



BEDFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Update



September 2026

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Recent happenings

August ringing meetings - 15 ringers came to the General Ringing meeting at Sharnbrook on 1 August where a good selection of methods were rung. Ann Collier was elected as a Resident Member at Colmworth, proposed by Linda Garton and seconded by John Loveless. Welcome Ann!

The Walk, Tea and Ring at Campton on 22 August was a very successful venture. We had a great turnout with 27 ringers coming for all or part of the afternoon.

The weather was perfect for the walk - a 3 mile 'up and down the hill to Meppershall' option or a shorter, shady walk along the River Hit and back through Polehanger Plantation.

Having worked up an appetite we enjoyed a splendid tea with a fine selection of sandwiches, nibbles and cakes.

After tea we were joined by more folk for the ringing session where call changes, Grandsire, Plain Bob and Stedman Triples and several Surprise Major methods were rung. Several of us rounded off the afternoon with traditional refreshment!

Thanks to everyone who made cakes and sandwiches, set and cleared tables and did the washing up.

Feedback was very positive with general comments such as the opportunity to talk to others on the walk, a very relaxed afternoon, a great tea rounded off with some 'no pressure' ringing!

Forthcoming Events

Ringing Opportunities

Unless otherwise stated, there's a **suggested £2 donation/person** at Association Ringing Programme events. This is so we can make a donation to the tower being visited. Thanks.

Saturday 5 September, 10.30am - 12.30pm

General Ringing and Short Business Meeting at Silsoe (6)

***** We need some more sign ups to make this viable*****

This general ringing meeting is for everyone, all levels will be catered for. There will be a short business meeting to elect new members, provide news and updates as necessary

Sign up in the MemberMojo Store <https://membermojo.co.uk/bacbr/store>
or Email Linda - ringing@bacbr.org.uk

Subject: General Ringing Silsoe

Saturday 12 September, 10.00am - 12.30pm

Second Saturday Training at the R J Sharp Ringing Centre, St Andrew's Biggleswade.

10:00 - 11:00 Session 1: Bell handling

11:00 - 11:15 Coffee (and cake!)

11:15 - 12:30 Session 2: Foundation skills - rounds, call changes, Plain Hunt

These sessions are aimed at less experienced Bedfordshire ringers who would like to improve basic skills and confidence.

Session 1: for those who are learning to handle a bell with assistance or wish to improve their handling skills.

Session 2: For those who can handle a bell unassisted and wish to improve their bell control and progress to ringing rounds/call changes with others.

We're always looking for experienced ringers to support these sessions. If you'd like more information either contact Chris for details or come along and see for yourself. Whether you feel you could help with bell handling and/or foundation skills you'd be most welcome.

Sign up essential for both students and helpers please

Email Chris Williams - christine.williams.bells@gmail.com

State whether you're coming to Session 1 or Session 2.

Sunday 13 September, 2.30 - 4.30pm

Bedfordshire Young Ringers at Campton

Bedfordshire Young Ringers is for **all** young ringers aged 18 or under, whatever your ringing experience. (Experienced tutors will be there to help!) Come along to ring with ringers your own age, eat cake and have fun!

For safeguarding reasons, we ask that all young ringers under the age of 18 are accompanied by an adult. Adults don't need to stay for the whole session (though you are very welcome to do so - tea, coffee and a comfortable place to sit will be available). We'll need some paperwork to be completed for each

young ringer the first time they attend.

For more details, or to confirm that you are coming please

email: youngringers@bacbr.org.uk

or via the Bedfordshire Young Ringers WhatsApp Group if you're on that; please ask to be added to this when you attend a Young Ringers' session.

Saturday 19 - Sunday 20 September

Ring to welcome the new Bishop of St Albans, The Right Reverend Dr. Andrew Rumsey

Bishop Andrew will be formally installed as our Diocesan Bishop at St Albans Cathedral on 19 September. It would be great if as many Bedfordshire towers as possible could ring to welcome him either on that date, or ring a special touch on Sunday 20 September.

Please add all ringing to BellBoard and link it to the event:

<https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=23643> so that we can send details to Bishop Andrew.

Saturday 26 September, 10.00am - 1.00pm

Ringing Up and Down Course at the RJ Sharp Ringing Centre, St Andrew's, Biggleswade.

This half day course is aimed at ringers who have yet to be taught to ring up and down, or who would like to improve their confidence and control when ringing a bell up or down. **Please note - this course will be on tied bells and will focus on ringing a single bell, not ringing up and down in peal.** We ask for a voluntary £5 donation, payable in cash on the day. Numbers are limited so sign up is essential on the MemberMojo Store -

<https://membermojo.co.uk/bacbr/store> or Email Linda - ringing@bacbr.org.uk

Subject: Ringing Up and Down

Events will only go ahead if there are enough people to make them viable, so it's really important to **book your place/confirm your attendance** for most events. There are two ways to do this:

1. **Via the MemberMojo Store** <https://membermojo.co.uk/bacbr/store>

Simply click on the link above and choose which event(s) you wish to attend.

2. **By emailing Ringing Master, Linda Garton**, on ringing@bacbr.org.uk , **or the organiser as stated**, giving the meeting name/venue in the subject line of your email.

Linda would also appreciate helpers giving their availability for focus practices and training courses.

We look forward to seeing you at an event soon!

Please note: Not all events may have a confirmed venue at the time of writing and venues may change at short notice, please see the Website for the up to date situation. If any event has to be cancelled due to lack of numbers, we'll email those who have signed up, but it may not be possible to post any amendments on the website or Facebook at short notice.

Proposed October events - put these dates in your diary!

Please check the website www.bacbr.org.uk for latest situation.

Saturday 3 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm - General Ringing and a short business meeting, at Goldington (6) **note venue still to be confirmed.**

Saturday 10 October 10.00am - 12.30pm - Second Saturday Training at the R J Sharp Ringing Centre at St Andrew's Biggleswade, the usual two sessions.

Sunday 11 October, 2.30 - 4:30pm - Young Ringers practice at Campton.

Saturday 17 October, 6.30 - 8.30pm - Advanced 8 Bell Practice, at Henlow.
From Grandsire Triples and upwards. **note venue still to be confirmed.**

Saturday 31 October, 10.00am - 1.00pm - "Go next"... Calling Call Changes and Plain Bob Doubles Course at the RJ Sharp Ringing Centre, St Andrews, Biggleswade.

This half day course is suitable for ringers with a range of experience, from those who can ring call-changes and want to make a start on learning to call, through to those who can ring touches of Plain Bob Doubles confidently and would like to learn how to call bobs and pick up some tips on keeping others right!

This course will be divided into different levels depending on your prior experience:

- Level1: Calling simple call changes
- Level 2: Calling go and stop to Plain Hunt / a plain course of Plain Bob Doubles
- Level 3: Calling a touch of Plain Bob Doubles being 'unaffected'
- Level 4: Calling touches of Plain Bob Doubles with other bells 'unaffected'

We ask for a voluntary donation of £5 per student please, payable in cash on the day.

Sign up is essential for students and helpers on the MemberMojo Store - <https://membermojo.co.uk/bacbr/store> or Email Linda - ringing@bacbr.org.uk

Short Business Meeting notes are on the website

Notes taken at our short business meetings at General Ringing Meetings are the website here [Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers](#)

Other notices and news

Firsts and Commemorative Ringing

Friday 31 July, The Abbey Church of St Mary and St Helena, Elstow - 5040 Plain Bob Minor. Congratulations to Oliver Coe who rang the treble, his first peal at first attempt. [BellBoard](#)

Saturday 1 August, St Mary, Henlow - 5056 Superlative Surprise Major. Rung to congratulate Heather and Philip Jewell (local band members) on their Golden Wedding Anniversary; married at this Church 31/7/1976. Also 25th peal for Dean De-Matteis. [BellBoard](#)

Monday 10 August, St Mary, Eaton Socon - 120 Plain Bob Doubles. Rung for Ann and Ian Steward's wedding anniversary. [BellBoard](#)

Tuesday 18 August, St Mary, Henlow - 240 Grandsire Doubles. Rung in fond memory of Martin Major, lifelong ringer at this church, on what would have been his 82nd birthday. [BellBoard](#)

Sunday 23 August, Bedford St Paul - 1320 Stedman Cinques. Congratulations to Alex Nash on ringing his first Stedman Cinques and to Dean De-Matteis who had previously rung Stedman Cinques but only on 11 bells! [BellBoard](#)

Friday 28 August, St Mary, Maulden - 240 Grandsire Doubles. Congratulations to Sam Warner for ringing the tenor to his longest length yet. [BellBoard](#)

Friday 28 August, The Abbey Church of St Mary and St Helena - 1260 Grandsire Doubles. More congratulations to Oliver Coe who rang the treble to his first Grandsire Doubles and to celebrate his GCSE exam success. [BellBoard](#)

Introducing the Association Bells and Tower Officer

From time to time, every tower has problems with its bells or the building. These can be simple maintenance issues or more serious faults that affect ringing. At the 2026 Association AGM, John Hele (Amphill) was appointed Bells and Towers Officer as the first point of contact for anyone needing advice or help. John can be contacted at:

- Email: bells-towers@bacbr.org.uk
- Phone: 07768 252461

What the Bells and Towers Officer Can Help With?

John can offer initial guidance on:

- Routine bell maintenance
- Problems with towers or issues affecting ringing
- Where to get professional help for repairs or specialist work
- Fundraising information for bell or tower projects
- Matters affecting the ringing environment, including:
 - Noise concerns and sound control
 - Bird or bat boxes
 - Alarm systems and mobile phone equipment in the tower
- Permissions needed for work (such as Faculties). These links may help:
 - <https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/parishsupport/buildings-and-churchyards/permissions/>
 - <https://www.stalbansdiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Minor-Matters-Lists-A-and-B-2022.pdf>
- Advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), who should be consulted for any work that may need permission or affect other parts of the church building
- Explaining requirements to PCCs when needed

Important Note – the Bells and Tower Officer role is advisory only, but more detailed help can be provided if required.

St Paul's Bedford - Tower, Clock and Bells Project Update

Work to restore the tower, clock, and bells at St Paul's Bedford is scheduled to commence on 28 September with erection of the external scaffolding. The clock mechanism, bells, and peal boards will be removed in early November. It is currently planned that they will be displayed in the Church between 14 and 27 November and it is hoped that visitors will donate generously to complete the appeal.

The total cost of the project is now close to £1million with about £25k still to be raised. It will be the largest investment in a tower and its bells ever made in the county; the culmination of over 7 years of fund raising and design work. The work is expected to take between 9 - 12 months to complete.

A final quarter peal will be attempted for the High Sheriff's Justice service on 20 September and a final peal attempt is also planned. Very many thanks to those ringers from across the county and beyond who have reliably supported (and hopefully benefited from) the Sunday morning and monthly Monday 12 bell ringing and QPs over this time. Without that, the project would not have been a viable proposition for the Church and charity funds to

support. It is hoped to maintain the bands with ringing elsewhere during the course of the work.

Part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund commitment is for the project to provide opportunities for people wishing to learn and gain experience in bell maintenance work. If you would like the opportunity to be involved in this major project and gain some useful knowledge, please contact Pat Albon (patrickalbon@gmail.com) who is coordinating the volunteer team.

Steve Stanford - steve.h.stanford@gmail.com

Don't forget - we have an Association Bell Restoration Fund!

The Association Bell Restoration Fund (BRF) was set up in 2013 to give grants to church authorities (within our area) towards work to provide, restore, maintain and improve bells and bell installations. Half of your annual subscription goes to the BRF and many of you have made additional, generous, donations through your membership renewal process - thank you!

You can read about the BRF, its objectives, scope and rules on the website here [Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers](#) - along with reports of projects that have been supported over the years.

The Fund is in a healthy state and we'd welcome new applications for grants towards work that is in scope.

News from the CCCBR

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Central Council Annual Meeting at Rugby, 5 September

The agenda and meeting papers for the upcoming 2026 Annual Meeting are now available on the Council's [Meeting Papers](#) page.

Young Ringers for Ringing 2030 Briefing - 13 September

The Central Council are launching their Young Ringers Hub at the Central Council

Annual Meeting on 5 September and on Sunday 13 September, at 7.30pm, you can join an open on-line meeting which is showcasing the Young Ringers Hub, a one stop shop for all young ringers, from school age to 30.

The session will feature a walk through the three developed sub-sites of the Young Ringers Hub: University Ringing, Under 18s and the Library, and will also explore the future Development Pathways project that will form the fourth sub site.

Register for the event

here https://us06web.zoom.us/join/lt9a1l_wTXahean5yfxcOg (you'll receive an automated email with the joining instructions)

Some other useful Central Council resources

Risk Assessment Guidance - [Risk Assessment | Running a Tower](#)

In Case of Emergency Notice - [Emergency | Running a Tower](#)

Recruitment and Retention - [Recruitment and Retention – CCCBR](#)

Notice Board toolkit - [Noticeboard Toolkit – CCCBR](#)

You Tube Index - <https://cccbr.org.uk/youtube-index>

Images - [Photos – CCCBR](#)

The Central Council Code for Ringing - a reminder for everyone about this code for ringers - [Code-for-Ringing-Edition-1-v1-285.pdf](#)

Do keep an eye on the Central Council website for wider ringing news, resources and helpful information! <https://cccbr.org.uk>



Simon Stranks - President

president@bacbr.org.uk

Linda Garton - Ringing Master

ringing@bacbr.org.uk

We welcome feedback on any aspect of the Association feedback@bacbr.org.uk
if you're not on the distribution list you can sign up to receive this Update directly [here](#)

Our Website - www.bacbr.org.uk

Association Management structure and who does what - [Bedfordshire Association of Church Bell Ringers](#)

You've received this because you are an Association Member, a past member who wishes to remain in touch or a Tower Contact for the Association

You can [unsubscribe from this list](#).