aware that the idea of learning to ring is to ring for services and they would need to be sympathetic towards the Church if not actually a church-goer.
- Our own mini ring
- Mini ring
- A mobile peal - as seen as last Queen's Jubilee. Helps people to realise you don't have to be Christian or associated with a church to be a ringer. Can take it to events all over Essex. In fact, let's have several mobile peals for demonstrations and training all over the place. So visible!
- Invest in a mobile bell tower which could tour around town centres and village fetes to show people what we do and let them have a go. Offer wedding bells at venues which do not have bells (or even weddings not in a church)"
- Investigate provision of a mobile belfry to expose our art to the general public.
- A Charmborough style mobile belfry.
- "mini ring purchased with trailer so that it can be used around Essex in senior schools, and churches as a training and recruitment aid. It can be used before and after service so that people can see what happens when the bells are rung in the tower. . This mini ring could be named after Heath and Cobb. We have enough volunteer members that would be able to demonstrate the mini ring at schools, churches and other events around the county." We need to do something different to try to recruit more ringers of all ages.
- Mobile bells (sorry don't know their proper name) that can go to fetes etc for people to try it out.
- "A mini ring available for village fetes, etc, obviously supervised by experienced ringers.
- Use of a mobile ring across local events.
- For recruiting the young
 - "An association portable rig. A scheme to engage primary schools close to towers "
 - "take mini ring to schools"
 - Take a mobile ring to schools, for teachers to have a go too.
 - As above, mobile mini rings at school fetes and sports days.
 - Again, take a mini ring out to schools or scout camps or disabled groups who can't access traditional towers or county shows, events at Hylands etc to show the general public who we are and what we do. Dispel the myths. Take ringing to the public.
 - Mini ring to take ringing out into the community and to communities who wouldn't traditionally associate ringing with something they could do.
 - A mini ring to take ringing to the community rather than trying to get the community up a tower. Could be used by disabled people who can't access a traditional tower and schools where younger potential recruits aren't big enough to ring tower bells yet."
 - Once again organized centrally, but a group of young ringing teachers over seen by adults should be going into schools with a mini ring to give every one the opportunity to have ago then taking the promising ones to a ringing center.
 - I really rate the Charmborough mini ring, so one made from Aluminum not steel and coupled up with one of Mathew Higbys portable dumbbell would be a great addition to the recruitment team.
 - A central center with paid staff part or full time could organize a voluntary recruitment team that could hire mini rings etc and attend all manor of events over Essex which would then feed potential learners to ringing centers to be taught before being introduced to their local tower.

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- **Focus on young ringers**
 - Recruitment is not the huge challenge although targeted recruitment is much more difficult. Recent recruitment campaign (Ringing Remembers & The Millennium) recruited older ringers whereas I believe we should be looking at ways of encouraging groups of younger ringers.
 - It would be wonderful if we could get more young ringers. I'm not sure that a 73 year old has the right answers.
 - See also Youth partnering
- **Have more open tower events**
 - Open tower day(s) across Districts or the County.
 - "Local tower representation at events that welcome community members to meet ringers and have an opportunity to 'pull a rope'. Visibility is key.
 - Bursary for ""Open Tower"" days and events to drum up interest.
 - More regular tower open days, to show and experience ringing.
 - Open days (recruitment) could be offered in conjunction with events in the town.
 - More National or district open days
 - Open days
 - More ringing open days at various locations to give people taster sessions.
 - Well advertised open days at local towers.
 - More open days.
 - sponsor open days for ringing trials.
 - Having open days for new and young ringers to come along.
 - Open days
 - A "tower tours were held yesterday at Canewdon with demonstrations of ringing. Those interested were given a "pull" and new recruits gained. Publicity of such events could improve recruitment.
 - Grant to buy ART material and anything else needed for have-a-go open days
 - support church open days, village fetes with ringing try it out demos.
 - Open days, videos, special events
 - "Regular open days in specific towers/specific Districts.
 - Open days with ringing demonstrations
- **Attend local events with loaned publicity material**
 - Paying for a stall/allotment at a show ground with banners and leaflets etc. that promote ringing.
 - Resources that individual towers could borrow/be given to help raise awareness at local events - eg pull-up banners which could be used when having a stall at a local fete"
 - Targeted events such as County fairs, Freshers fairs,
 - "Support local church open days and fetes to promote ringing.
 - A stall at eg Tendring Show with leaflets and posters
 - ensure fetes and fairs away from churches are attended
- **Work with Autistic charities**
 - Work with the National Autistic Society and other autistic charities to recruit ringers.
 - Contact Autistic charities to promote and market bell-ringing
 - Youth ringing groups as well as autistic groups;
 - Work with disability focused charities especially as Donald was on the Autistic Spectrum.
- **Give talks and demonstrations to interest groups, schools etc**
 - Talks to interest groups, demonstrations, school visits, advertising. All are low cost and shouldn't dent the budget much
 - Talks and demonstrations to schools, uniformed organisations and other groups
- **Put a dumb bell in places open to the public**
 - Simulator within a high street shop on short term lease (already suggested for the recent Higby dumbbell donation)

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- Installing something like a single Higby dumb bell (rigged up in a frame/de-mountable) in places open to the public e.g. a public library, community centre etc. with bookable sessions on certain days. (One of the ideas submitted for Jo & Ken Elliott's dumb bell was to put it into a high street shop window - thinking outside the box perhaps but provided it was somewhere with suitable footfall should draw attention to the wider public which is what we still need to do).
- [Note other ways to engage with the community](#)
 - "Engaging with social prescribers - to promote the benefits of ringing in terms of mental agility as well as physical activity.
 - Filmed a competition and the built up of preparation. Then distributed. You can then suggest it as team building for corporates, to earn money possible, retain or gain all ages of ringers
 - Work with Friends of Essex Churches Trust to take part in their 'study days'.
 - "Running evening classes or adult education in association with the local authorities to recruit and train ringers.
 - Give lectures at retirement seminars provided by Essex businesses and institutions
 - Closer links to parish councils and community groups.

5.2 Focus on communication and PR

- [Create assets for publicity](#)
 - Presentation material
 - Presentation material for delivering to parish / youth / schools / A groups for example
 - Also, materials (e.g. slides and handouts) to support speakers at events.
 - Modules of information that can be tailored for younger or older audiences. "
 - Film/ video
 - A young person's video blog of their training journey.
 - An official video promoting bellringing (to all ages) - covering not only bellringing itself, but also outings/social side of meeting new people. .
 - Filmed a competition and the built up of preparation.....Plus also use it at schools or centers for people with disabilities that would be able to ring. Bell ringing is a team event , inclusive , challenging, social and good for wellbeing.
 - A short, professionally produced film.
 - Maybe doing a short film to be put out on social media platforms.
 - Bell model to demo
 - I have always thought that designing a motor controlled bell rope with no bell connected could be a good means of training new ringers. This could be installed in village halls and simulate how a bell rope behaves but without the dangers of a live bell. Having been involved with automation projects I believe this is possible but have not taken it any further.
 - Having a portable simulator with a computer to take to schools and events and developing computer programs and presentations to go along side to engage new ringers.
 - Build bell models for demonstration to youth groups
 - Better marketing materials for towers to use
 - Provide recruitment advice (or recruitment pack) for struggling bands / churches."
 - Centralised publicity eg official posters, which Towers can put up in their locality encouraging the public to try out bellringing and who to contact in the locality. .
 - Better information for towers to use to advertise for ringers. Quite often there's a tatty sheet in the church porch which looks as though it hasn't been updated for 10 years. Not very encouraging for new ringers.
 - Invest in professional marketing materials to encourage people to take up the art, for example posters, web design, leaflets. Could we promote the friendliness of the bell ringing community, the great welcome that is always given, flexibility of when you can ring and how often.
- [Advertise bell ringing](#)
 - Advertising in local magazines such as Network and Vision delivered in houses in Hutton.
 - Funding for advertisements to attract new ringers.
 - For recruiting the young
 - More focussed advertising perhaps even short exciting stories in the form of Manga stories in magazines, (how bells were used by the young person to come to the rescue).

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- Promote the "what's cool" about bellringing.
- Put advertising material out to senior schools, colleges etc.
- school promotion/marketing
- More advertisement for younger recruits, very difficult these days
- Involvement in local high streets. Shop displays in empty shops. (*)
- Increase visibility in village/town websites & Facebook pages. Training for tower captains on how to increase visibility, work with worship teams and community resource teams and publications.
- Advertising campaign
- Funds for Towers to advertise for new ringers.
- More media advertising
- [Increase media interaction](#)
 - Get a higher profile, media
 - much more media interaction promoting the attractions of bellringing
 - perhaps a higher profile in media for opportunities
 - A strong public relations officer keeping bellringing in front of the public
 - getting local press involved to do a story.
 - Working with local papers/local radio to promote bell ringing"
 - Celebrate the ringing of church bells more in social media & press to make it more mainstream
- [Engage a publicity professional](#)
 - An energetic, possible part time funded, recruitment officer that can (a) encourage local bands on best approach, (b) develop materials, (c) engage with the media professionally
 - Central resource paid for whose role is to go to churches, schools, unis with good materials to drum up enthusiasm and interest
 - Professional publicity.
- [Communication and PR.](#)
- [Publicity, Community engagement,](#)

5.3 Study other successes & failures

- [Contacting other Guilds / Associations for information about successful recruitment projects](#)
- [Most towers seem to have learners, look at individual towers to see which ones do not have bands or/and learners and see why.](#)
- [Establish where ringers are most needed. Undertake a study to establish where and how existing ringers were recruited and well as collecting data such as age. This should help towards targeting marketing.](#)

5.4 Improve visibility in the church

- [Video links in churches so more people can watch the ringing from the comfort of the pews.](#)
- [Allowing members of the church to visit the bell towers and learn about bell ringing.](#)

5.5 Organise social events

- [Social events, not just a dinner.](#)
- [Social events](#)

5.6 One-off ideas

- [A comprehensive, illustrated survey of Essex towers and their bells, published. It would become a fantastic historic resource and a great memorial for the two gentlemen. Local people who get involved in the project will all want to become ringers! I'd love to be involved in that.](#)
- [Promotions to people of other faiths.](#)
- [Bands of highly skilled ringers touring Essex towers and ringing. Opportunity to listen should be advertised to whole community and contextualised. Less skilled ringers offer refreshments / available to meet people who come to listen."](#)
- [2. Have a big co-ordinated recruitment drive across the Association. Get as many keen ringers involved as possible](#)

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so you have things going on all over the county. Advertise on tv and social media.

- "University Scholarship for ringing in Essex (named after bequestors?) to recruit members.
- Alliances and events with other charities and volunteers on common interests (Red Cross, Samaritans, Salvation Army, Christian Aid, Local Museums etc). "
- Do we have a recruitment/retention committee/group?
- Reconnection with young ringers who have learnt but moved away or on in life. Stay connected with ringers who leave, somehow.

5.7 Other comments

- Focus on retention rather than recruitment
 - In my experience, recruitment drives have only ever been successful for major National Event e.g. Millennium ringer. Even then, retention is problematic after the event. Therefore I am not convinced that significant amounts of bequest money should be spent on recruitment.
 - None. I don't think it's recruitment that is, an issue so much as retention.
 - Improve training to retain ringers
 - I'm not sure that recruitment really is the problem. To me it lies far more in the areas of education, training and retention.
 - Training is key to maintaining interest in Ringing."
- What a massive open question! You need to be careful with this because some clever individual will suggest compulsory conscription. Look I have no idea or I'd have told someone. Get a Tiktok account? Seriously though, target the middle aged. Stop focusing on young people. It won't work (speaking as a secondary school teacher).
- If ringing desirability is not raised nationally then a local effort will likely fail. We have to recognise that ringing is a niche activity, like railway enthusiasts, stamp collecting, fell running, etc. Money does not improve recruitment; the right publicity may. Ringing needs to appear a family activity. The best ringers today either learnt as teenagers 40 years ago, or at least started as part of a family/group activity, or luckily are at an very active tower.
- I am not in favour of spending any money on a mini ring!!

6 Travel and accessibility

6.1 Ensure training facilities are in places with good transport links

- Any training facilities need to be somewhere that have good transport links.
- Spread ringing centres across the county
 - Make ringing centres more accessible for everyone.
 - By ensuring that the money is used for training across all of Essex and East London and that people can access that training without dependency on cars, which young people and many others don't have. So it is vital that all investment is close to good public transport links.
 - In each district
 - Modern ringing centre in an accessible location in each district
 - Have a course in each of the 6 districts, for ease of travel
 - training days in each District for ease of travel
 - Local ringing hubs
 - Ringing "hubs" to allow teaching/practicing to happen at towers when it is not practice night. As an example, Louvres to control sound. One central ringing school like Mancroft, whilst a lovely idea, won't capture those who don't want to travel far from their home towers.
 - Training centres - more than one, so people don't have too far to travel (time and cost are disincentives).
 - Money spent on projects should, in my opinion, be spread across the county so as to reach as many people as possible. We have on occasions found the need to travel too far to be a disincentive. The establishment of more local ringing training centres is likely to be more successful.
- Set up a ringing centre in a central location
 - I like the idea of a centre for excellence, but I do appreciate that it might be difficult for all members to get there depending on its location.
 - I think a well-connected central resource would work - somewhere easy to get to with facilities which could attract groups of people (not just young people).
- In a tower Donald had strong connections with that is easily accessible transport wise
 - Donald was a dedicated ringer in the SW district and he was passionate about education and training in relation to ringing. It would be ideal to develop training facilities and towers beyond just a simulator centre which is easily accessible (transport wise, which is significant as Donald was very dependent on public transport to get around) in a tower he had strong connections with such as West Ham, Barking and Leytonstone.

6.2 Provide (free) transport to ringing centre(s), other towers and for outings

- Transport access for ringers who no longer drive beyond local area to aid older ringers to be helpers on courses [at ringing centres]
- As above transport provision for older ringers to training centres and other towers
- If only one central training unit is set up, provide free transport, mini busses
- Interest gained from the money available could be used to purchase and run a minibus, to be used for outings for groups without their own transport ie young ringers.

6.3 Reimburse travel expenses

- Young
 - Encourage parents and siblings with full grants to attend training and competition events.
 - Travelling to towers
 - what made involvement hard for my son was the cost of traveling to all the towers so maybe some sort of travel bursary scheme?
 - "Travel Bursary for young people to travel to practice nights.
 - Travelling to events
 - Sponsor travel to events
 - Travel fund to meet up with young ringers from other counties.

EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

- "The success of the RWNYS being held all over the country with ""Flagship"" towers clearly attracts young ringers - they are keen to travel and ring at prominent towers. Therefore subsidies (and I mean subsidies not full payment) for events/a weekend away (?).
- bursaries to cover expenses for students coming from far corners of the county [to a ringing centre] or some way to encourage commitment.

7 Other ideas

| What other ideas do you have for projects we can spend money on?

7.1 Improve the Association's website

- Create an online forum, where people can see events of other towers, people can post if they are short for a ringer at a wedding, or if they have a special event on and need ringers. I'm not sure learners feel included and feel intimidated about larger more experienced bands, so they never travel to other towers. We need to encourage more exploration and inclusivity, no matter what skill base someone has.
- The Association website is appalling. It is difficult to navigate and not appealing to casual browsers. Some excellent work has been done recently on the Becoming a Bell-ringer Page showing that we do have expertise within the Association to develop a more appealing and modern looking website. Some bequest funding could be spent in this area.
- Not an expert but on-line presence
- plus strengthened on-line presence
- New, modern, interactive website, completely new not revamp of the existing.
- Essex website is an unholy mess. Certainly find someone with a talent for this important resource (especially if you want to attract the younger person into the ringing family.
- Better website, including notes on ringing specific methods/ principles., the importance of knowing place bells, even in plain bob.
- Interactive website.
- "Complete rebuild of the website, professionally done.

7.2 One-off

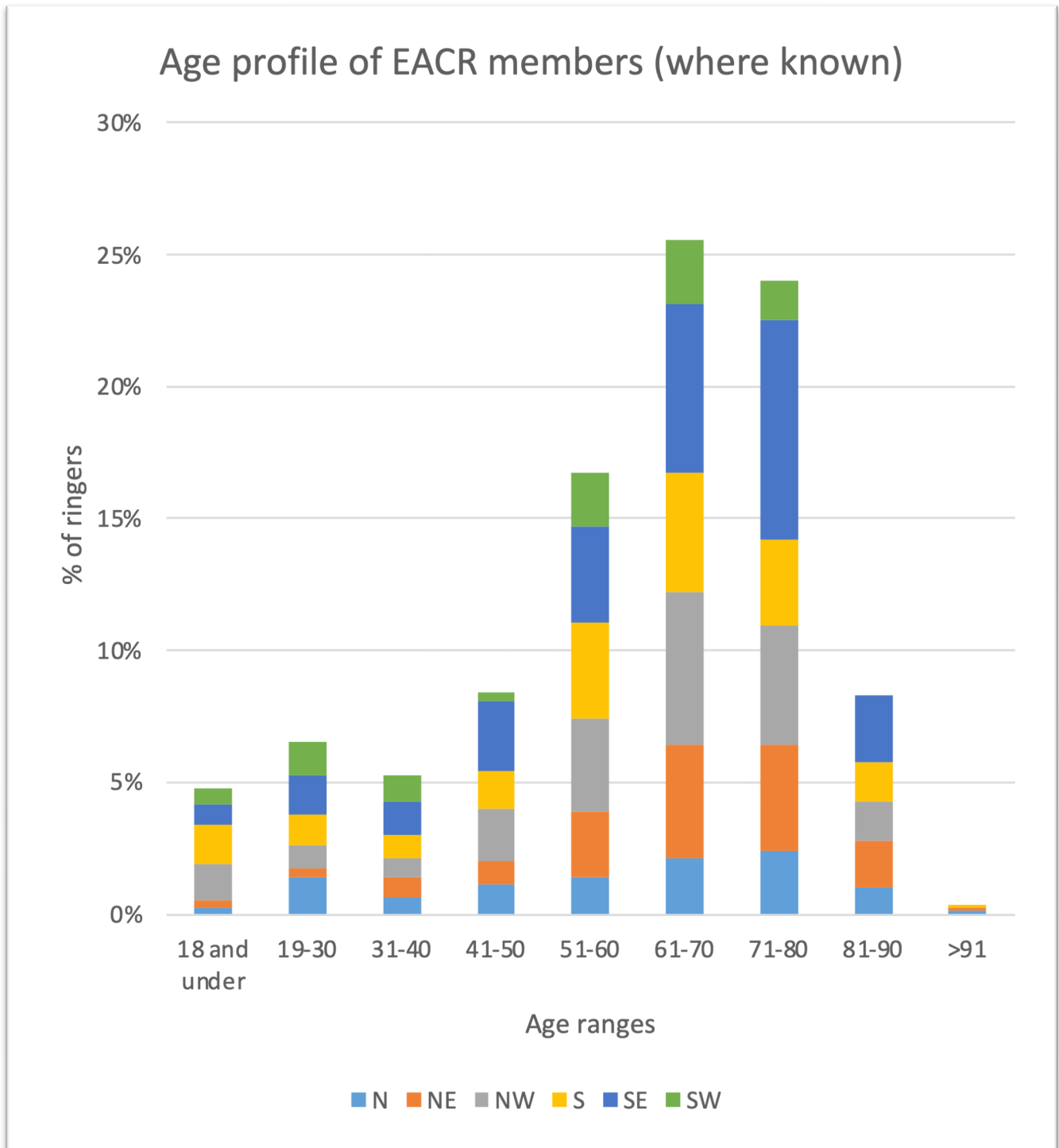
- I'd love to promote a Bell Sunday programme, similar to Christingle - look how successful that has been. Recruiting via the church is out of popularity but actually delivers the most long-standing ringers.
- Any redundant Churches for sale with Towers suitable for bells.
- Bit presumptive. I say maintenance of "closed" towers in expectation of new ringers must be important.
- Filming equipment?
- Refurbish handbells to invigorate this aspect of ringing too?
- Peal boards for towers where there aren't any but there have been peals rung?
- Make practice sessions on optional nights, ...so if you miss one you might catch another
- We have few recruits, fewer teachers and even fewer helpers to support teaching. Spending money on project will just create a larger vacuum. Make a major contribution to the Central Council ringing centre in Northampton (>~£100k) in return for a significant number of free places per year on courses. Make a significant contribution of the new CC mobile ring (?~£50k) in return for a number of free uses in Essex each year. Make an annual contribution to MRDC for the same reason. Sponsor students who have the right attitude and aptitude to use these centres (accommodation etc).
- After the incident at Rayleigh where a life was saved by the church having a defibrillator, the idea put forward to ensure ringing rooms had them should be considered.
- Bringing back some rings that are in high footfall/historic villages/towns across Essex eg Dedham
- I would be happy to support projects put in place at district level
- regular communication and support for all towers
- ask churches what help they require

7.3 Other comments

- A 600 character limit in these responses is far too little.
- Can I give this more thought?!?

Appendix E: Age profile of the EACR members

The following chart shows the age profile of the EACR members across the districts, where these details are known.



EACR Bequests Project – Bequests Survey

The detailed breakdown of the age profile of the EACR membership (where it is known), by district, is given below.

Membership Statistics

Age - Total membership		
5%	38	18 and under
5%	39	19-25
2%	13	26-30
5%	42	31-40
8%	67	41-50
17%	133	51-60
25%	203	61-70
24%	191	71-80
8%	66	81-90
0%	3	>91
	795	
	1,017	Membership of total
	78%	

Age - N District Membership		
2%	2	18 and under
10%	8	19-25
4%	3	26-30
6%	5	31-40
11%	9	41-50
13%	11	51-60
20%	17	61-70
23%	19	71-80
10%	8	81-90
1%	1	>91
	83	
	124	Membership of total
	67%	

Age - NE District Membership		
2%	2	18 and under
2%	2	19-25
1%	1	26-30
5%	6	31-40
6%	7	41-50
17%	20	51-60
29%	34	61-70
27%	32	71-80
12%	14	81-90
1%	1	>91
	119	
	125	Membership of total
	95%	

Age - NW District Membership		
7%	11	18 and under
4%	6	19-25
1%	1	26-30
4%	6	31-40
10%	16	41-50
17%	28	51-60
28%	46	61-70
22%	36	71-80
7%	12	81-90
0%	0	>91
	162	
	208	Membership of total
	78%	

Age - S District Membership		
8%	12	18 and under
5%	7	19-25
1%	2	26-30
5%	7	31-40
8%	11	41-50
20%	29	51-60
25%	36	61-70
18%	26	71-80
8%	12	81-90
1%	1	>91
	143	
	196	Membership of total
	73%	

Age - SE District Membership		
3%	6	18 and under
4%	8	19-25
2%	4	26-30
5%	10	31-40
10%	21	41-50
13%	29	51-60
24%	51	61-70
31%	66	71-80
9%	20	81-90
0%	0	>91
	215	
	235	Membership of total
	91%	

Age - SW District Membership		
7%	5	18 and under
11%	8	19-25
3%	2	26-30
11%	8	31-40
4%	3	41-50
22%	16	51-60
26%	19	61-70
16%	12	71-80
0%	0	81-90
0%	0	>91
	73	
	129	Membership of total
	57%	