

North West Region of HRGB

Oyez



October 2026 Issue 39

Chair's Chat

Hello all

We are starting to see darker nights and cooler weather, so I hope you all have your cosy blankets ready for Winter. Some of you may now be rehearsing for Christmas concerts and I hope they are going well. If you have any public concerts, could you let me know so I can see if I can come along?

I attended the International Symposium in Aberdeen in August and it was an amazing week. There were over 600 ringers from all over the world. It was fun but exhausting as the days were very long. The Northern Bell Orchestra and Maghull Handbell Ringers played individual pieces during the concert, and it was a great honour to participate and watch many other teams. Some played as individuals and some in large groups. The workshops were fantastic and there were so many to choose from.

I am starting to save up for the next one as it is in Singapore in 2028! I am attending a rally in Alton next weekend which is outside of the North West region but they welcome ringers from all the surrounding areas. Make sure you check the calendar in Reverberations or on the HRGB website to find out about events you could attend. It is important to support these events as if we don't get enough people, they may not be able to go ahead.

I am looking forward to the 60th Anniversary of Norbury Handbell Ringers. It is taking place on 10th October at All Saint's Church Hall in Stockport and will be great fun. On behalf of the North West Committee I wish you a great Autumn of ringing.
Kate Worthington

A note from the editor

During the summer I went to my first international symposium in Aberdeen. Whilst I was there I met old and new friends and connected with people from many countries such as New Zealand, America and so many more... One of the many reasons the symposium was so amazing-aside from meeting new people- is to play music together as a group and that was something I had not experienced before on that scale, but I would love to experience again!

As I'm sure many of you will agree, it was an amazing event organised by members of HRGB who became known as 'The Green Shirts'. The venue was perfect and the general event was superb.

The final, amazing part of the Symposium was the well organised workshops. All of mine were awesome and I really enjoyed them.

There are so many more reasons I could list but with limited time and space this is all I could fit but I would like to thank every single person who put there time and effort into this wonderful event. Thank You.

Jocie

NEXT ISSUE DATE 1ST DECEMBER

**PLEASE SEND ANY ARTICLES, NOTICES OR
QUESTIONS BY 10th NOVEMBER TO
northwestHRGB@gmail.com**



Spotlight on a committee member

In this edition the spotlight is on our Treasurer: Sheila

HOW DID IT ALL START??

Over 30 years ago, when I was young and full of energy, I saw a notice in our local Parish Magazine about an introduction to Handbells. I had no idea what it was all about, so I decided to go and see and that is where it all started.

It was fascinating, I had never heard of Handbells before, the only musical instrument I had ever played was a recorder at school, so I joined the Monday afternoon team of Dean Handbells. I was given the big bells to play, I say big but not as big as some! It is 22C and that is where my journey with handbells started. I found out that we ring with Whitechapel bells, now, I am not prejudiced but they sound the best.

Luckily, the music for the team was transposed to numbers by Margaret Benn so it made it easier for me and others who can't read music or those who could but not fast enough to keep up. I loved the big bells and, as people remind me, although we don't have the tune sometimes down in the bottom, we are still important. I got better, well I think so, and was promoted to the Thursday night team who went out and did concerts! Help! Perform to the public?!

Time, as they say, went by; my daughter grew up, some of our members passed away, I developed Multiple Sclerosis which didn't affect me much in the early days. I went away to National Rallies and watched some marvelous teams and had a lot of fun. In particular I remember one rally, it was held in a University, and after going to the toilet asked Margaret why did they have sweet dispensers in the toilets? She looked at me, what did I mean? "Well there was banana and chocolate flavours". When she told me I was embarrassed!!!!

Our team has gone from 9 regular ringers down to 7, which unfortunately means we can't ring some of our old favourites but we manage to play 2 octave music. I am still ringing, finding music, transposing said music and as a team we are still playing at WI's and retirement homes.

Sheila manages to fit handbells in around her other great passion - horses!

Here she is on Cassie and with her bells.



Norbury at Hawk Green Festival

On 1st August 2026, immediately before the international handbell symposium, Norbury Handbell Ringers we were invited to perform at Hawk Green Festival which was to take place at Marple Ridge Methodist Church. The views from up on Marple Ridge over Manchester are spectacular. Also appearing at the festival and promoting their local groups were Hearing Dogs for the Deaf, New Horizons Community Narrow Boat, Fairtrade, Marple Chess Club, Romiley Model Railway Club and Moya Cole Children's Hospice.

There was even a pig race game where stuffed toy pigs in jumpers raced across a table.

The dogs were not keen on our ringing, too high pitched perhaps, but otherwise the shoppers and browsers were very appreciative. Some even had a go and were very good.

Delicious refreshments were available and some of our team were even able to take some Homemade Pizzas for our tea.

We rang at the Redesmere Day Centre in Handforth where the clients enjoy joining in and often know all the words to the old tunes.

We also rang after a Wedding at Dunham Massey where the chief bridesmaid wanted the bells to be a surprise for the bride. Unfortunately, when the day dawned the heavens opened and although we rang as the happy couple left the church they were concentrating on getting to their waiting car and out of the rain!



Redesmere Day Centre



Hawk Green Festival



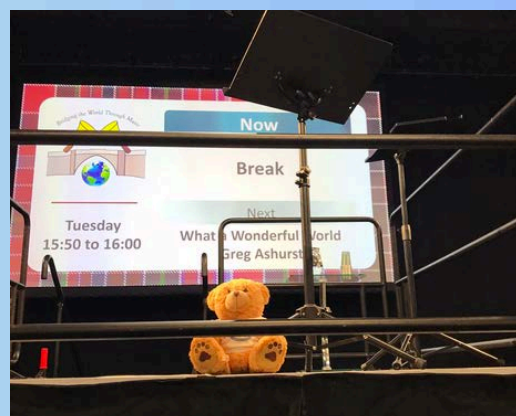
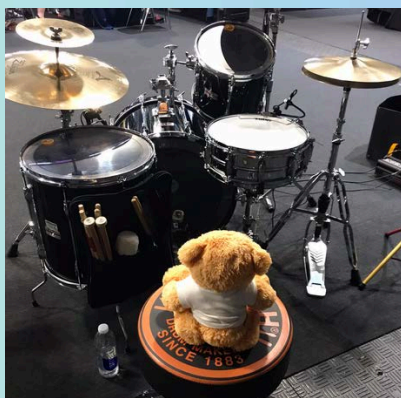
Dunham Massey



Hi I'm Jocie (editor of the magazine you're reading right now) I was given a job at the Symposium by the secretary of the North West Region (my mum!). The job was to take pictures of this guy having fun.



But I knew I would need some help so Megan and some of her friends helped with an international photo shoot of Ashton the bear!!!



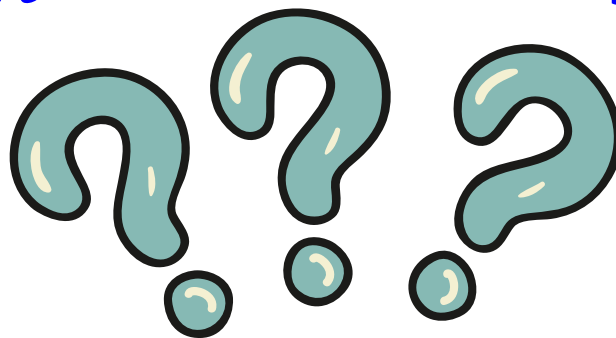


Our next regional rally will be the Spring Rally and North West AGM on:

Saturday 6th March 2027
Aughton Christ Church Ministry Centre

A day of ringing and fun awaits for teams or individuals alike.

Short of an answer



Number or Staff Notation?

There is definitely not a single answer to this question!

When you start to investigate handbell music you realise quite quickly that notation can vary dramatically from team to team. 'Numbers' aren't always the same numbers....some teams use letters and I've even heard of 'telegraph pole'...who knows!

Basically, whatever works best for your team. Numbers are the easiest to start with simple music but don't be put off by trying staff notation. It does certainly help though if you have someone in the team who can highlight or mark up notes in different colours.

Then there is always the question of which colours to use....!

There is a huge amount of music available to download for free by HRGB members only on the HRGB website.

If your team already has music in a particular notation, I know from experience that it can put people off to try to change that notation so you have to decide if it is worth it or not.

Ultimately in most handbell teams the most important thing is to have fun and enjoy spending time with your team mates, playing music you enjoy.

And if you have the chance to try a notation you are unfamiliar with....go for it!



EVENTS

Dates for your diary:

2026

October 10th 2026

Norbury celebration rally

2027

March 6th 2027

Spring Rally and AGM at Aughton (same venue as this year)

April 9th - 11th 2027

HRGB National Rally, Harrogate (all current details on website)

August 2nd - 7th 2027

HRGB National Residential Ringing Week, Sheffield (all current details on website)

Please do remember to send through any dates of concerts or events which you are involved in so we can add them to our list!