

Setting up virtual ringing for your tower.

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Version

Version 3 31st May 2020. Additional trouble shooting tips and documentation of the new chat facility.

Introduction

This document tells you how to set up a virtual ringing session - and a virtual meeting to support it - for your tower. The document covers:

- The equipment you will need
- How to set up a virtual meeting using the Zoom tool
- How to set up a virtual ringing session using the Ringing Room website ringingroom.com

Note that other sites and conferences are available but are not covered in this document.

What equipment do I need?

Essential: A device to get on the internet

Usefulness	Equipment
Ideal	PC, Laptop
Less ideal	Tablet (e.g. iPad)
Least Ideal	Smartphone (e.g. iPhone, Samsung Galaxy)

Essential: Microphone and Speakers

Usefulness	Equipment
Ideal	Headphones
Less ideal	Microphone and speakers

Desirable: Access to a camera

If you want to see everyone else in the virtual meeting, then you will need a camera. Most modern computers have one built in; if not, a camera can be obtained at a reasonable price. Using a USB connection for your camera makes installation easy. However, audio is all you need to support virtual ringing so don't worry if you haven't got a camera.

Essential: A working Email address

This is to allow communication for virtual meetings.

Essential: Modern Web Browser

You will need one of the following web browsers: Chrome, Safari or Microsoft Edge. Others are available but one of the three above is recommended.

Chrome can be downloaded at <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

Safari can be downloaded at <https://support.apple.com/downloads/safari>

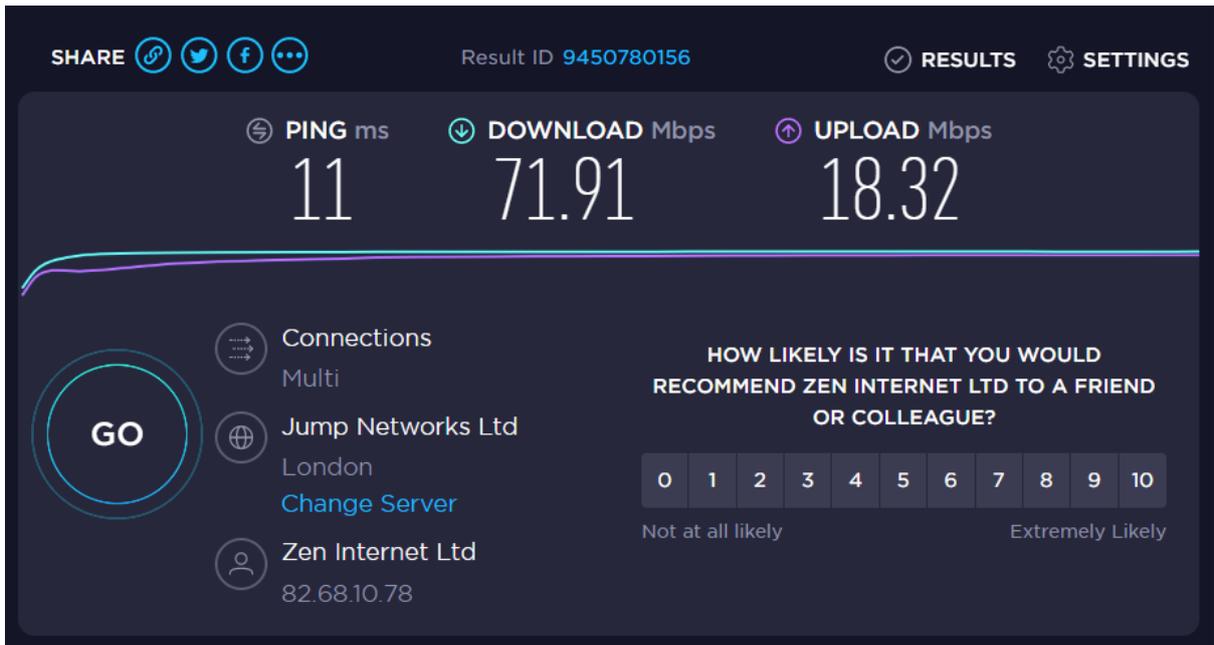
Microsoft Edge ships with Windows 10

Essential: Good access to the internet

Usefulness	Equipment
Ideal	Fibre connection

Less ideal	High-speed data connection via mobile device
Least ideal	Broadband over phonline

You will need a minimum upload / download speed of 1.5Mbps. If you regularly use the internet for online shopping, entertainment or work, it is likely that you already have a fast enough connection to support virtual ringing and a virtual meeting. However if in doubt, there are plenty of online tools that can test the speed of your broadband. The standard one is <https://www.speedtest.net/> which produces a report similar to that below when you click on “Go”:



This test shows a download speed of about 72 Mbps and an upload speed of 18 Mbps - both are vastly more than the required upload/download speed of 1.5Mbps.

Two tools are required on the device; some sort of voice conferencing tool (so you can talk to the ringers involved) and some sort of internet browser (so you can access the online ringing tool). From personal experience and based on guidelines from the experts, the preferred voice conferencing tool is Zoom and the preferred browser is Google Chrome. Other conference tools and browsers exist but this article will focus on the two tools discussed here.

Setting up a virtual meeting with Zoom

If you want to be able to start a Zoom meeting, you need an account with Zoom (free of charge at the time of writing).

If all you need to do is join a Zoom meeting, you just need the Zoom software installed on your PC and you don't need an account with Zoom.

Getting an account with Zoom to set up Zoom meetings

You will need this if you intend to set up and control a Zoom meeting.

The following sites talk you through registering and installing Zoom:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbYHaNvCw9M>

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/3/31/21197215/how-to-zoom-free-account-get-started-register-sign-up-log-in-invite>

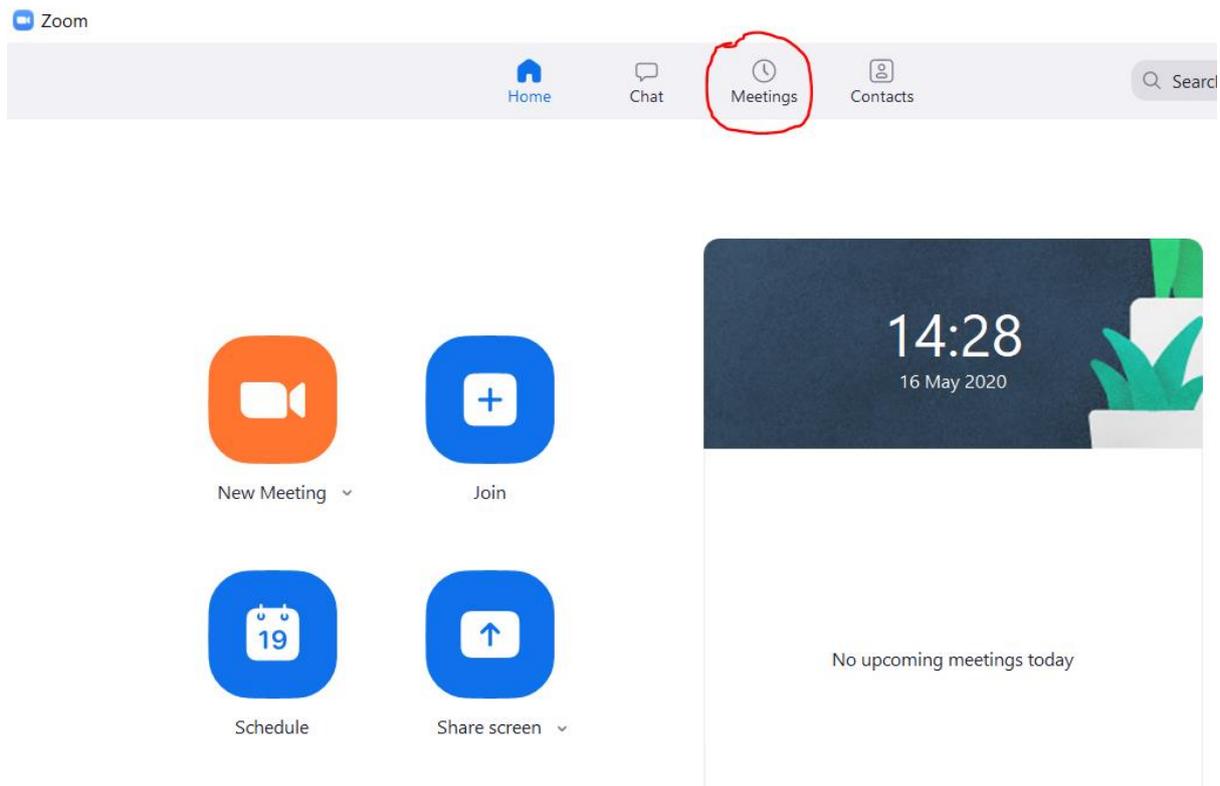
The sign up for Zoom is at <https://zoom.us>.

Inviting people to a Zoom meeting

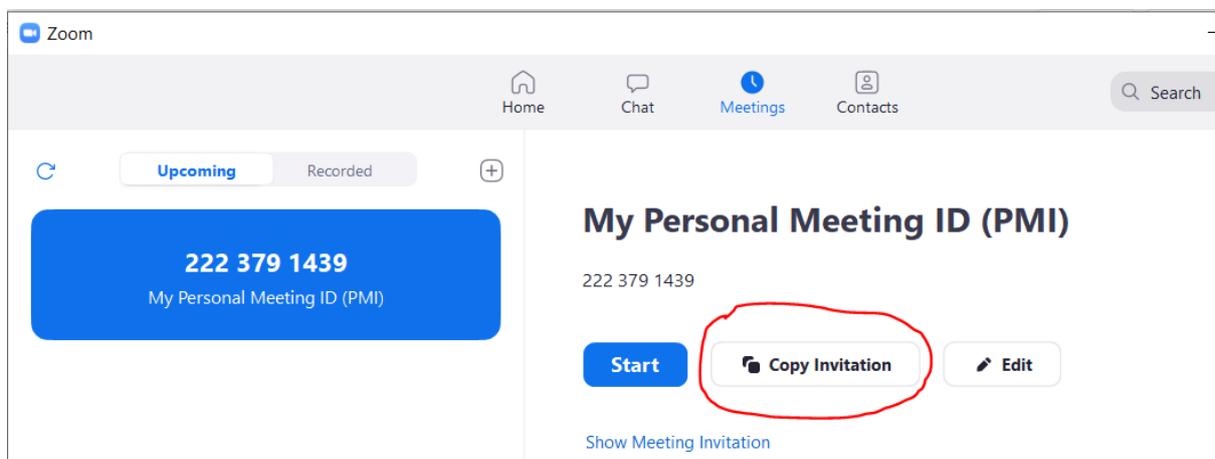
Start Zoom by clicking on the Icon which may be on the task bar, desktop or start menu:



The main Zoom screen is displayed:



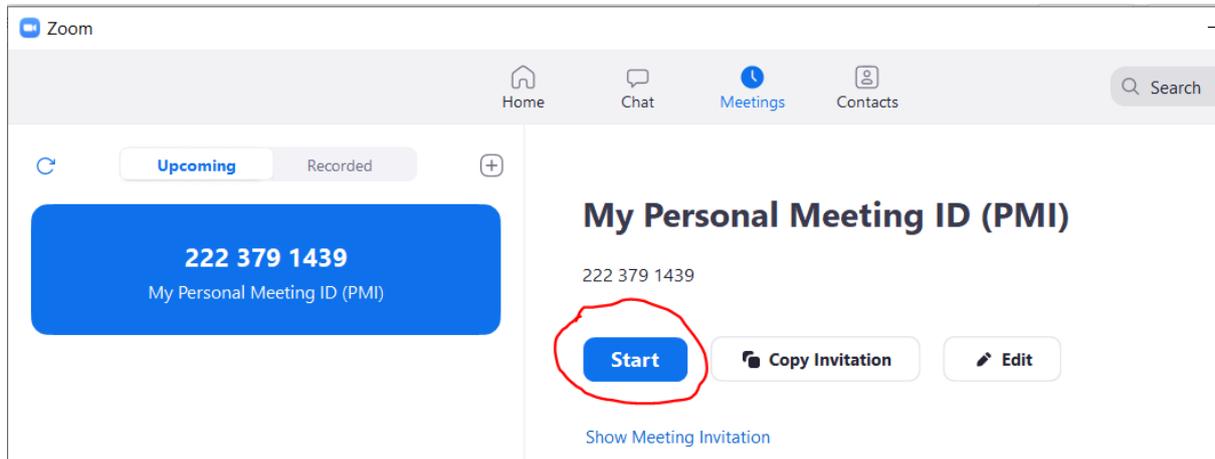
Click on “Meetings” which displays your personal meeting ID. Click on the “Copy Invitation” button.



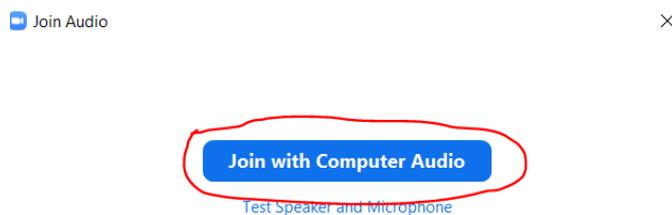
This copies a meeting invite to your clipboard. Now invite others to your meeting using email or messaging app and paste in the invitation you have just copied using the “paste” facility (or using Ctrl-V).

Start your Zoom meeting

When you are ready to start, click on the Start button:



This should start your camera (if you have one) and prompt you to start audio:



Select Join with Computer Audio

You are now ready for your invitees to join.

Joining as an invitee

If you are an invitee and have Zoom already installed, it is simply a matter of clicking on the link in the email that has been sent out. This will open the web browser and ask you to open Zoom.

If Zoom is NOT installed, the following links talk you through installing Zoom as a client:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gr-JuyVeDf4>

or

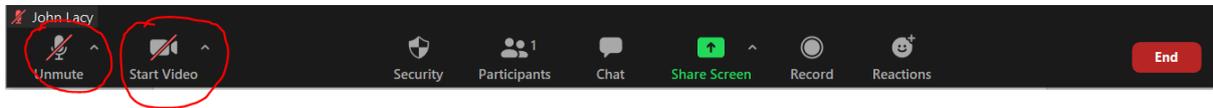
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DLS1pYyzUh8>

Your invitees will be prompted as described in the “Start your Zoom meeting” section.

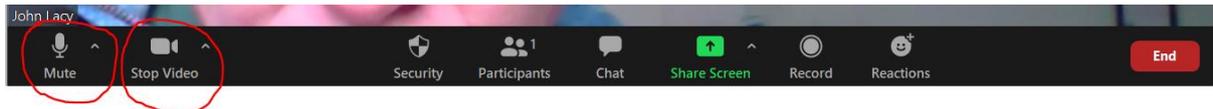
Checking Zoom Video and Audio are on

All new users to Zoom seem to encounter problems with sound or vision. At the start of the meeting please ask all participants to check the bar at the bottom of the screen and ensure that they have

video and sound active. If there is a red line through the microphone and/or camera icons, they will be switched off:



Clicking on the icon starts sound and vision:

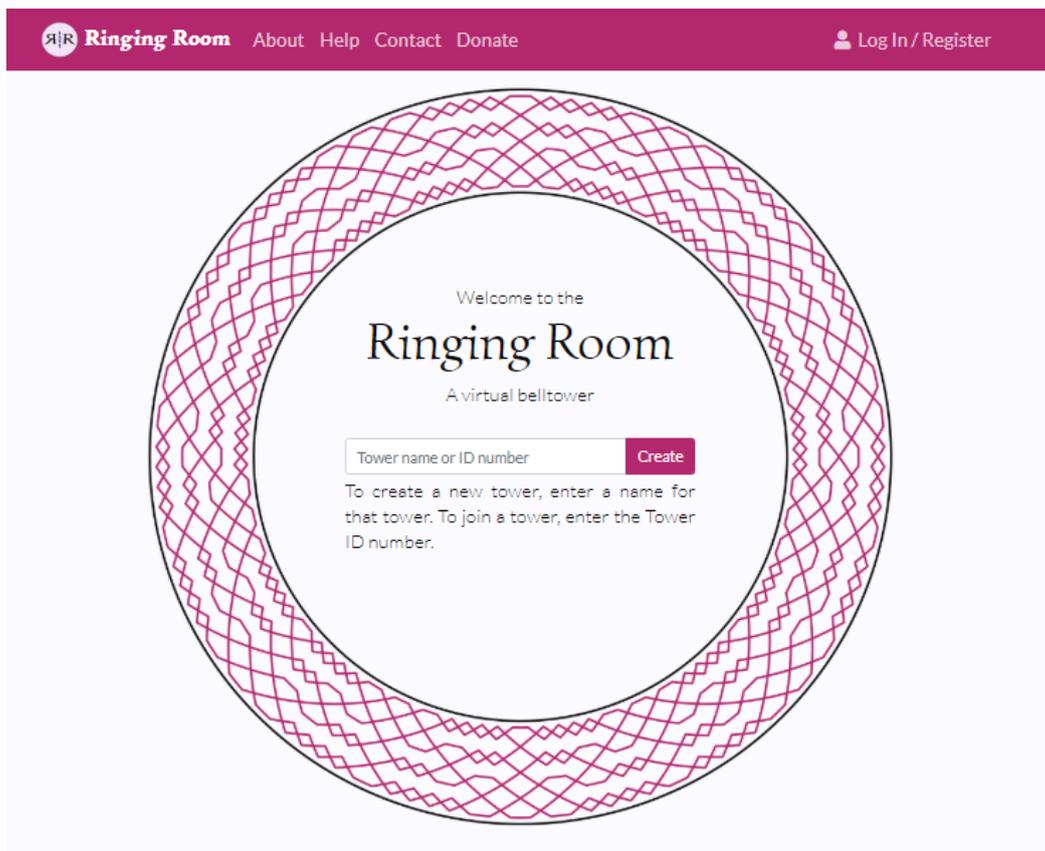


Setting up a virtual session in Ringing Room.

To set up a Ringingroom session, you must first set up a virtual tower.

Enter <https://ringingroom.com/> in your browser (or use this link).

You will now see the main Ringingroom screen:



If this is the first time you have used this site you will need to register for an account by clicking on the Login/Register button:



You are taken to the following screen:

The screenshot shows the Ringing Room website's login and registration page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Ringing Room logo and links for 'About', 'Help', 'Contact', and 'Donate'. On the right side of the navigation bar, there is a 'Log In / Register' link. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'Already have an account?' and 'Register'.

Already have an account?
 Username or Email Address:
 Password: Remember me

Register
 Username:
 This is the name that will appear in the tower when you're ringing. You can change it later.
 Email:
 We will never share your email address with anyone.
 Password: Repeat Password:

If you haven't got an account with Ringing Room, use the Register section to create a Username (which can be anything you like). You will need to specify the email address you are using and a password of your choice. You then enter the password you have chosen again (in the Repeat Password box). Then click on Register. This will then log you in. If you already have an account, just use it to log in.

You now need to set up a virtual tower by entering a tower name (Example "Holy Virtual Trinity") and clicking on the "Create" button. This will create the virtual tower and take you to:

The screenshot shows the Ringing Room virtual tower interface for 'Holy Virtual Trinity'. The browser address bar shows the URL: ringingroom.com/578693124/holy_virtual_trinity. The interface includes a session number '578693124' and a 'Help' button. There are buttons for '4', '6', '8', '10', and '12', with '8' currently selected. Below these are buttons for 'Tower', 'Hand', and 'Set at hand'. A 'Users' section shows 'Major A K Lynch' with an 'Assign bells' button and a 'Leave Tower' button. The main area displays eight virtual bells, each represented by a bell icon with a number in a box next to it. The bells are arranged in a grid and numbered 1 through 8. Bell 1 is at the bottom right, bell 2 is at the bottom center, bell 3 is at the bottom left, bell 4 is at the middle left, bell 5 is at the top center, bell 6 is at the top right, bell 7 is at the middle right, and bell 8 is at the middle bottom right.

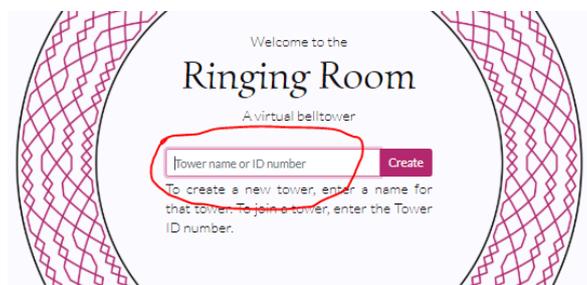
Note the ringing room session number:



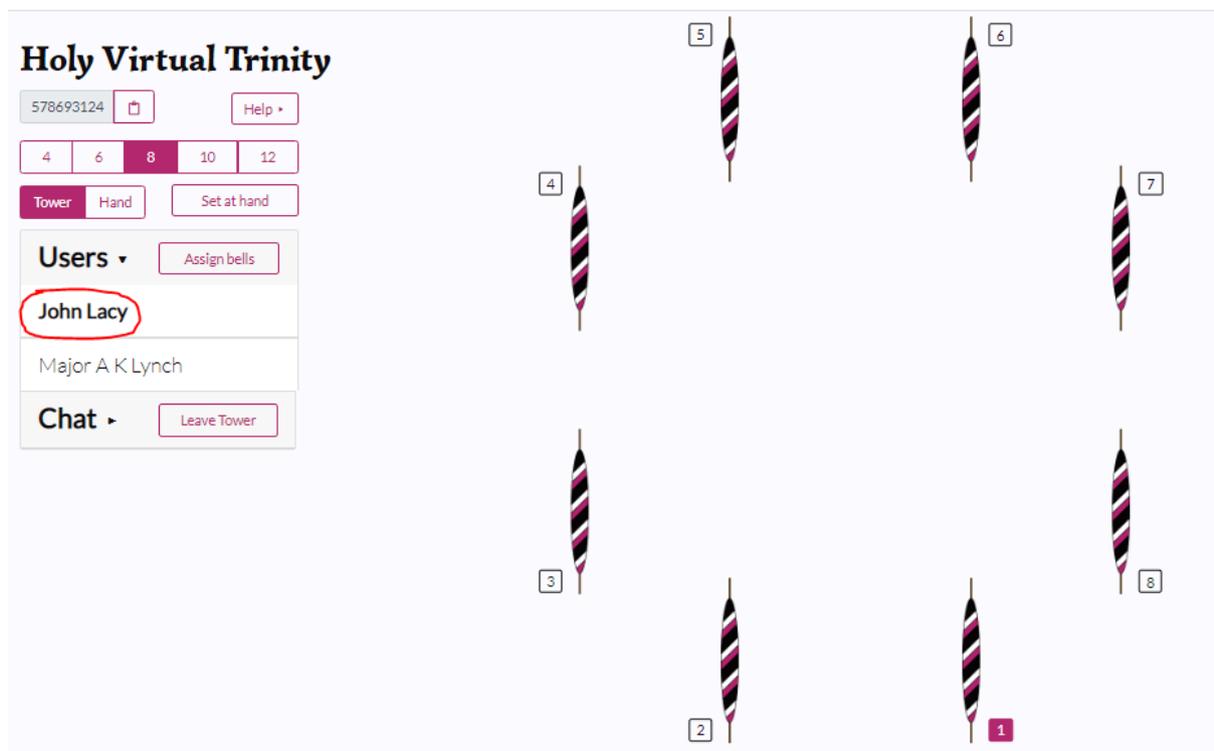
Click on the Clipboard icon to copy this ID then paste it into an email to those you wish to join.

Joining a ringing session that you have set up

Once you have emailed your invitees with the session number of the tower, they must now log in to Ringing Room to join your virtual tower. They will then need to enter the Tower ID number. The "Create" button will change to "Join" so they click that button to join your tower."

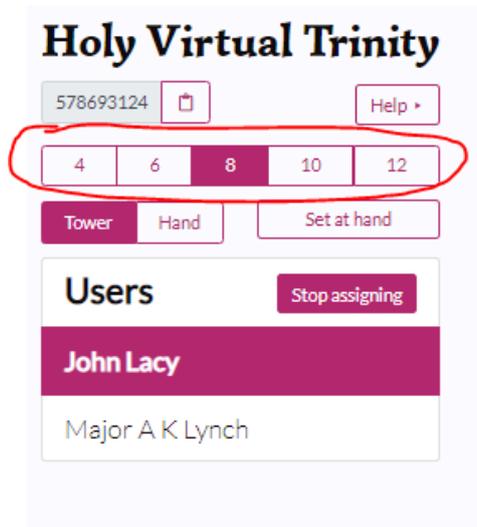


Note that if they just put the tower ID number in and don't log in, they will be taken to the virtual ringing room, but will not be visible and will not be able to join in. They should use the Login: button to log in to join the ringing. Click on the triangle ▶ next to the **Users** label to the ringers present:

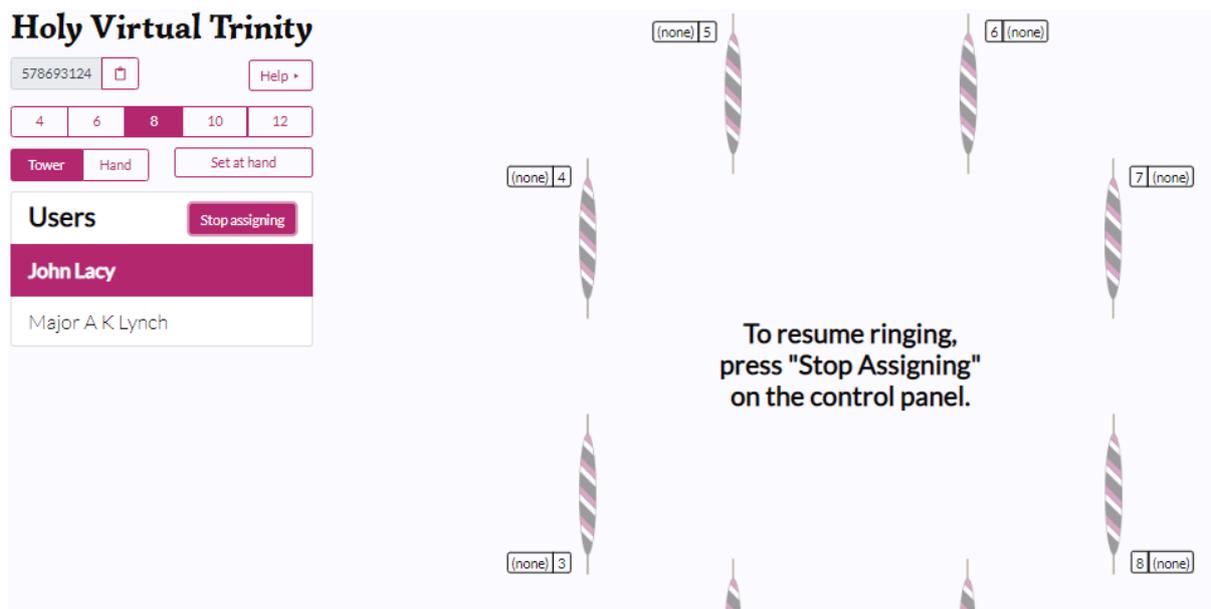
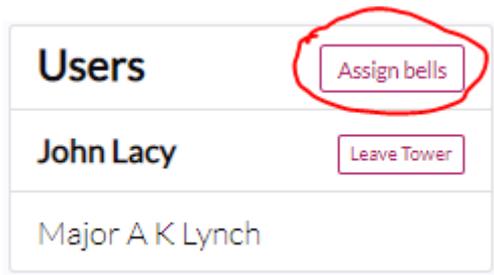


Running the ringing practice

You should now have your invitees logged in to ringing room and simultaneously logged into your Zoom session. You are ready to run the practice. You can choose the number of bells in the virtual tower by selecting from the circled set of numbers. Note you can choose Tower or Hand bells to ring.



You may assign ringers to bells by using the "Assign Bells" button:



Click on an invitee name and then click on one of the slots next to a Sally this will assign that invitee to a bell. Repeat for each invitee and then click on button “Stop Assigning” to finish. You are now ready to ring.

The easiest way to “ring” the bell is to use the Space Bar. To do this you need to ensure your bell is at the bottom left of the ringing circle. If not, press SHIFT+(your bell number) to put it there. Now pressing the space bar moves the bell from handstroke to backstroke and back to handstroke:

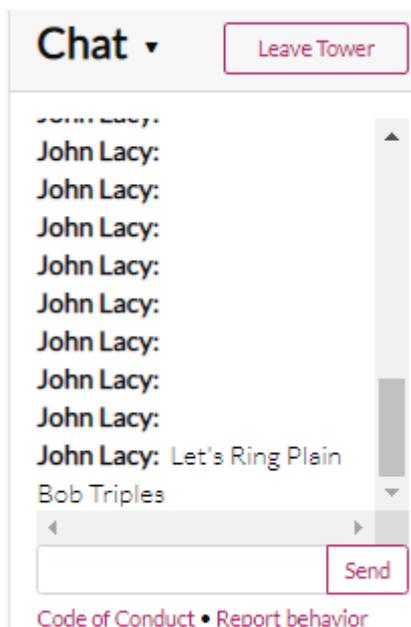


Chat Facility

There is now a chat facility; click on the triangle ▶ next to the **Chat** label to open the chat window and type your message into the box with the “Send” label then click “Send”:



This will appear in all the chat windows of the ringers present – as long as they also have the chat window open:



Please respect the Ringing Room Code of Conduct:

“We expect that you will be a courteous member of the tower chat, and that your actions will reflect well on the values of the ringing community in general. Be kind, be encouraging, be polite, and be generous in your interpretation of what each other's comments might mean.

If someone is not upholding these values, please report the behavior to us using the "Report behavior" link at the bottom of the chat box. We will do our best to address your concerns; this process may involve a period of mediation (not including the reporter) or it may involve other actions on the part of the moderation team.

*Certain behaviors will **never** be tolerated on Ringing Room and will result in an immediate ban of the reported individual. These behaviors include: threatening violence or harm of any kind, harassment, verbal assault, racism, homophobia, and transphobia.”*

Note there is a “Report Behavior” button to click in the event of unreasonable behaviour on the chat.

Tips for improving the Ringing Room practice

Ensure you have a leader

Like any ringing practice, you need to make sure someone is in charge of the practice, assigning a conductor and allocating ringers to bells.

Turn off video and sound in Zoom

Suggest that invitees turn off their video in Zoom and mute themselves. This reduces the amount of traffic over the internet and makes the bells more responsive. Muting the users cuts down extraneous noises such as creaking chairs, meowing cats and the sound of over-zealous pressing of the space bar. Obviously, the conductor should NOT mute (and should first oil the chair and put the cat out).

Starting to ring and making calls

There are a series of commands than can be issued from a keyboard:

[l]ook to...

[g]o next time

[b]ob

si[n]gle

t[h]at's all

s[t]and next

Alternatively, ask the ringer of the treble to shout “look to, trebles going, she’s gone” (after unmuting...). The conductor can just make the calls for bobs and singles – some ringers have found this is much easier than the computer-generated calls.

Use a keyboard and the space bar

There are enough distractions going on already, so using a keyboard and assigning the space bar to your bell makes it easier to ring the bell on time. Clicking on the bell with the mouse will work, but is less easy to get right every time. The same also applies if you are using a tablet or smartphone – use of these devices in Ringing Room should be discouraged if possible.

Consider separate devices for Zoom and Ringing Room

Some ringers lucky enough to own more than one computer have found it easier to run Zoom on one device (e.g. another computer or a tablet or smartphone) and run Ringing Room on another.

Maximise your internet connection

If your computer is connected using a wireless connection, try and ring from an area with good coverage, which reduces the lag between pressing your bell and the bell sounding. If you have a wired connection to the router, use that.

Don't be too ambitious

Start simple (rounds and call-changes) and as you get more experienced, move on to methods. Just like any ringing activity it takes practice to get right. Gradually build up to more adventurous ringing as you improve, but note the more bells in the tower, the more reaction times interfere with the ringing.

Match invitee numbers to the bells available

It is possible to run a full practice with say 20 invitees to an 8-bell practice, but it is boring for those not involved to stand around and just watch. You might consider running a series of sessions inviting ringers to each session and then maybe grouping together at the end for feedback or a chat.

Finally

Consider making a donation to the Ringingroom.com team. Running this kind of operation costs money and it is only right that you should contribute to these costs if you have enjoyed the ringing experience. There is a "Donate" button on the login screen

Troubleshooting your Ringing Room session

- **I can see images of ropes but no sound** make sure you haven't inadvertently muted your speaker
- **I can't see all the bells on the screen** the latest version of ringing room uses a larger canvas, so if it doesn't all fit all the bells on your screen, use the "zoom in and out" facility on your browser to zoom out. Or hold down the "Ctrl" key and use the scroll button on your mouse.
- **My bell won't ring when I tell it to** use numeric keys to ring the bells instead of a pointing device or use the left or right arrow or space bar. Check you are logged in to ringing room (if not you will just be a listener and you are not allowed to ring the bells). Check you are not in "Assign Bells" mode (click on the "Stop Assigning" button).
- **One person's bell is persistently late** Their local broadband speed may be very slow or their wireless router connection is poor; it might be better for them to connect computer to router with an ethernet cable. Another reason for slow response is latency: that person's computer is working too hard against too many tasks with insufficient processing power and the network cannot carry with sufficient speed the volume of traffic generated by the ringers. Serious, hardcore interactive gamers might have kit which eliminates these kinds of problems.
- **I can hear echoes** The sound from your speakers is being picked up by your microphone and fed back round the circuit via the Zoom link. The person hosting the Zoom meeting can mute everybody's microphone remotely or everyone can use headphones which prevent sound reaching the microphone.
- **I think there is a bug in the ringing room** That might be the problem but think about other explanations first. It is a good idea for everyone to pool their experiences of using the ringing room so that the most common problems are brought to the fore. If there is no more tractable solution, there may be a bug that can be reported to the programme's authors.
- **I get a "500 - Internal Server Error"** This is a sign that Ringing Room is subject to heavy use. Try back later. Try and avoid practising at peak times (7.30 – 8.30pm Monday to Friday).

- **I get a really slow response when try and join the tower** This is another sign that Ringing Room is subject to heavy use. Try back later. Try and avoid practising at peak times (7.30 – 8.30pm Monday to Friday).
- **Sound has stopped working.** Try reloading the page. If not successful, try rebooting the machine.
- **No response from any inputs except the Tower and Hand buttons.** Try refreshing the page.
- **No sound from my bell or any others.** Try clicking the Assign button and then immediately click it (now called Stop Assigning) again.