

Organising an SCACR Event

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1 Overview

These Guidelines are primarily designed to help you organise and publicise your event.

The reason that communication guidelines are required is that the total amount of correspondence to the membership is limited. Typically, this is once a month to all members of the Association and once or twice a month to all members of each District.

If you need help with any of this please contact the General Secretary at secretary@scacr.org. The Secretary will either help you directly or find someone who is happy to give you support throughout the process. The secretary’s telephone number can be found in the Annual Report and Sound Bow.

It is hoped that you or someone helping you will assemble the information for publication: text, pictures etc. The publishers will publish what you give them, though they may need to reformat it to suit their medium.

Please note that it is *not* the Webmaster's or Newsletter Editors' job to write your advertisements or news stories for you! *You* need to provide the "copy" in a concise and timely manner.

2 Event Planning – In Advance

2.1 Initial event planning

Before you start advertising anything, you need to work out some basic details. Start by thinking about what kind of event you are planning (District practice, social, training course?) and what kind of venue you need (toilets, tea/coffee making facilities, kitchen, hall?). If actual ringing is included, you should also consider ease of access to the ringing room, and the "go" and ease of handling of the bells (the latter is essential for a novices' practice).

Some things to consider early on:

- Do you need **organisational help**? If so contact secretary@scacr.org
- Who will be running the event (**event manager**)?
- Do you need **helpers on the day**?
- What kind of **venue** do you need?
- Who will be looking after **publicity**?
- Do you have a **date** – and does your date clash with any other events (other Districts', Association, ART, Central Council, sporting matches...)?
- Have you worked out **timings**? People need to know the *end* time as well as the start time! What time is your venue available?
- Will there be **refreshments**? Who will be responsible for these? Decide if/when you need names (and any dietary requirements) in advance – how will these be collected?
- **Cost** – what is the cost of the event (costs could include venue hire, refreshments, travel expenses for organisers/speakers, etc) and how are you going to cover this? If you are going to charge attendees, you need to decide what the charge is in advance (will Young Ringers go free or have a reduced rate?).
- Is there any **information about attendees** that you need to know in advance, e.g. what level they currently ring at? How will you collect this?

All SCACR events must have a **risk assessment** completed when organising the event – see below for more details about how to do this.

2.1.1 How to book a tower

Tower Correspondents' names and contact details can be found in the SCACR Handbook. You can also contact a tower via the [electronic form on the website](#).

2.2 Risk Assessments and Safeguarding

2.2.1 Risk Assessments

All District and Association events **must have a risk assessment done in advance, and sent to the General Secretary** (secretary@scacr.org). Before organising an event, you should **familiarise yourself with the [SCACR Health and Safety Policy](#)** (which includes a risk assessment template), and refer to this when completing the risk assessment. Risk Assessments take into account:

- Hazard: something with the potential to cause harm
- Who may be harmed and how: an analysis of persons who may be harmed and the possible damage to their wellbeing

- Control measures: what needs to be done to mitigate the risk

Example risk assessments for various activities, which can be used as a starting point, are available to download from the SCACR website. Remember, the risk assessment is a *process* by which potential risks and control measures are identified; each control measure must have a named responsible person. The *activity* risk assessment should be used alongside the *venue/tower* risk assessment(s).

2.2.2 Safeguarding Policy

Event organisers and those running events must familiarise themselves with the [SCACR Safeguarding Policy](#). A [guide to safeguarding for bellringers](#) is also available from CCCBR; Appendix C in this document provides very useful good practice for a safe environment for young people. Under-18s participating in an Association/District event must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Any photographs/videos of under-18s must have written permission in advance from the parent/guardian. Remember, just because you're not expecting any young ringers or vulnerable adults to attend your event doesn't mean that there won't be any.

2.3 Publicity

2.3.1 Information to include

Before you start advertising the event, make sure you have decided the following:

- **Date, start and finish time** (people need to plan!)
- **Location** (give the exact address, including post-code for sat-nav – don't assume that everyone knows what you mean by e.g. "St Mary's church hall"!)
- Arrangements for **refreshments** (ask people to let you know if they have special dietary requirements)
- **Cost** and whether payment is in advance (how?) or on the day
- **Parking** (including cost or any special arrangements) and public transport options
- **How to book** – who to contact and how (phone and/or email address and/or through online form), deadline for booking; remember to ask for special requirements (dietary, access)
- **Name of the person running the event** on the day
- You will need a **short paragraph ("blurb") to describe the event** and to encourage people to attend – for the website calendar, newsletter, etc.

2.3.2 Things to bear in mind when planning your publicity

How are you going to reach everyone that you need to advertise to? Some things to consider:

- **Who do you want to come** to the event – is it an open invitation to the whole District/Association, or are you targeting particular areas/towers/people (e.g. tower captains)? Adjust your advertising strategy accordingly.
- It's best to **use as many different advertising methods** as you can, so that you can reach as many people as possible – website, Facebook, emails to members, emails to tower correspondents, posters, newsletters/magazines (see below for more details)...
- Remember to **make sure that all the information listed above is available** – don't worry if you can't fit it all on the poster or Facebook post; emphasise the key details and signpost to the event entry on the SCACR website calendar that has all the information on it.

- It takes more time, but **direct, personal invitations are much more effective than mass mailings**. So if you're struggling for numbers, try reaching out directly to people who you think would benefit – you might discover that they “thought it wasn't intended for them”!

Remember to **start advertising as early as you can** – you can announce a “save the date” with minimal details first, then follow up with more information once finalised. But be careful not to say things like “We are hoping to be able to run a practice or something, it's probably going to be on this date, somewhere in the county” – that just gives the impression that you don't have a clue and that it will be a poorly organised event! **There's no point in starting to advertise just a week or two before the event – by then, most people will already be busy on the day.**

What's the **maximum number of people that your venue can accommodate** (or that you can cope with!)? Keep an eye on the number of attendees and make sure you don't go (much) over this (one or two people are likely to drop out at the last minute).

Depending on the type of event, it may be sensible to contact your attendees about 1 week in advance to confirm final details (particularly important for e.g. training courses).

2.3.3 Ways to advertise your event to SCACR members

SCACR website calendar: as soon as the date and initial details of the event have been fixed, get these onto the website calendar – you can add more information as further details are confirmed. District Secretaries, the Publicity Officer and the Webmaster can all add events to the calendar. Remember that the calendar event details are visible to *anyone*, so think twice before including personal details such as personal email addresses.

SCACR Facebook group (any current SCACR member can join the group): anyone who is a member of the group can post in the group; posts will only be seen by members of the group, not the wider public. Posts with images are more attention-grabbing than just text. The group has around 350 members, i.e. only about one quarter of the Association membership.

Posters: make a poster and email the PDF to Tower Correspondents so they can print it and put it up in their ringing room.

District and Association magazine, newsletters, events sheets and emails are published at regular intervals - see the Appendix for details including publication dates and deadlines for copy. Please note that the number of emails sent to members each month is limited, otherwise people unsubscribe!

District Newsletter and Events Sheet: usually 6 times per year; some Districts alternate between a full newsletter and a 1-page summary of upcoming events. Events sheets tend to cover the next 2-3 months.

District Emails: in between months with newsletters/events sheets, most Districts also send their members an email with a summary of upcoming events. So each District usually sends just one email per month to their members.

Association Emails: usually monthly to all members, with a summary of 4-5 short items of news and events coming up (Association or wider, usually not District level or smaller).

Soundbow (SCACR magazine): many towers subscribe to *Soundbow*, and also a significant fraction of individual members. Bear in mind that there is a relatively long lead-time to publication and distribution (compared to the other methods listed above), so details of events need to be provided weeks or months in advance of the event.

3 On the Day

The person running the event must be familiar with and have a copy of the **Safeguarding Policy** and the **event and tower/venue Risk Assessment**.

Remember to take good quality **photos** (ask consent) during the event for social media, newsletter, website news etc. Ask someone to do a **write-up** for the newsletter/*Soundbow*/website news.

3.1 What do you need to bring?

Make sure you work out in advance what you need, and allocate someone to bring it! For example:

- **Copies of the Association Safeguarding Policy and event and venue Risk Assessments.**
- **Refreshments!** Tea, coffee, milk, sugar, squash, biscuits, cake... Does the venue have a kettle, mugs etc, or do you need to bring those too? Will you need to take any **rubbish** away with you?
- **Washing up** supplies – you may need to provide your own tea towels, washing up liquid, sponge etc.
- Sticky labels and pen for **name badges**.
- Handbells
- Exhibition materials
- Copies of *Soundbow*, District newsletters, *Ringing World*
- Training materials
- Feedback forms

4 After the Event

4.1 Feedback

It's useful to gather feedback at the end of the event or immediately afterwards, so you can find out what people found most useful/enjoyable, and if there's anything you (or others) could improve next time.

How are you going to gather feedback? A paper form and/or online form immediately at the end of the event can work well, or you could try talking to everyone who took part. Think about what questions you are going to ask. Try to keep it short – people are only prepared to spend a couple of minutes on this!

4.1.1 Follow-up with attendees

This is particularly relevant for training courses and workshops. Contact all attendees immediately after the event (within 2-3 days – don't leave it longer or people will have lost interest). Thank them for attending, remind them to complete the feedback form (if needed), and point them to helpful resources or attach electronic copies of resources.

You might also want to follow-up with attendees at a later date (3 months/6 months/1 year later) to find out what they did as a result of the training course/workshop, and how successful it proved to be.

4.1.2 Celebrate success - write a good news story!

Remember to celebrate your success! On the day itself, post photos on social media of people having a great time, and write a good news story (with photos) for the Association website, District newsletter and/or *Soundbow*. Consider writing something for the local press too, to raise the profile of ringing in the wider community and possibly gain some new recruits...

5 Appendix: Publications and their Timings

5.1 Association – Soundbow and Association “emails to all”

Publication	Issued	Input Date
Soundbow - Spring	May	1 st week of April
Soundbow - Summer	August	30 th June
Soundbow - Autumn	November	1 st week of October
Soundbow - Winter	February	1 st week of January

The content covers the period leading up to the date of issue. Articles should be sent to Soundbow99@gmail.com. “Dates for your Diary” cover Association events in the month of issue and the following 2 months. Kathy is often able to include a few last minute snippets.

The Association usually sends an email to all members once per month, with a summary of 4-5 items of news and events coming up (Association or wider, not District level). If your event is an Association level event, send the details to Steph Pendlebury (sec-north@scacr.org) *as soon as you have the details*, with a request for this to be included in the monthly Association “email to all”.

5.2 Northern District

Publication	Issued	Latest Input Date
<i>What's On</i> (upcoming events)	February	15 th January
<i>Northern News</i> (including upcoming events)	April	15 th March
<i>What's On</i>	June	15 th May
<i>Northern News</i> (including upcoming events)	August	15 th July
<i>What's On</i>	October	15 th September
<i>Northern News</i> (including upcoming events)	December	15 th November

Information for the Northern District newsletters (*Northern News* and *What's On*) should be sent to news-north@scacr.org.

The Northern District sends a **monthly email** to all District members and members from other Districts who have requested to receive Northern District communications. The email includes the events sheet/newsletter and/or details of the next event. This is usually sent mid-late month – if you have something you'd like included, please send this to sec-north@scacr.org at the beginning of the month.

5.3 Western District

Publication	Issued	Latest Input Date
Events Sheet	February	15 th January
Events Sheet + Sally Forth	April	15 th March
Events Sheet	June	15 th May
Events Sheet + Sally Forth	August	15 th July
Events Sheet	October	15 th September
Events Sheet + Sally Forth	December	15 th November

Information for the Western District newsletter (*Sally Forth*) should be sent to news-west@scacr.org or sec-west@scacr.org

Emails from the Western District Secretary are typically sent out on the 1st Saturday of the month.

Information for the email should be sent to sec-west@scacr.org.

5.4 Southern District

Publication	Issued	Latest Input Date
Southern News	January	15 th December
Southern News	March	15 th February
Southern News	May	15 th April
Southern News	July	15 th June
Southern News	September	15 th August
Southern News	November	15 th October

Information for the Southern District newsletter should be sent to news-south@scacr.org or sec-south@scacr.org

5.5 Eastern District

Publication	Issued	Latest Input Date
Look To	March	15 th February
Look To	June	15 th May
Look To	September	15 th August
Look To	December	15 th November

Information for the Eastern District newsletter (*Look to!*) should be sent to news-east@scacr.org or sec-east@scacr.org