

Caring for towers and a safe return to ringing

- working together to keep churches open

Church Buildings Team lunch time roadshows

25th May 2021

Kate Andrew, Alison Hodge, Mark Regan





Welcome from Bishop John

This session has been devised by ringers in Worcester Diocese with the aim of making connections between parishes, the Worcestershire and District Change Ringing Association, the Central Council of Bellringers and the Worcester DAC.

We welcome participants from across the country but we may not have the answer to diocese specific questions

Bell ringing - The sound of your church



Alison Hodge -

Worcester & Districts Association of Church Bell Ringers

- **Western Branch Master**
- **Belfry Advisory Panel Convenor**

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Workgroup Lead



“We don’t just turn them on”



Bell ringing brings in active people

More than just services, weddings, funerals

Teaching, practices

Competitions

Visiting ringers

Tower open days

Fund raising

Different times,

“additional presence,
eyes and ears”



... audible contribution to church life!

Ringers' service – e.g. annually / quarterly

Invitations to contribute at PCC meetings

Website, news sheets, church magazine....

Displays in church, with
ringing times and contacts

Open tower events



Local and national events coming up

- Ride and Stride, 11th Sept and Heritage Open Days 10th-19th Sept 2021
- 11th Sept is also the young ringers competition day at Worcester Cathedral
- www.heritageopendays.org.uk web site is now live, events need to be listed well before the end of July
- Tower tours (in-person or easily filmed these days on a mobile phone)
- Ringing demonstrations
- If rules allow, chiming a bell
- Information about how to learn to ring and get involved

Handbells – wider participation

youth groups, parent & toddler, church school....

valuable
musical
instruments

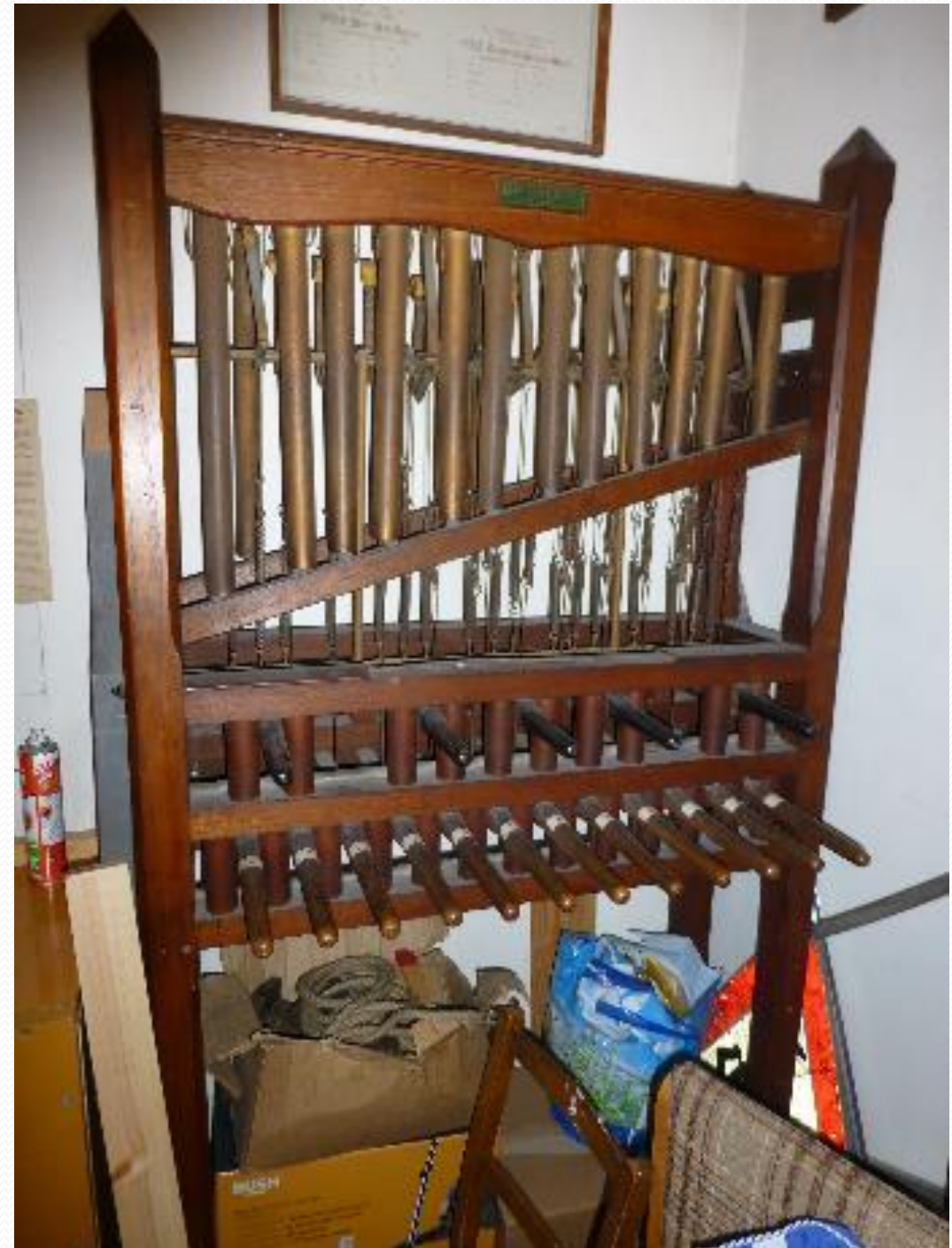


AARGH!!
NO!!



Other methods of ringing?

- Ellacombe systems – only need one person to operate them but may not have been used for a long time
- Young ringers clubs - need to abide by the indoor rule of 6 or operate as a “classroom” with two adult leaders

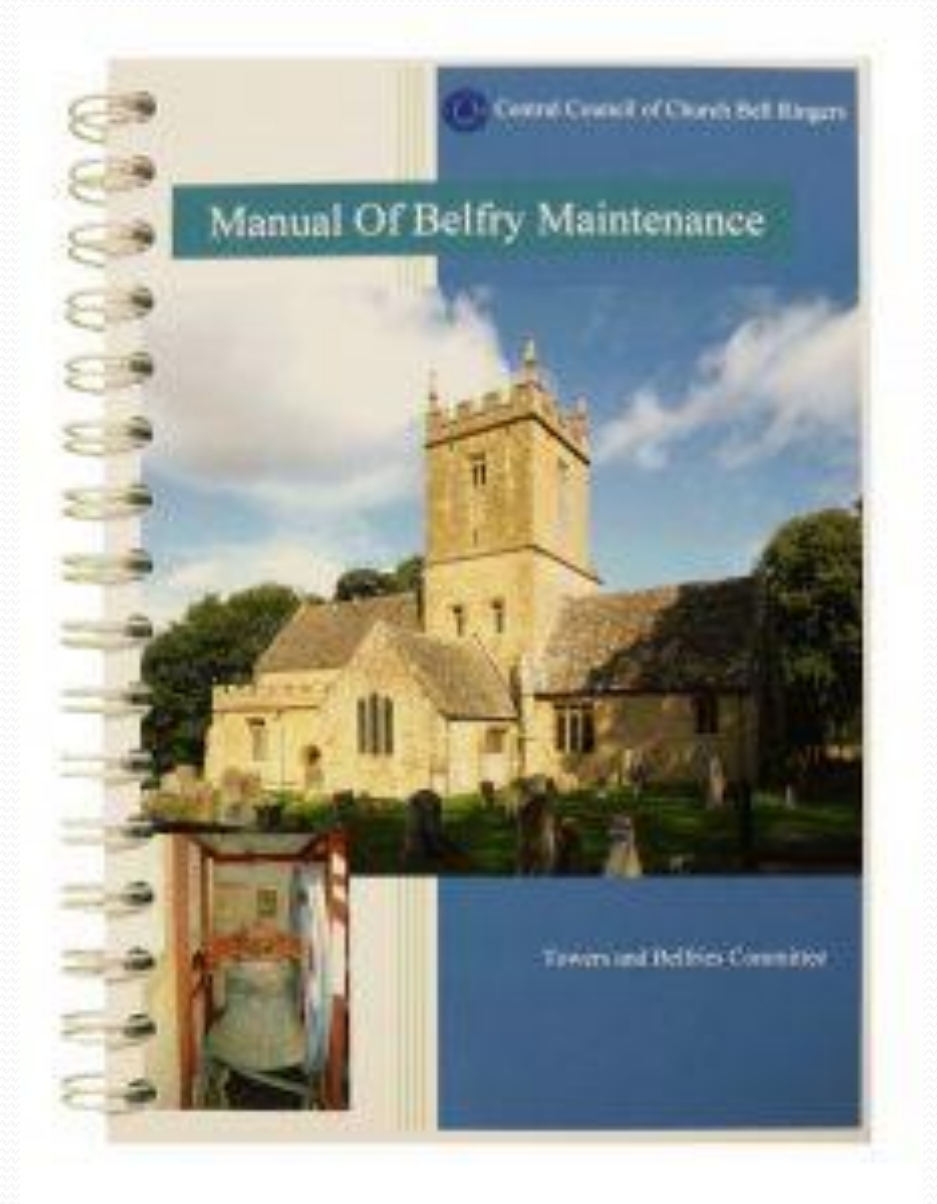


Help and support:

Local Association (W&DCRA)

Central Council of Church Bell Ringers

- ✓ Training of ringers
- ✓ Tower management
- ✓ Bell restoration and fund raising



More information - <https://cccbr.org.uk/>, <http://www.wdcra.org.uk/>

Mark Regan

DAC member and bells adviser

Ringling Master at Worcester Cathedral

National consultation with Church House
about bellringing during and after Covid

Over 30 years service as a PCC member

Over 20 years service as a Churchwarden

The hardware

- Nothing serious will have gone seriously wrong in the past 15 months.
- Jackdaws!
- Please check the basics - louvres, the clock hammers and faces and the bellropes
- Clearing space for services may mean things are now in the wrong place
- One thing to ask. Please ensure the tower door is locked and that bellropes can't be touched from the ground floor.
- The bell and clock trade will give excellent advice. Some charge some don't. Remember there is world of difference between a report and a quotation.



Worcester DAC and Cathedral

- The DAC is here to support you.
- The WDCRA can offer useful help
- The Cathedral's Teaching Centre is a national resource
- Safe environment, especially for those who would like some ropetime



Return to ringing

Government and Church guidance will continue to be updated after 21 June

There will be some nervousness about the return to ringing

Decisions should be consensual with the clergy and PCC

Expect sore hands and aching muscles

Please work with neighbouring ringers. The WDCRA will help connect you.



Tips

Rule of Six and social distancing until 21 June

Wear face masks

Ring for up to an hour to start

Maximise the ventilation in the ringing room.

Use sanitiser and keep things clean.

Lateral flow tests are not compulsory.



The future

Things will not return to how they were.
Post Covid is an opportunity to adapt for
the future.

Ringling will tell everyone there is church
in the heart of the community.

Ringling will support keeping our churches
open for everyone.

Bells are good news

Kate Andrew

Assistant Church Building Officer

Worcester DAC officer

Started bellringing over 40 years

Lots of lengthy breaks from ringing over the years, so knows about sore hands

A chance to embed better procedures

Signing in and out

The PCC & incumbent are responsible should an incident occur at a church – set up a signing-in log

Signing in system can double as a fire register - include “in” and “out” times

Safeguarding

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/parish-support/safeguarding>

PCCs are being asked to update safeguarding procedures and awareness

Ringers should know who the Parish safeguarding officer is in case of any concerns

Diocesan Safeguarding website and contact details should be on display

Church leaders (including tower captains) to do the leadership C2 course

Church volunteers (ringers are church volunteers) the online C0 awareness course this can be found at

<https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/parish-support/safeguarding/safeguarding-training/>

Safety assessments

When was the clock last serviced?

When was the tower fire extinguisher last checked?

When was the tower fan heater last cleaned and tested?

First aid items have expiry dates, when was the box last updated? Where is the incident book?

Have you updated your risk assessments including the fire risk assessment?

Time for a sort out and a spring clean?

Definitely rubbish

Empty plastic Quality Street tins, un-emptied bins, blown lightbulbs, left behind coats, gloves and umbrellas, order of services from the most recent weddings and funerals, bent drawing pins, the 2019 ringing outing poster....

Definitely not rubbish

Bell muffles

Handbells (even if the leather handles are damaged)

Loose cast iron bell clappers

Boards with number patterns for methods

Charity donor boards, boards recording peels

L shaped metal handle (probably for winding the clock)

Square section lengths of wood (these are probably spare bell stays)

Marlin spike (essential tool for shortening ropes)

Sallies and sections of bell ropes and (used for repairs) and to tie clappers for silent ringing

The historic funeral bier

Check before chucking - "no material of historic or artist interest can be repaired or disposed of without consultation"



Time for some basic maintenance? List A

Works of routine maintenance and small scale like-for like repairs especially on unlisted churches just need to be recorded

The “List A” record acts as the on-line church log book

Examples

Removing sticks deposited by jackdaws

Clearing up bat droppings (using PPE)

Clearing pigeon droppings (a job for a contractor with the correct PPE)

Sweeping and checking the tower roof for splits (work in pairs, have someone else at ground level)

Clearing tower hoppers and spitters

Repair and like for like replacement of wire mesh (window/louvre) guards

Routine maintenance of bells, bell fitting and bell frames

Inspection and routine maintenance of clocks and clock dials and like for like repairs carried out on-site

Electrical repairs provided these are not additions and are carried out by a person whose work is subject to an accredited certification scheme

Tasks with more impact - List B and Archdeacon's consent

Since April 2020 many tasks are now on list B and only need Archdeacon's consent

The process is completed on-line and the team normally turn requests around in a few weeks

Bell and ringing chamber examples

Works of internal and external redecoration, provided this does not change the overall appearance of the building

Installation of lighting and safety equipment in the tower

CCTV and fixed cameras

Security and fire alarms

New peel boards within the tower

More complex repairs and maintenance to bells than those on list A

Alterations to clock striking chains to prevent striking at night

Replacement of carpets

Treatment of historic fixtures for beetle and fungus

Anything more complicated will require full faculty consent

Any questions?

List A and List B are now on the Diocesan website <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/new-faculty-jurisdiction-rules.php>

Guidance for bellringers on the faculty system will be uploaded soon

The Church Buildings team are here to provide help and advice churches@cofe-Worcester.org.uk or 01905 732809

Information about the Cathedral Teaching Centre is at <https://worcesterbells.org.uk/ringing-towers/cathedral-teaching-centre/>

The Worcestershire and District Change Ringing Association covers most of Worcester Diocese www.wdcra.org.uk

The national body for church bellringers is at <https://cccbr.org.uk/>,

Severn Stoke Bells video

Recently restored by the Worcester Cathedral Guild of
Bellringers after 80 years silence