

The Touring Tower

Risk Assessment and Method Statement



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Registered charity 1126164

Version 3 – 1st August 2024

Introduction

This risk assessment and method statement has been prepared to outline the procedures adopted in assembling, using and dismantling the Touring Tower. It also considers the key health and safety risks and the control measures designed to minimise these risks.

The Touring Tower is a small ring of tower bells hung in their own aluminium structure. There is a video of it being rung here <https://youtu.be/FsRjxJZ5Dn8?si=asuaw6oLTsZljk1D>

The Touring Tower is checked for defects prior to delivery to site, and any defects rectified.

Pre-planning

The Touring Tower is hired for use at public events for about 20 to 25 days per year. Each hirer is responsible for providing the details of the proposed location to the booking coordinator hiring@mobilebelfries.org and highlighting any site-specific risks in advance.

The ring is brought to site by one of our trained supervisors. We check proposed pitches using Google Streetview. If necessary, a site inspection may also be undertaken by the supervisor before the booking is confirmed. The bookings coordinator and supervisor may also prepare an addendum to this document to address unusual site-specific risks.

Transport

The Touring Tower is transported horizontally on a four-wheeled trailer which measures approximately 5.75m long x 2.35m wide and 2.75 m high with a laden weight of about 1475 Kgs. Prior to towing there will be a safety check of the trailer and towing vehicle, using the checklist provided (appendix 2). This method statement and risk assessment considers the issues once the trailer has reached the site.

On arrival, the supervisor will double check the site and ensure that it is safe to drive the vehicle and trailer on to the site. The Touring Tower needs to be erected on reasonably level firm ground. The presence of lightweight manhole covers, overhead power cables, and other similar site-specific hazards will also be checked and addressed. We will also check where the trailer can be left nearby whilst the event takes place. A hitch lock and wheel lock are provided for security if left unattended.

The set-up process.

The Touring Tower takes about 40 minutes to set up, and this operation requires one or more persons to assist the supervisor.

First the transport cover is removed and the ties securing the tower and bells in transit are released. The four adjustable legs are wound up and plywood panels placed underneath where they will land. Ply panels are also placed under the two jacks at the rear of the trailer, which are then lowered.

The second stage involves raising the tower to the vertical using the hydraulics. Once vertical the adjustable feet are adjusted to take the load, and the jacks on the rear of the trailer lowered, before the trailer is moved away and the bed of the trailer lowered. There is a video of the raising and lowering operation here https://youtu.be/0_nLZrF6NLA?si=-_nJRJ467HCnEqZZ

Finally, the four outriggers are attached to the ring to minimise sway during ringing.



Raising the Touring Tower



Raising the Touring Tower



Vertical position



Lowering the bed before moving the trailer away

Safety

Prior to beginning, the supervisor will give a toolbox talk and safety briefing to the person(s) assisting him. As there is no heavy lifting required or hazardous substances used, no special personal protective equipment (PPE) is required.

Members of the public will be kept out of the site whilst assembly and dismantling takes place.

The area needed depends on the event and whether the Gazebo is used. For further details see Appendix 1 – Space requirements.

Giving members of the public a taster

A team of at least six experienced ringers is required to man the ring throughout the event. These will be arranged by the local organiser.

It is perfectly safe for members of the public to have a go, under the supervision of an experienced bellringer. The instructor will start with the backstroke and use another experienced ringer to demonstrate how to hold the rope and what needs to be done. Most members of the public will be able to ring the backstroke on their own in less than a minute. The instructor should resist the temptation of putting their hands on the backstroke above the pupil. This will prevent the pupil from feeling the bell.

The pupil can then have a go at ringing rounds, with the instructor ringing the handstroke, and other experienced ringers and any other pupils ringing the other bells. Please do not spend prolonged periods ringing single bells. This is not necessary, it does not sound good, and those watching will soon lose interest and walk away.

Occasionally a pupil may let go of the rope, in which case it will wrap itself round the wheel. In this case a telescopic ladder is provided so that someone can go up and unwind the rope.

There is more detail about teaching non-ringers in the document 'Getting the most out of your mobile belfry' and copies should be circulated to the helpers beforehand.

Branding

The belfry comes with a gazebo, two roller banners and a feather flag. It is also ideal if those ringers helping wear the same T shirt, in order to distinguish themselves from members of the public. This could be the logo the local ringing society, or the new Bellringing branded T shirts.

The aim of the Bellringing branding is to help ringers strike up a conversation with members of the public, whilst they are waiting to have their turn a 'Talking points' sheet is included in appendix 6, and copies should be circulated to the experienced ringers acting as helpers beforehand.



Roller banners and gazebo

Lowering the ring and packing away

Lowering the ring and fitting the transport cover is the reverse of the set up process and takes about 40 minutes.

As the ring is lowered and packed away, it is checked, using the checklist provided (Appendix 2). Any defects are rectified before the next use.

Feedback

We encourage feedback from each event, so that we can continuously improve our procedures.

Risk assessment.

Risk	Party responsible for managing risk	Risk management action/mitigations	After risk management		Action period/deadline
			Likelihood of risk	Impact	
Delivery to site and return to depot afterwards	Supervisor	The ring will be transported to site on the trailer. This will be checked before towing.	Low	Low	
Vehicular movements on site	Supervisor	There are usually restrictions of vehicular movements on site at events open to the public. The Touring Tower will arrive in good time, and observe local rules, so that there is no danger to members of the public.	Low	Medium	
Safety of erection team	Supervisor	Prior to erection the supervisor will give a toolbox talk and safety briefing to those assisting him. The team are also encouraged to view the video beforehand.	Low	Medium	
Soft or uneven ground	Supervisor	Use plywood squares to ensure that the load is spread and that the ring can be levelled $\pm 50\text{mm}$ in 2m. Use the spirit level provided in the toolbox to check that the tower is vertical.	Low	Medium	
Manual handling	Supervisor	None of the components require manual handling. The heaviest item is the telescopic ladder which weighs about 16 Kgs.	Low	Low	
Falling objects	Supervisor	The work at high level is restricted to re-roping a bell if it goes over the balance. Both operations are carried out from the telescopic ladder and no-one should stand directly underneath.	Low	Medium	

Risk of slips, trips and falls	Supervisor	The telescopic ladder needs to be properly footed and the person doing this should wear the hard hat provided.	Low	Medium	
Falling from height	Supervisor	The telescopic ladder needs to be extended and retracted and used in accordance with the instructions provided. It should be placed at an appropriate angle on a sound surface and properly footed. It should also rest on a firm part of the tower. The ladder should not be used if there are any faults with it.	Low	Medium	
Ringling of the bells	Hirer	The bells should only be rung under the supervision of a competent bellringer. The bells are sufficiently light for there to be very little risk of any damage to people misusing them. A video of the bells being rung can be viewed here https://youtu.be/0_nLZrF6NLA?si=wm2PNSfFaRKGn7_2	Low	Low	
Noise nuisance	Supervisor	The bells are nowhere near as loud as church bells. They have leather pads on the clappers to reduce the volume. If necessary additional muffles fitted with Velcro straps can be used, however the bells do not normally disturb neighbouring stands, or risk damaging people's hearing.	Low	Low	
Safeguarding	Hirer	Ensure that there is no unnecessary touching or inappropriate remarks made to young people or vulnerable adults.	Low	Low	

Appendices

1. Space requirements
2. Towing checklist
3. Raising and lowering sequence
4. Extend Climb telescopic ladder– Safety, operation and maintenance instructions.
5. Getting the most out of your mobile belfry
6. Talking points
7. Insurance details