BEDFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION
OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

Update



November 2026

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Peter Bishop, Stevington

The Bedfordshire ringing community was saddened to hear of the recent death of Peter Bishop. Peter served as Tower Captain at St Mary's, Stevington, for several years and was a familiar figure to many local ringers.

Outside ringing, Peter served in the police force and later became landlord of The Red Lion, where he was well known within the Stevington community. He will be remembered for his contribution to the tower and for the friendship he showed to fellow ringers over many years.
Peter's funeral will be held at St Mary's Church, Stevington, on 12 November at 1.45 pm, followed by cremation at Norse Road Crematorium. We extend our sincere sympathies to his family and friends.

Recent Happenings

October ringing meetings - The General Ringing Meeting at Goldington was reasonably well attended after a bit of a chivvying for support.
18 ringers came to the Advanced 8 Bell Practice held at Henlow on 17 October. It was a very worthwhile session with lots of focus on Grandsire Triples for four members who specifically wanted to practice ringing touches and they were all doing this really well by the end of the evening, having only rung a plain course or two before. It was good to ring well struck Cambridge and Yorkshire S Major too.
Most importantly, followed by some convivial pubbage!
It was agreed by those present that this should be a regular event in the calendar (maybe bi-monthly), so do look out for and come along to the next one.
Five students attended the half day workshop at the RJ Sharp Ringing Centre on calling call changes and touches of Plain Bob Doubles. To help event planning, each student was asked in advance to choose one of four levels that best described their current capability:
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 'unaffected'.
Level 4: Calling touches of Plain Bob Doubles with other bells 'unaffected'.
The workshop was very successful with positive feedback including - "a great time was had by all, a really well run workshop, I learnt a lot and I'm very keen to put it into practice."
Thanks to Simon Stranks and helpers for running the workshop.

Farewell to Vivienne Johnson - we say good bye to Vivienne as she and Malcom move from Great Barford to be nearer to their family and we wish them well. Vivienne has been a brilliant Tower Contact and Association supporter and we will miss her. The new Tower Contact at Great Barford is Karen Humphreys - thanks to Karen for taking this very important role on.

Stevington Practice Night has changed from Wednesdays to Monday evening.

Please let us know of any changes to Sunday ringing times, practice nights or Tower Contact details. Email - webmaster@bacbr.org.uk

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.

Sunday 1 November, 2.30 - 4.30pm - Note 1st Sunday this month, 2nd Sunday is Remembrance Sunday.
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 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 7 November, 10.30am - 12.30pm
General Ringing and Short Business Meeting at Linslade (8)
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 Linslade

Monday 9th - 15th November, ringing to mark the retirement of the Bishop of Bedford.
The farewell service for the Bishop of Bedford, the Rt Revd Richard Atkinson OBE, is being held at St Paul's Bedford on **Sunday 15th November**.
Bishop Richard is one of our Patrons and has been a great friend to the Association since he was installed as Bishop in May 2012. To mark his retirement and to thank him for his interest in, and dedicated support for, ringing in Bedfordshire, we hope that bells can be rung at as many towers as possible on or around this date.

We're asking tower captains and organisers to assist if possible please by arranging any of the following:

- a special touch on or around Sunday 15th November at your own tower or others nearby;

- a Quarter Peal - Quarter Peals need to be rung from Monday 9th to Sunday 15th November.
- or even a Peal!

and link any ringing to the event 'Ringing to mark the retirement of the Bishop of Bedford' on Bellboard: https://bb.ringingworld.co.uk/event.php?id=23940
We will be sending details of all ringing to Bishop Richard following his retirement.
Any experienced ringers who are available to help out are asked to forward their contact details to Chris Williams, christine.williams.bells@gmail.com, who will be coordinating some of the ringing.

Saturday 14 November, Second Saturday Training at the RJ Sharp Ringing Centre, St Andrews, Biggleswade.
These sessions are aimed at less experienced Bedfordshire ringers who would like to improve basic skills and confidence. Session 1 - 10.00-11.00 bell handling. 11.00 - 11.15 coffee and cake. Session 2 - 11.15-12.30 foundation skills - rounds, call changes, Plain Hunt. Sign up essential for students and helpers, please email Chris - christine.williams.bells@gmail.com and state session 1 or 2.

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 December events - put these dates in your diary!

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

Saturday 5 December, 10.30am - 12.30pm - General Ringing and a short business meeting, at Westoning (6)

Saturday 12 December - Second Saturday Training at the RJ Sharp Ringing Centre, St Andrews, Biggleswade.

These sessions are aimed at less experienced Bedfordshire ringers who would like to improve basic skills and confidence.
Session 1 - 10.00-11.00 bell handling.
11.00 - 11.15 coffee and cake.
Session 2 - 11.15-12.30 foundation skills - rounds, call changes, Plain Hunt.
Sign up essential for students and helpers, please email Chris - christine.williams.bells@gmail.com and state session 1 or 2..

Sunday 13 December - 2.30 - 4.30pm - Young Ringers practice at Campton.

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

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Other notices and news

Firsts and Commemorative Ringing in October

Sunday 4 October, St Mary, Maulden - 1260 Plain Bob Minor. Congratulations to Dean De-Matteis, this was his first minor as conductor. BellBoard

Monday 12 October, St Mary Magdalene, Westoning - Call Changes. . Congratulations to Julie Luckman for calling changes to Kings for the first time. BellBoard

Saturday 17 October, St Andrews, Biggleswade - 1260 Plain Minor two methods. Congratulation to Oscar Matthews for ringing his first QP of minor. BellBoard

Sunday 18 October, St Mary, Maulden - Call Changes - jointly called by Joe Warner from the treble and Sam Warner from the tenor, this is first time they've led the Sunday service ringing - well done! BellBoard

Sunday 18 October, All Saints Clifton - 540 Plain Bob Doubles, rung for Evensong. Well done to Nicola Temple, this was her longest length of ringing so far. BellBoard

Friday 30 October, St Edmund King and Martyr and St James, Blunham - 5040 Surprise Minor (7m). This was the first peal on these bells for 32 years and a real physical challenge for the band. It was sponsored for the Blunham bells restoration project, it's not too late to donate! Please use the link below if you would like to donate.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfPEUcAsp8Tks19GisNJLY8xA_4uRHR8wzfvYGHSXTNYPuCcA/viewform

BellBoard

Saturday 31 October, St Mary, Maulden - 1260 Grandsire Doubles. Well done to Nikki Cox for ringing her first Quarter Peal in quite a long time and to Joe Warner for ringing his first Quarter Peal on the tenor to a method. BellBoard

Saturday 31 October, All Saints, Kempston - 5093 Grandsire Caters. For All Saints; also in memory of Clifford W Izzard, born 20/6/1931 – died 10/12/2024, aged 93. Cliff was Tower Captain here for 36 years during which time he master-minded the project in 1978 to have the bells rehung and their subsequent augmentation to 10 and taught numerous people to ring. He was an Honorary Life member of the Bedfordshire Association and served as its Technical Advisor. Fondly remembered and greatly missed. BellBoard

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Opportunity to see St Paul's Bedford, bells, clock mechanism and peal boards during November.

Following a five year fundraising appeal, the 12 bells of St Paul's, Bedford, are being lowered from the tower into the church. The church will be open to view this on Monday 3rd (12-4 pm) and Tuesday 4th November (10 am-2pm). From 8th – 26th November, visitors will be able to view the bells at close hand before they're loaded on the lorry on 27th to be taken away for refurbishment.

The bells date mostly to 1896/7 when they were cast by John Taylor & Co, Loughborough. The heaviest weighs 1 1/2 tonnes! They've not been seen in public since World War II when they were stored in the churchyard for safety. Once overhauled they will be rehung in the tower later next year in a new metal frame.

The 1811 clock mechanism can also be seen in the church before it is repaired and the clock faces are repainted and gilded. It's one of the earliest surviving examples of a public clock with a deadbeat escapement mechanism dating back to the late 17th century.

The decorative peal boards, which record the names of those who have rung peals, commemorating special events, and the clock are on display in the church until the end of November.

News from the CCCBR

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

Ringing Census 2026, 16-22 November

Every ringer and every tower counts!

Ringers of all ages and experience levels are invited to complete an online questionnaire about their ringing during Census

Week, Monday 16– Sunday 22 November 2026.

The Census is for ALL bellringers and towers. Whether you ring every week, occasionally, or are just starting out, your contribution matters. Please do take part and encourage your tower to participate too!

Why take part?

We don't currently have a reliable picture nationally of how many people ring, how often they ring, or where ringing is changing. The Census will help provide that evidence and inform work on recruitment, retention, training and long-term planning..

How do I take part?

The links to complete the Individual and Tower Censuses will be made available **towards the end of Census Week and will remain available into the following week**, so that you can report accurately on what happened between 16 and 22 November. **We will send the links out in an Update once they are available**.

How long will it take to complete?

The questionnaire should take 5-10 minutes for the individual census, 10-15 minutes for the tower census. Please help make sure your tower is included.

Will my data be protected?

We won't be collecting any personal identifiable information. For full data protection statement please visit cccbr.org.uk/census.

Where can I find out more information?

Visit the CCCBR Ringing Census page for the latest information: cccbr.org.uk/census
or contact Linda Garton ringing@bacbr.org.uk

Some other useful Central Council resources

Running a Tower - Running a Tower | Running a Tower
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

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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.