



THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF CHURCH
BELL RINGERS

Adoption of new Framework for Method Ringing

A message from the Central Council President to Members

As you may recall, the Council Reform Action Group's (CRAG) Proposal H, which was passed at the May 2017 Central Council meeting, called for the Decisions of the Council to be replaced with a simple, permissive and descriptive framework for ringing with only the minimal detail required to maintain the historical record.

After 16 months of intensive work, involving two major consultation exercises, the Framework Team led by Tim Barnes delivered version 1 of the Framework to the Executive in January 2019. The Framework has since been reviewed by members of the Executive over the past four weeks, with questions and comments satisfactorily addressed by the Framework Team. At their monthly meeting on Sunday, 24th February 2019, the Executive voted to adopt and implement the Framework.

Here are some explanatory notes to accompany this decision and announcement:

1. Permissive and Descriptive

1.1. The Framework will take its place in the Council's rulebook as a "standard", which is a form of policy as defined in Council rule 10.4, and will be maintained by the Technical & Taxonomy Workgroup under the supervision of the Executive as stated in CRAG's Proposal H and under Council rules.

1.2. It is important to note that the Framework fulfils the objectives set out in CRAG's Proposal H that it should be a permissive document, which is not over-prescriptive, but instead describes in simple language the norms and understandings which are common to almost all method ringing performed around the world. It will inform and govern the Council's various collections and records (e.g. methods, record lengths, extension processes), including how things are recorded, classified, analysed and reported.

2. Magnum Opus

2.1. In addition to the Framework, there is also supporting material comprising examples, further explanations, technical comments and appendices. The supporting material is not part of the Framework itself, but assists in the understanding of the Framework, expands upon certain definitions and requirements, and further assists ringers in communicating about method ringing. The supporting material will be updated by the Council's Executive when the need arises.

2.2. The Framework, appendices and supporting material are combined in a single website at <https://framework.cccb.org.uk>. PDF versions of the Framework and appendices can be downloaded from this link (ref section 1.B). The rest of the

supporting material can be accessed through the website.

3. Consultative and transparent

3.1. Two ringing community consultations have been completed on the Framework. Over 40 ringers participated in the consultations, raising over 130 points between them. This feedback resulted in the team making around 60 improvements to the Framework. The consultations were widely publicised, including in the *Ringing World*, on ringers' email lists, on Facebook and Twitter, on the CC website, and by communication to all CC members and to all CC-affiliated societies. The live draft of the Framework has been publicly available on the Internet since October 2017, and the team published four articles in the *RW* explaining the Framework development. In addition, *The Ringing World* has recently been serializing the FAQs from the Framework website. This process has been an intensive exercise not only for the members of the Framework Team, but also for those ringers who have devoted many hours reviewing the various versions as they have been produced.

3.2. In short, the development of the new Framework has been undertaken with full transparency and consultation. Consultation submissions and the team's responses can be found in Appendix I (FAQs).

4. Implementation

4.1. Council rule 10.8 calls for new policies and standing orders to take effect no earlier than three months from the date of notice. We therefore give notice that our decision to implement the Framework takes effect on June 1st 2019. The Framework directly replaces Decisions D, E, F, G, I and J.

4.2. We also give notice of our decision to retire the remaining ("non-method") Decisions A, B, C, H and K, with effect from 1st June 2019. This is in accord with the Council's wishes as expressed in votes at the 2017 Edinburgh meeting and the 2018 Lancaster meeting. The Executive have reviewed these "non-method" decisions and where possible consulted those responsible for them to confirm that they may be safely retired. We are satisfied that their purposes are achieved by the Council's current objects and rulebook, although in the case of Decision H (Ringing Alliances) we will be writing to those few organisations with whom alliances have been formed to emphasise that the Council will continue to nurture these relationships and seek new ones. The latter Decisions may be replaced in due course by new Council policies if needed.

4.3. The version of the Framework which will be implemented on 1st June is version 1. The Framework Team have intentionally left some things to consider in subsequent versions, since trying to do everything in one go would have taken too long. For example, the

Framework's method extension requirements largely follow the current Decisions, but this is an area where more analysis may lead to improvements and simplification. Timing for a second version has not yet been determined, but will likely follow between 6 and 12 months after version 1.

4.4. The Framework Team will be ready to address any issues that arise in the implementation of version 1. While there's been a good level of review in the consultations, it's possible that notice of implementation may generate more scrutiny that uncovers something that has been overlooked. The Framework Team will be setting up an online forum that is open to all ringers to join, where ideas, issues, criticisms, etc can be raised. The Framework Team will use this input to inform future development of the Framework in what we expect to become a process of continuous improvement. Comments can also be sent to this email address: methods@ccb.org.uk

5. Day to day ringing

5.1. A significant amount of effort has been devoted to ensure that the new Framework reflects ringing as it is currently performed, so the new Framework should have very little impact on day to day ringing. Quarters or peals rung by the vast majority of ringers will be the same after 1st June as before.

5.2. For the more technically adventurous, who enjoy pushing the boundaries of method construction or composition, the Framework will offer both guidance and support in a way which we hope will encourage rather than stifle innovation and so promote further advancement of the Exercise.

6. In conclusion

6.1. We know, after a century of debate over the Decisions, that there will never be a version of the Framework with which all ringers fully agree. However, we believe the new Framework will be acceptable to the vast majority of ringers. We also believe it meets, to the extent possible, the CRAG mandate of simple, permissive and descriptive while maintaining the historical record, and we hope the transition from a prescriptive approach to a descriptive one will largely eliminate controversy in this area in the future.

6.2. The Executive wish to express their sincere thanks to the members of the Framework writing team. This first version of the Framework for Method Ringing represents countless hours of volunteer time, robust debate and careful deliberation of fundamental theoretical concepts.

6.3. We ask you to communicate details of the new Framework and the web links set out above among your society. If you or your members have any concerns or questions, please direct these to methods@ccb.org.uk

I commend the Framework to you.

CHRISTOPHER O'MAHONY

President

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

On behalf of the CCCBR Executive