

Diversity in Ringing... Woke or What?

Chris Sharp

Equality & diversity

- Diversity and its advantages.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- Drivers of inequality.
- Some concepts associated with promoting equality & diversity.
- Women in Ringing.
- Where are we overall?

Equality & diversity... Why bother?

- Equality of opportunity... a fundamental right.
- Significant under-representations should be questioned.
- CCCBR Strategic Priority 1.
 - *Find alternative long term sources of recruits who have the potential to be good ringers.*
- CCCBR Strategic Priority 2.
 - *That no ringer should hit a barrier to their own progression.*
- Oh... and it's the law!

What is diversity?

- The degree to which there is variation in any given population.
- The degree to which different quarters of society are represented in a given population.
- The extent to which any group is represented in a given population.

Diversity... example characteristics

- **Personal characteristics** e.g. Gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability status, education, accent.
- **Worldview** e.g. Philosophical beliefs, political standing.
- **Organisational** e.g. Ringer, quarter peal ringer, call-change ringer, conductor, peal ringer, ringer's tea maker, composer, teacher, steeple keeper, restorer, historian, administrator, social organiser, handbell ringer, professional expert, tower captain, organisational leader, PR manager, Sunday service ringer, learner.

Diversity... the advantages

- Recruitment & retention
- Innovation
- Role models
- Skills

Equality Act 2010

- Consolidated all previous equality legislation.
- The concept of equality is controversial and not universally accepted.
- Two concepts are central to the individual rights part of the legislation.
 - Protected characteristic
 - Prohibited conduct

Protected characteristics

- The Equality Act identifies a number of protected characteristics:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage & civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation

Prohibited conduct

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Failure to make a reasonable adjustment (to aid a disabled person)
- Harassment
- Victimisation

Commission is relatively rare, omission is more complex, subtle and frequent.

Drivers of Inequality

- Prejudice

- Harvard Implicit bias

- Stereotyping

- Stereotype threat

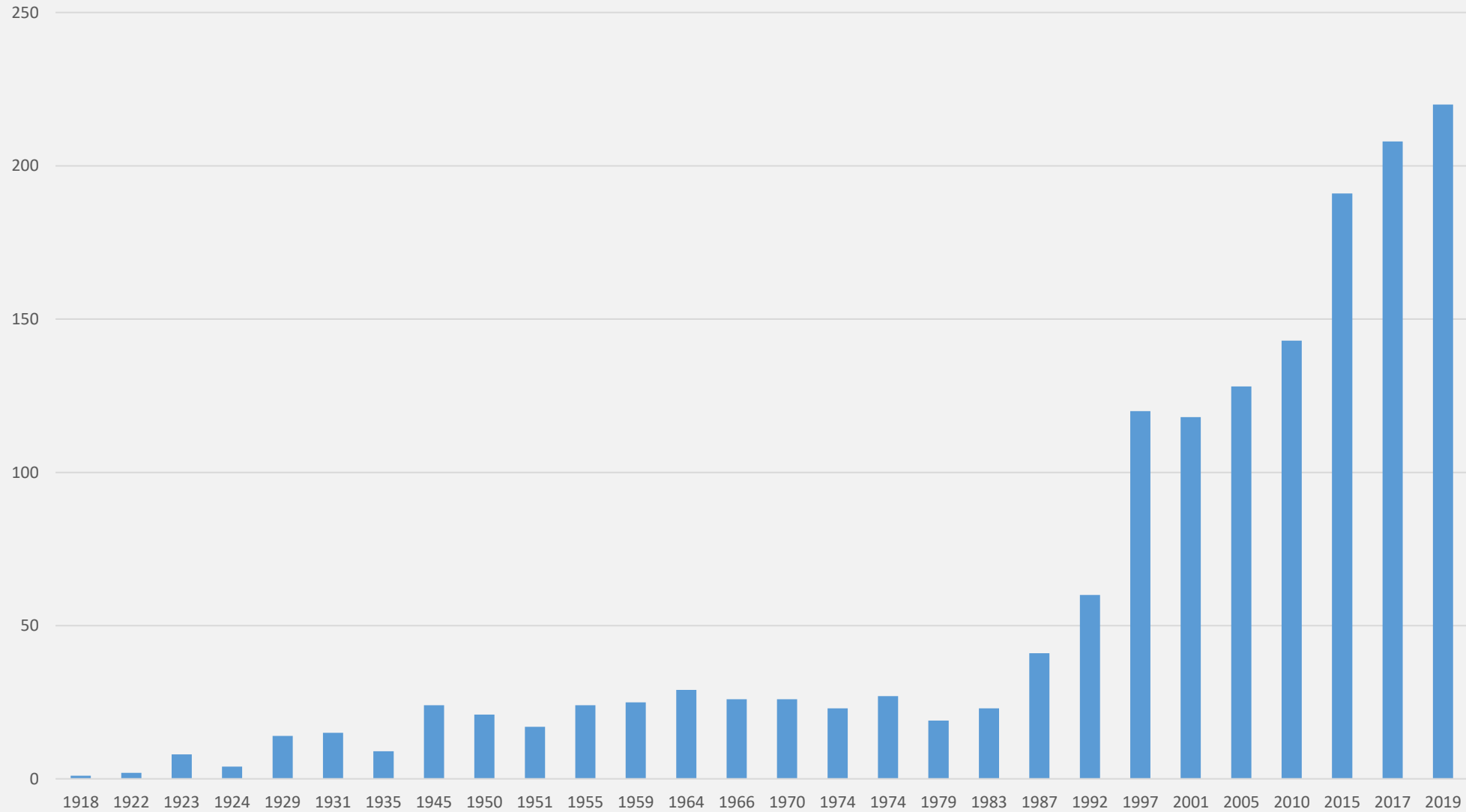
- C M Steele, “A Threat in the Air: How Stereotypes Shape Intellectual Identity and Performance”, American Psychologist, June 1997.

Example story from a female ringer. Stereotype threat alive and well!

“At a branch practice I attempted to ring a heavier bell than I was used to in a method. I didn’t completely mess up but it certainly left lots of room for improvement. Afterwards a few of the ‘kindly’ men present said things like ‘that was a bit too big for you’. I felt a bit embarrassed and decided I would stick to the light bells. That was until later in the same practice when a man who was also fairly inexperienced rang it and made a complete mess of it. The eye opener for me was the comments he received: ‘Well done – a few more goes and you’ll have it’ and ‘Have another try later – nearly there.’”

From Women in Ringing 2020

Number of women in parliament



Startling inequality can often be overlooked and seen as 'normal'.

(Emperor's new clothes)

Doing something significant is usually required to make a permanent shift in culture and outcome.

Data is a necessary pain!

Data

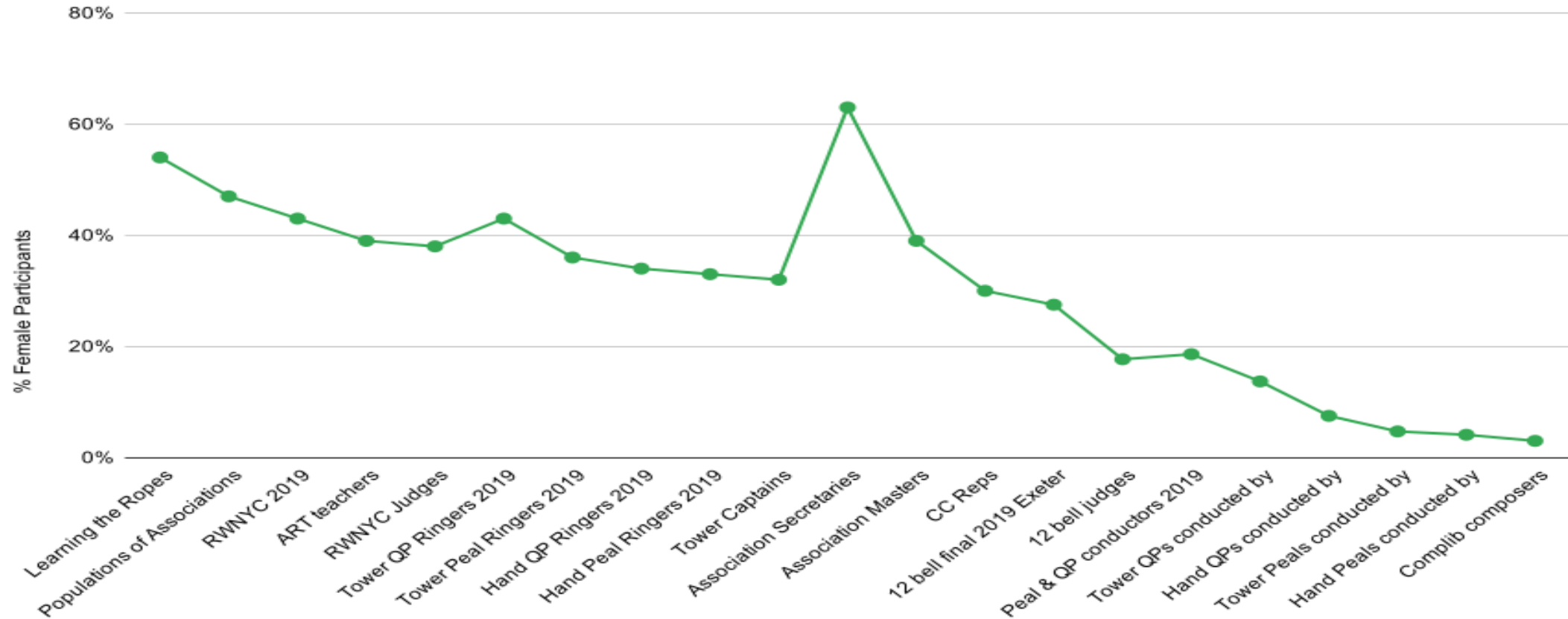
- The collection of data can be controversial and should be done on a voluntary basis, collected directly from the subject and in accordance with the GDPR.
- Without data significant under representations are.....
 - Not clearly seen
 - Not fully understood
 - Not monitored

Women in Ringing Group

Julia Cater, Elva Ainsworth, Kira Chase, Dorothy Hall, Bryn Reinstadler,
Tina Stocklin, Lucy Warren

Ringings's Leaky Pipeline

Ringings's Leaky Pipeline



RW 13th November 2020. Women in Ringing Group.

“When my husband and I walk into a tower as visitors, he is invited to call touches, asked if he’s in charge at his home tower and of course offered the tenor immediately, before they’ve any idea of his or my ability”.

Women in Ringing 2020

“What I generally find, everywhere I go, is that where a male is running the practice, he automatically invites another male, usually one round the back end, to call even plain courses. Even online in Ringingroom.com.”

Women in Ringing 2020

2023 The Year of the Female Conductor

- Proposal to encourage Societies and leading conductors to encourage more women to conduct.
- Concentration on quarter peals.
- Data is problematic

What can we do to encourage greater diversity in conducting?

- **Safe place to conduct.** Hold a ringing practice specifically for practicing conducting. Concentrate on lifting confidence and make it especially for those with little or no previous experience.
- **Develop a course** specifically to address the building of confidence in conducting taking participants through both emotional and technical aspects of conducting including aspects of leadership and conducting.
- **Celebrate and make a fuss of** conducting achievements....e.g. first quarter/peal as conductor. Maybe celebrate achievements at an earlier stage.
- **Mentoring.** Consider setting up mentoring scheme in the Society to provide a formal route for experienced conductors to encourage and provide technical help to budding conductors. This could range from tips on when to make calls, observation bells, choosing and remembering compositions, introduction to coursing order, how to improve striking, how to constructively seek improvements in ringing etc. Ask that all leading conductors mentor at least one different female each year.

What can we do to encourage greater diversity in conducting?

- **Monthly Society/tower female conducted quarter/ peal.**
- **Monthly Society/tower all female quarter / peal.**
- **Branch coffee morning for women** to share conducting experience, fears, advice etc.
- **Set and publicise a target as a society** for numbers of female conducting quarters/peals in the year. Try and make sure it's on an upward trajectory.

What can we do to encourage greater diversity in conducting?

- **Agenda item.** Keep female participation in conducting on the agenda of Branch/Society meetings so achievements can be enjoyed and suggestions made for improved practice.
- **Branch and AGM meetings.** Try and aim to balance conducting between males and females.
- **Quarter peal day.** Try and achieve a gender balanced quarter peal day so that participants and conductors are as near to balanced as possible.
- **Encourage and support Tower Captains** to embrace the need to empathetically introduce conducting as a distinct skill and particularly the need to encourage female participation in conducting. All of the suggestions above such as gender balanced conducting opportunities could potentially be applied at tower level.

What can we do to encourage greater diversity in conducting?

- **Heavy bell ringing.** Conducting is often done from back bells. Encouraging and supporting females to ring big bells effectively will of course help (see Julia Cater's article in the RW 13 Nov 2020 p 1114).
- **Calling from the front end.** Specific instruction and guidance on how to conduct from any bell should be offered.
- **Give people warning** to try something new so they have time to look it up and feel secure. Give people encouragement if it doesn't go right.

Equality & Diversity...how do we fare in ringing?

- Female/male participation?
- Ethnic origin?
- Disability?
- Religion? (The Equality Act 2010 protects those with no religion as well as those of faith).
- Age?
- Sexual orientation?

Are there E & D issues to address in ringing?

- What is in plain sight.
- Unfortunately in society at large it is rare we find no problem **when we look.**
- BUT data needed... and that opens up a debate around the collection of data.
- The total people resource contributing to the exercise is not only measured by the total number of ringers but also by the extent to which each individual is able to contribute.