



## GUILD TEN-BELL PRACTICE SURVEY OUTCOMES

We were asked at the 2017 AGM for further outcomes of the on-line survey. The results are available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-SBGRJSSN/>. Many thanks go to the 27 out of the 58 'possibles' who took the time and trouble to complete the survey and to Nick Churchman for setting up the SurveyMonkey® questionnaire.

Below are comments related to each question and the individual unidentified comments for the appropriate questions. We should remember that at the time of the survey there had been eight practices, the first two of which had 35+ attendees, a number that is very difficult for anyone to manage!

**Q1** 52% of the 27 responders had been to 5 or more practices at the time of the survey in late summer 2016.

**Q2** 59% were willing to travel for up to an hour.

We will aim to keep more practices in the central Northants area but we must make sure we do not overburden these towers. We noted that there was a very good local turn-out for the Peterborough Cathedral session.

**Q3** 78% thought that notification was sufficient.

Since then, regular individual attenders have been added to the email circulation which already included the GMC, Branch Secretaries and Ringing Masters and the tower captains and correspondents of all 10/12 bell towers. More recently the practices have been advertised in Bellboard Diary and on the Guild website Latest Guild News and Events pages.

We aim to get the programme of locations and dates further in advance now.

**Q4** There have been a range of suggestions about methods. The original combination was to aim at those who could ring Grandsire Caters well enough to try touches; Yorkshire for a reasonable range of people to have a go at, being a little easier with more internal signposts than Cambridge; and Bristol to attract those who can or want to learn it and also to ensure that we have enough to be able to ring the other methods competently!

Depending on who has attended, Little Bob, Stedman, Erin, Cambridge have all been rung – all were suggested in 'comments' The Master has suggested that he may substitute Littleport Little Surprise Royal which is like Bristol Royal but easier to learn as much of it is Bristol Major!

**Q5** 67% got enough ringing. Clearly not everyone could ring every time as not everyone knows all the methods and there were 35+ at the first two practices!

**Q6** 91% thought they received adequate or better advice and 56% good or excellent advice. Anyone attending needs to be open to advice and see Q8!

**Q7** 84% thought that aims were met. Included in the 84% were 52% who made comments, raising the balance between striking and method progress. Different people want different things from the practice, but at least it is giving a regular ten-bell practice across the Guild that cannot be obtained other than perhaps at three or four towers regularly. It also enables the ends of the diocese to meet more often than the three Guild meetings! Perhaps we need to seek further information from attenders on the balance of aims.

**Q8** This question was an attempt to assess how 'advice' was coming over. Respondents were not confined to vote for one description and the 26 responders voted 43 times. 53%

thought the practices were friendly and 35% thought them scary and in some cases these admitted to being the same people! The comments indicated a realisation that to raise standards, constructive criticism is necessary and needs not to be taken personally. Some of this is inevitably a result of not knowing other ringers particularly well or their traits. Richard Allton has run most of the practices as he was recommended as the best able to advise on accuracy of striking and quickly correcting method slips that can soon disturb the ringing rhythm for the rest of the band. Placing of the band to ensure that the best is made of the talents available is also more essential on ten bells to ensure that those improving have a sound constant rhythm around them. As someone commented, this does rely on knowing the capabilities of all those present and may seem to be a closed clique. The more often you come, the easier it is for you to be placed for your best opportunities!

**Q9** 85% thought that monthly was about right so we are keeping to it.

**Q10** asked for one item that you would want to change about the practices.

There were 24 answers. Four mentioned that the first Saturday inconveniences the same branches every month, so we shall rotate which Saturday of the month that the practices are held so as to spread the downsides.

Quarter peals were mentioned. We have considered but not decided whether to substitute a quarter peal when we know attendance will be low. This occurred *ad hoc* twice in 2016.

Attendance of around 16-20 usually gives the best balanced practice and recently that has been achieved most recently.

Since the survey was taken, another 30 people have attended at least one of the further 20 practices that have taken place, later ones having the results of this survey to work with.

Perhaps it is time for another survey to monitor progress. Simon Dixon, as Guild Master, will be directing the way forward in co-operation with Richard Allton so please support this venture.

*GHP 20.7.17*