

TROYTE RINGING CENTRE – CORONAVIRUS RISK ASSESSMENT FOR HUNTSHAM TOWER V3 – FROM AUGUST 2021 ONWARDS

Assessor: Leslie Boyce

Date: 7th Aug 2021

This risk assessment is additional to that for general risks in Huntsham Tower and may be supplemented by requirements made by the Churchwardens and PCC.

H.M. Government guidance currently indicates that COVID continues to present significant risks requiring special measures to reduce their effects: *“There are still cases of COVID-19 in England and there is a risk you could catch or pass on the virus, even if you are fully vaccinated. You are encouraged to exercise caution and consider the risks. While no situation is risk free, there are actions we can take to protect ourselves and others around us.”* This risk assessment and the accompanying set of guidelines offer measures which can help to keep us all safer while ringing.

<u>Risk</u>	<u>How are ringers affected</u>	<u>Steps to reduce the risks</u>	<u>Action by whom?</u>	<u>Date Due</u>	<u>Done?</u>
Bell installation compromised during lockdown	Bells may be difficult to handle or could cause damage or injury in any malfunction	Tower inspected, ropes, bells and clock room checked for safe operation before ringing as part of planned maintenance. A programme of regular inspections to be instituted	Contractor supported by Chris Bolt & Chris Tedman Any competent pers.	March 21 Ongoing	Y
Persons displaying symptoms	Symptoms may indicate presence of virus and therefore potential to infect others	Persons with any COVID symptoms must not attend, must get a PCR Test and notify the Tower Captain. Situation to be reviewed if negative PCR test received subsequently.	Any ringer with symptoms	For all ringing events	
Many ringers attend, making social distancing impossible	Social distancing not kept - increasing potential for virus spread	Rota of ringers for each ringing session in line with agreed TRC policy & any Govt restrictions. Number limited in ringing chamber at any one time. Length of ringing session agreed by band in advance. Recommended: 1 hr practice initially.	Tower Secretary Ringing Leader & all ringers	For all ringing events	
Doors, handles, handrails contaminated	Virus picked up and spread to other surfaces	Keyholder opens/closes and does necessary handling of keys, clock hammers, rope spider, sound control and switches. Staircase is regarded as high-risk zone. Hand sanitising used on leaving staircase at top and bottom.	Keyholder All ringers	For all ringing events For all ringing events	

Surfaces touched contaminated	Virus transferred to hands and then spread to other surfaces and to individual's face causing infection	Hand sanitiser used when changing ropes. Ringers only use own learning aids and not shared resources. Shared resources distributed electronically if req'd	All ringers	For all ringing events	
A COVID-infected person present – no symptoms at time of ringing	Virus passed to others through contact or aerosol transmission	Record of those present to be made by the Ringing Leader in the usual attendance register. Anyone with symptoms subsequently to get an immediate PCR test, inform the Ringing Leader and to self-isolate for 10 days. If test is positive, other ringers will be informed. All ringers asked to do Lateral Flow Test weekly.	Ringing Leader All ringers All ringers	For all ringing events Weekly	
Virus spread in droplets released in respiration	Heavy respiration, coughs and sneezes releases droplets into atmosphere in ringing room with potential to contaminate surfaces	Face covers are recommended on entering church. Ringers to use staircase one at a time to allow droplets to disperse between persons. Previous ringer to give "all clear" to next person to use stairs. Face covers normally worn in ringing room unless the band agree to do otherwise.	All ringers	For all ringing events For all ringing events	
Vulnerable people attend a ringing session	Vulnerable people more at risk if infected and may struggle to survive infection	Ringers classed as vulnerable are advised to refrain from attending until infection level is low and represents lower level of risk. Double vaccination is reducing risk. Young ringers take regular LF tests for school & college.	Meetings held with all ringers and concerns noted	Prior to resumption	Y
Number of ringers turning up above safe capacity of ringing room	Excess ringers will make social distancing much less effective and increase risk of spread if virus is present	Prior notification and confirmation of planned attendance required. Rota of ringers published. If number exceeds agreed safe number (10), ringers rotate turns from body of church. Practices & service ringing limited to TRC members & invited guests until open attendance agreed by members/trustees meeting	All ringers. Tower Secretary to confirm bands.	For all ringing events	
Ringer loses control of bell	Ringer may be injured by rope Risk to helper if taking control of loose rope	Less experienced ringers to be allocated bell adjacent to ringing teacher. Learner ringers not included in band, but offered 1:1 sessions on practice bell at Bampton.	Ringing Leader/Ringing Teachers	For all ringing events	

Other personnel enter the tower for maintenance etc	48-hour quarantine period on stairway breached by other use between ringing sessions	Others requiring access to contact Tower Captain or Steeplekeeper before entering tower and a record kept of the areas of the tower visited. If less than 48 hrs lapsed before next ring cleansing procedure necessary (CoE guidance)	Churchwardens to contact TC	On each occasion as required	
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A detailed set of guidelines for those attending any ringing session accompanies this assessment (see Appendix).

This assessment will be reviewed regularly in the light of changes in Government and CoE policies regarding the opening of churches and access for ringers. Due note will also be taken of guidance issued by the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers.

Prepared by: (signed)

Leslie Boyce

Agreed by Trustees at their Meeting 15th August 2021

TROYTE RINGING CENTRE – A SAFER RETURN TO RINGING IN A CONTINUING PANDEMIC. Version 4 (April 22 onwards)

The TRC Trustees have considered the risks associated with a return to ringing at Bampton and Huntsham in the light of local infection case numbers and official guidance. They are mindful that attitudes to the risks vary between individuals and that this guidance will need to be reviewed frequently as circumstances change. It may be subject to any procedures required by the churchwardens and PCCs in Bampton and Huntsham.

As a ringer at the Centre towers, we ask that you consider both your own wellbeing and that of your fellow ringers and you follow these guidelines:

1. If you are suffering any symptoms which might be COVID (Continuous cough, high temperature, change or loss of taste or smell, runny nose, sore throat, muscle pains, headache or general fatigue or dizziness) do not attend.
2. If you can take a Lateral Flow test on the day before attending a Thursday practice or Sunday ringing, this is helpful, but with the latest Omicron variant one or more of the above symptoms may appear a day or two before you test positive. If you get a positive result, self-isolate, and let Pat Hatchett (01398 331843) know. But in short if you feel unwell, stay away!
3. When infection levels are high a rota of ringers will be arranged to limit numbers present in the tower. Please let Pat Hatchett know right away if you find yourself unable to attend a session for which you were booked.
4. Please ascend/descend the stairs singly in both towers. Please wait for the keyholder to make all necessary preparations before entering the ringing room.
5. At Bampton, if **all** members of the band agree and the ventilation system is switched on, ringing may take place without facemasks. A chart is displayed in the ringing room indicating the appropriate fan speed setting for the number of people present.
6. At Huntsham, where ventilation is less good and ropes are closer together, we suggest that facemasks are worn for ringing. A band may agree unanimously beforehand to dispense with them and those with a medical exemption may ring without a mask.
7. To avoid overcrowding we will limit the number of ringers on the ringing floor to 12 at Bampton and 10 at Huntsham. If additional ringers are present, some should await their turn to ring in the tower base at Bampton or in the nave at Huntsham.
8. Please use hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the building and whenever you change ropes. The Ringing Leader will try to organise touches to avoid excessive sanitising. We recommend that you only use your own learning aids, but tower resources may be sent to you electronically.
9. Finally, we thank you for accepting these guidelines and hope you can enjoy your return to ringing with confidence that steps are being taken to provide for your better safety.

Mandy, Jenny, Sheila, Mike, Chris, Mike and Les (TRC Trustees)

(From 1st April Lateral Flow test kits will no longer be free from the NHS, but may be purchased at some pharmacies or online.)