

Hull Handbells Project

Annual Report 2020.

The handbells year splits into four very different quarters.

With the momentum of a record breaking year in 2019, a lot of ringing took place in the first quarter. The band centred around Market Weighton started to build on the foundations laid down in 2019 ringing Plain Bob Major and simple Treble Bob Minor, and the Tuesday meeting in Hull was thriving.

In the Kirk Ella / Hull axis a peal band came together with Sam Austin taking the conductor's role. The band struggled to develop a consistent style even though some peals were scored.

The Covid-19 Lockdown that started in March effectively killed handbell ringing until the end of July.

In the summer period, with the lifting of the first lockdown, the Market Weighton Band started meeting, socially distanced in Melbourne once more. Several quarters of spliced plain major, plus one of Plain Bob Royal were scored before the temperatures plummeted in October.

Then in the autumn, we benefitted from the work of the boffins, the key development being the ability to ring collaboratively across the internet. These developments, especially of Ringing Room and Handbell Stadium, created the opportunity to strengthen the handbell method ringing capability in East Yorkshire by incorporating some experienced ringers from further afield without a travelling overhead, and with no social distancing constraints. Simon Humphrey from Wetton in Staffordshire, and Hamish McNaughton from Eastergate in Sussex provided the much needed strength for us to build the capability of ringing Surprise Major methods.

The online systems are invaluable in keeping ringing skills alive, but the overall challenge is huge when compared with ringing real bells, which are also more rewarding to ring. Virtual bells, simulated sound, great persistence, real patience, and immense concentration are all part of the effort. This is all on top of learning the method thoroughly for each pair of bells.

There were 3 peals and 34 quarters rung in 2020.

The Hull Handbells project started in October 2016 so is now over 4 years old, what have we achieved?

- Over 140 quarter peals have been rung, their footnotes document significant individual and collective progress
- 8 Peals have been rung with footnotes including first peal and first on handbells; and the third Society peal of Royal on handbells
- Method ringing has moved up to ringing quarters of right place Surprise Major
- Over 30 ringers have been involved
- We have learned a great deal about the learning process

We look forward to the lifting of meeting restrictions imposed in the face of Covid-19, and the resumption of ringing that will take place.

Peter Church