



“Dear Correspondent...” or Organising an Outing

Presented on the Bradfield Ringing Course, August 2023

Outings, peals, quarter peals, training courses; they don't just happen!

All the above are great!

But, they do take someone to pull them together

And this is why you are here, right? 😊





“I’d like to ring at Lower Marshpuddle,
but I’ve never had the opportunity”

Well, now you can! This is an amazingly common reason people do organise events! The below are also common reasons given:

- ▶ Because a band of ringers wants an afternoon out
- ▶ For groups who meet occasionally (e.g. Social Media, Ringing Room)
- ▶ To ring at a different tower (tower grab; family connection; to gain experience; to ring on more/fewer bells; historical interest....)
- ▶ Because they are asked to
- ▶ Because nobody else will
- ▶ Because they enjoy it!



Great! Idea forming! I'd like to arrange a small outing, which will include Lower Marshpuddle! What do I do next?..

Excellent! You have a plan; the seeds have been sown! Now, all you need is:

- ▶ A date
- ▶ Towers
- ▶ And people!

The planning!

Now for the fun bit! Planning the itinerary, booking towers, getting the timings right!
Points to consider include:

- ▶ What, Why, When
How, Where, Who?
- ▶ What are your band's capabilities?
- ▶ Six bells? Eight? Ten?
Twelve? A mixture?
- ▶ Whole or half day?
Lunch break?
- ▶ How many towers?
- ▶ How far away from home?

Six Key Questions



I keep six honest serving-men.

They taught me all I knew;

***Their names are What and Why and
When and How and Where and Who.***

Rudyard Kipling

Indian-born British writer and poet

Setting a date



This is the first challenge! But, as the organiser, you have the ultimate say over this! However, things to consider when setting the date include:

- ▶ How far away the date is – to attract maximum availability, it is good to plan **at least** a couple of months in advance!
- ▶ Are there any other events, such as weddings, other outings, Association or Branch Events, etc., planned for that day which may detract people?

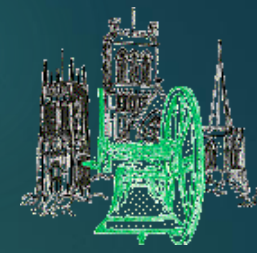
Getting Ringers



A day won't happen without ringers! And this stage needs to be done at the same time as deciding a date.

- ▶ Who is your audience?
- ▶ Make sure you have enough interest/commitment to run the outing before booking anything
- ▶ Decide a date that suits as many as possible.
 - ▶ Once finalised, make sure it gets put in the diary!
 - ▶ If practical, you might like to give people a choice of two or three dates and see which one is most popular. (A site like Doodle Poll is free and easy to use).

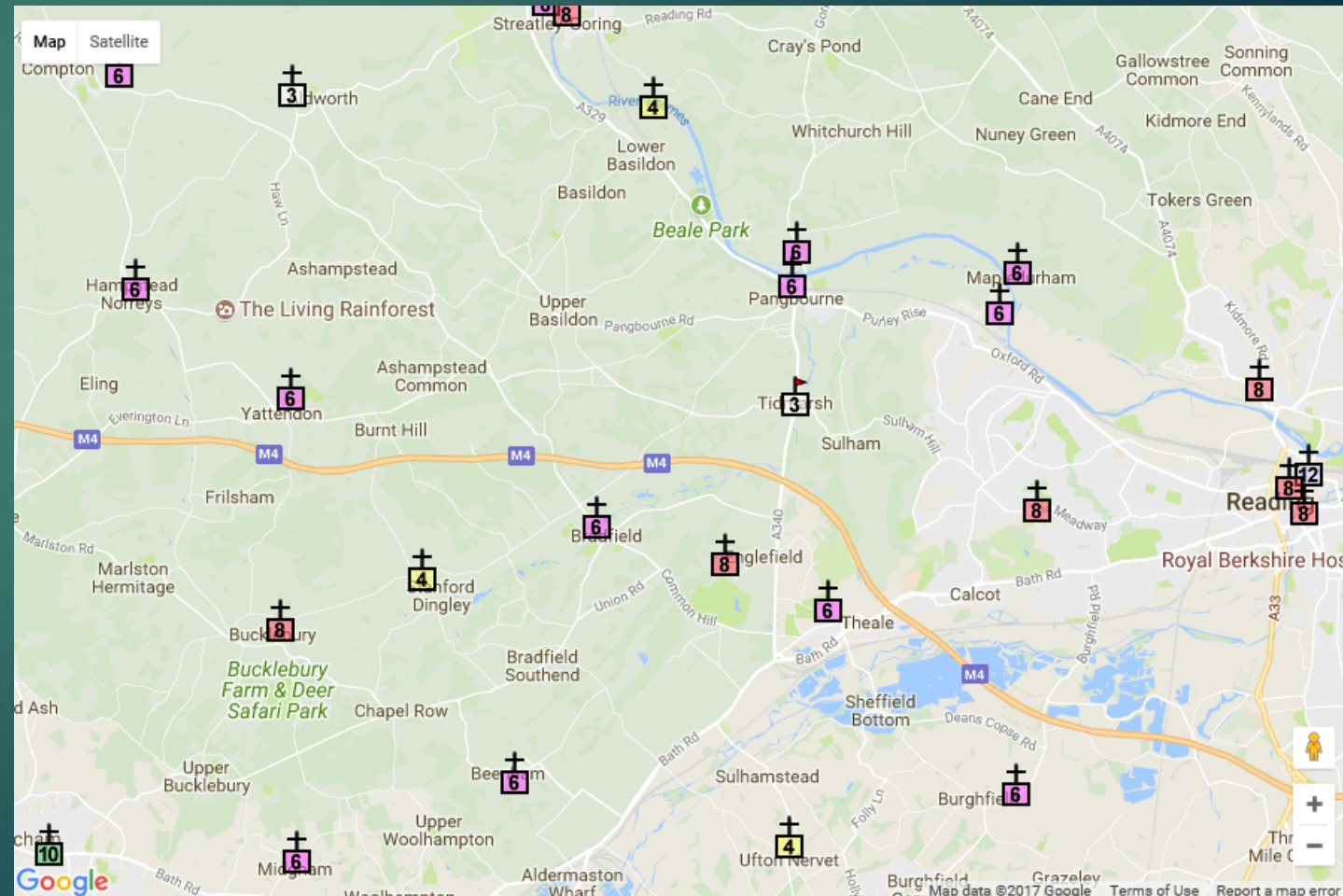
Planning an Itinerary



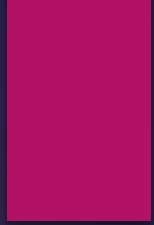
The fun bit! Deciding where to go is part of the adventure! And, knowing that you want to start at Lower Marshpuddle, you can plan your outing around that!

- ▶ Dove Map (or similar)
- ▶ Association Report
- ▶ Local Knowledge
- ▶ Tower Requests from Others!

Remember, as the organiser, you have the power over which towers you go to! 😊



Planning an Itinerary



Once you have a plan for an itinerary, put it into some sort of list (as below). I find colour coding helps this bit – you will see why later!

There are some considerations you should take into account when planning the trip:

- ▶ Know your audience! This will affect such logistics as the number of towers visited, and the range of bells (six/eight/ten, easy or tough bells)
- ▶ Distance between towers and distance from home
- ▶ Anything different – e.g. “joker” towers!
- ▶ Timings – Allow 45 minutes for a five/six, an hour for 8+. Then ~30 minutes between towers for travelling (a buffer if you overrun!)
- ▶ Transport – Cars? Buses/Trains? Walking?

Friday 4 August

10:00 Bryanston (8, 17cwt)

11:15 Blandford Forum (8, 20cwt)

Lunch

13:30 Shaftesbury (Cann) – (4, 6cwt, Steel Bells) *

14:45 Fontmell Magna (6, 14cwt)

16:00 Iwerne Minster (6, 14cwt)

** I need to know in advance if you plan to visit Cann*

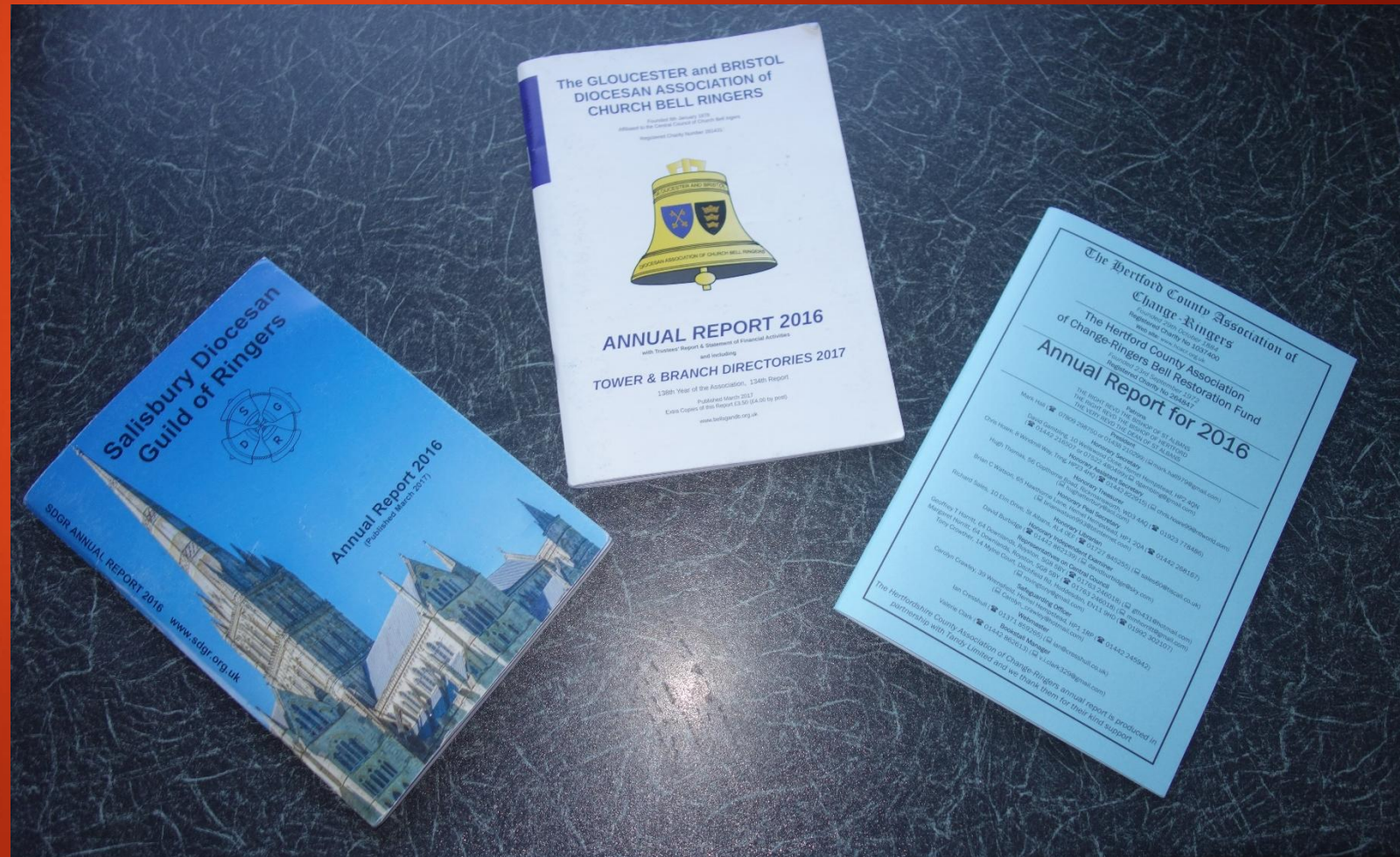
Tower Donations: £1 per person per tower, OR £5 for the whole day.

Booking the towers

So now you need to make contact with Lower Marshpuddle, and the other towers on your wish list, and ask for the bells on Day X at Time Y.

Great! We're in the same Association! This shouldn't be too hard!

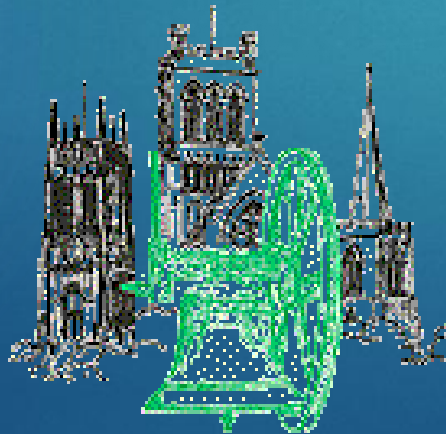
- ▶ Consult the Annual Report
- ▶ Find contact details given on relevant Branch page
- ▶ Skip the next slide! 😊



But Lower Marshpuddle is in the Muggle Association – and I don't have an Annual Report for them! Now what?

Contact details are often quite easy to come by; especially today with the wonderful world-wide web! Other places you could look include:

- ▶ Association Website – and, if unsure what Association, consult Dove! ☺
- ▶ Branch/Tower Website
- ▶ Church Website
- ▶ Ask a friend (AKA: Local knowledge!)
- ▶ Ask on Social Media (e.g. Facebook)



Marston Bigot, Frome Branch



Photograph Copyright © Helen Parkin

Place:	Marston Bigot St Leonard
PostCode / Grid Ref:	BA11 5DE / ST755449 on Landranger Map 183
Tower location:	Use Dove GoogleMap , or Dove OS Map
Bells:	8
Condition:	Overhauled 2003 by Matthew Higby
Tenor:	7-0-21 in B
Bell details:	see Dove
Peals:	See peals.co.uk for full details since 2005 (and list since 1985) See Felstead Database for complete list
Sunday ringing:	By arrangement.
Practice:	Thursday (1st & 4th) 7:45pm.
Contact:	Helen Parkin, Foghamshire House, Foghamshire Lane, Trudoxhill, Frome, BA11 5DG
Telephone:	(01373) 836509
Email:	Helen Parkin

But I cant find any sort of contact details for Lower Marshpuddle!

This isn't as uncommon as you may think! Maybe there are no local ringers; maybe the Vicar is the prime contact for any requests; maybe the local doesn't want to give their details!

Alternative contacts include:

- ▶ The Branch Secretary
- ▶ The Vicar



“Dear Correspondent”: Asking for the towers!

Super, I have a few details and a couple of names to try now! 😊 But who do I approach first?

The tower correspondent/secretary is usually first port of call for enquiries

If this is not possible, the Tower Captain or Ringing Master is a good alternative

Nowadays, email addresses and phone numbers are the most commonly given details. Few people write letters – although it can be done!

“Dear Correspondent”: Asking for the towers!



When asking for the tower, be it by email, phone, or letter, remember to include:

- ▶ The date
- ▶ The time
- ▶ The place
- ▶ Contact details for you!

Bell Ringing at Lower Marshpuddle

To lowermarshpuddle@muggledgr.org

Bell Ringing at Lower Marshpuddle

Dear Correspondent,

Would the bells at Lower Marshpuddle be available for a ringing outing on Saturday, 23rd September, ringing from 10 - 11am.

I look forward to hearing back in due course. Many thanks in advance for your help

Kind regards,

Simon Edwards
Swindon, Wilts
Mobile: XXX

Hopefully!....



All being well, the towers will come back as a yes, and they are looking forward to welcoming you! 😊

This being the case:

- ▶ Mark as confirmed on your list – this is where another colour is very handy! 😊
- ▶ Take the contact details – you will need them again!
- ▶ If by email/letter – file this away safely for use nearer the time!

Friday 4 August

10:00 Bryanston (8, 17cwt)

11:15 Blandford Forum (8, 20cwt) – TBC

Lunch – The Red Lion, Shaftesbury

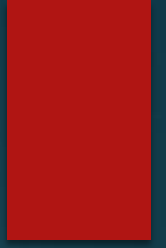
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16:00 Iwerne Minster (6, 14cwt) – TBC

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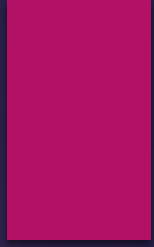
If the tower says no....



They may have a wedding; they may not be able to accommodate you at 2pm but could at 11am; they may not have anyone to let you in! Sometimes, the bells will be unavailable!

- ▶ They may be a flat no. In which case, you will just need to find an alternative tower 😞
- ▶ They may offer you a different time - this is handy, but may involve you having to change the timings at another tower to manage this
- ▶ Or maybe they can have you, but special or different arrangements may be in place (e.g. instructions on where to find the key)

Getting there!



Pretty though Lower Marshpuddle is, some of our non-driving members – in particular our younger members! – may struggle to get there! There's one bus a week, and the nearest station is four miles away! Help!

Sadly, this is only too common – especially when young ringers (who don't drive!) are present. Some practicalities might include:

- ▶ Travelling together (Lift Sharing) – *ensure safeguarding procedures in place...*
- ▶ Making sure the first and/or last towers are in easy distance of a public transport link (e.g. station)
- ▶ Use a minibus

A lunch break?!

Much as we love the ringing, food (and social time!) is a big part of an outing – especially if it is a day trip! Allow **at least** 1½-2 hours for lunch!

- ▶ Pubs are great! What better than a hearty pub lunch and a pint over a social lunch!
- ▶ If you are coming as a group, phone ahead! Make sure they are serving food, and can accommodate you. Book a table and pre-order food if possible, especially with a large party!
- ▶ Considered a picnic? Great for Summer outings!
- ▶ Own Arrangements – everyone can sort themselves out, one less thing for you to worry about; albeit less social.



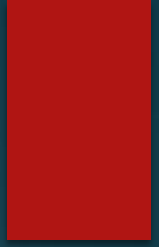
Other Practicalities to Consider



While we're on the subject of logistics, these are a few other things that are useful to consider:

- ▶ Rings in a town – allow extra time for car parking, congestion, one-way systems and people getting lost!
- ▶ Make sure you have a good idea where the towers are – many churches are well-hidden!
- ▶ Would your band like any additional breaks – such as an afternoon tea stop?
- ▶ And do you have enough “strong” ringers to support you?

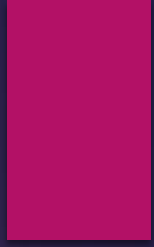
Pulling It All Together!



Now for the niggly little bits; it's make or break time! A week before the outing, it is good to:

- ▶ Send a confirmation email to everyone coming, re-iterating the towers, times, lunch stop, etc. Make sure you have enough people coming.
- ▶ Phone/email the towers, to check you are still expected. Lockouts are a nightmare! Take a contact name/number in case of difficulty on the day!
- ▶ Chase food orders for the pub
- ▶ Make sure everyone has transport!
- ▶ Allocate Ringing Masters to run towers
- ▶ Sort Tower Donations

And on the day



And the day is here! Enjoy Lower Marshpuddle, and the other towers you have chosen to visit. Hopefully the sun will shine, a good number of people will turn up, as will all the tower keys, and you will have a splendid day 😊

Some pointers below may be useful – a lot of these will also apply to the people running the towers, of course:

- ▶ Stick to the band's capabilities – good striking is more important than method complexity
- ▶ Ensure everyone gets a fair go
- ▶ Is everyone accounted for – e.g. nobody has been left behind!

Arranging Quarter Peals, etc.



Perhaps you would like a quarter peal at Lower Marshpuddle; maybe you would like to make a day of it Quarter Peal days are great fun – you can ring four quarters and still have a lunch break between times! A lot of the above applies to the arranging too!

- ▶ However, you only need X ringers. Quarter peals and peals tend to be more “Invitation Only” affairs
- ▶ Among those ringers, you will need a Conductor
- ▶ Make sure the tower(s) know it is a quarter peal rather than an outing!
- ▶ Of course, you will need to tell your ringers what the methods are. And if someone drops out, you will need to replace them!

Logistics for Quarter Peals



Again, fairly similar to an outing, but, in some respects, easier and less hassle!

- ▶ Know who your band is, and their capabilities.
- ▶ Is there anything anyone would like to ring – maybe David wants to ring his first quarter on the treble!
- ▶ Timings – allow an hour per tower, and the 30 minutes travel time
- ▶ How many towers, the number of bells, the methods, etc? Again, this is dependent on your band
- ▶ And have you got a Conductor?

Confirmation for Quarter Peals

Similar format to the general outing – but different too! You know exactly who is ringing, so you can list the band. And a conductor. And a treble and/or tenor ringer if these bells have been pre-booked!

- ▶ List the towers and times as normal
- ▶ Note the method(s) if known, with a conductor (if allocated)
- ▶ List the band, and note any allocated bells (e.g. treble)

Quarter Peals - 23rd September - Confirmation

To

Bcc Willy Wonka ✕ Postman Pat ✕ David Beckham ✕ Basil Fawlty ✕ Desperate Dan ✕ Harry Potter ✕

Quarter Peals - 23rd September - Confirmation

Dear All

Thank you for agreeing to ring in the quarter peals next Saturday, 23rd September. Towers, times and bands are:

10:00 Lower Marshpuddle - Grandsire Doubles
Simon Edwards, Willy Wonka, Postman Pat, David Beckham (1), Basil Fawlty, Desperate Dan (C)

11:30 Upper Marshpuddle - Plain Bob Minor
Simon Edwards (C), Willy Wonka, Postman Pat, Daniel Radcliffe, Basil Fawlty, Desperate Dan

Lunch afterwards at the Red Lion in Little Whinging

Any problems, please let me know. See you there!

Thanks,

Simon

Safeguarding

Whether an outing, quarter peal or training course, safeguarding is important to consider, and especially when you have <18s or vulnerable adults in your group.

Consider:

- ▶ Have you got DBS checked adults (both for ringing and transport)?
- ▶ Some towers may require that your group (leaders and/or adult members) have undertaken relevant CofE training
- ▶ Do you have a safeguarding policy (not always required, but often helpful)
- ▶ Does the tower **know** you have <18s in your group? **Be clear if you do.**
- ▶ Do all your ringers know the basic safeguarding rules/requirements?
- ▶ Do your young people know who to talk to in case of problem or concern?

An example email for booking a tower is provided on the next slide.

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Bell Ringing at St Michael, Lower Marshpuddle

I am arranging a week's ringing trip (our annual Summer Tour) for The St Thomas's Guild of Bell Ringers, and wondered if it might be possible to book the bells at St Michael, Lower Marshpuddle as part of the week? If possible, might I request permission to ring on **Saturday, 19th August**, from **5:00-5:30pm**.

I should also let you know, in case required when seeking permission to ring, that The Guild will include some under-18s in our party. The group leaders (of which I am one) do hold valid DBS checks, and I would be very happy to provide copies of these, or the Guild's safeguarding policy, if that would be helpful at all.

Best wishes,

Simon Edwards
Swindon, Wiltshire

Send         



So to sum up!



And that's all there is to it! Some outings take more work than others, but this should cover most basis. Remember:

- ▶ The “Six Serving Men” – What, Why, When, How, Where, Who
- ▶ Purpose and Audience
- ▶ Communication!
- ▶ Niggly logistics and safeguarding!

Remember, it is in your hands! 😊