

St Mary's Bellringers

Sunday Service Ringing:

09:45 to 10:25 for Sung Eucharist (Parish Communion) service

17:45 to 18:25 for Choral Evensong service (we sometimes attempt a quarter peal at this time - so please check with Tower Contact if you are planning to visit at this time)

Wednesday evening practice: 19:30 to 21:00

Bellringing, and non-bellringing, visitors are always more than welcome to attend practice nights at Swanage and Sunday service ringing.

Bellringing is great FUN!

- Church bellringing can be a very rewarding hobby. It is a tradition dating back centuries. Bellringing combines a unique blend of mental and physical prowess.
- You don't have to be particularly strong or mathematically-minded to ring. A good sense of rhythm helps though.
- Bellringing can be physically and mentally challenging, but it doesn't matter how long it takes you to learn. Even as a beginner you become a valuable part of the team.
- There are about 40,000 bellringers in the UK. Bellringing is a great way of making new friends and meeting people.

What's involved in ringing?

Am I too old or too young? Young people may join St. Mary's ringers from the age of 11 to 12. This is the lowest sensible age and ensures that the young people are tall and strong enough to manage the bell rope comfortably.

Young adults usually find it easier to develop the necessary co-ordination to control the bell rope and the mental agility to 'ring the changes'.

There is no upper age limit but mature adults may have to consider health-related issues. Bellringing involves climbing a flight of stairs, lengthy periods of standing - you cannot sit down to ring church bells - and gentle muscular exercise.

Learning to ring

During the initial training period a separate learners practice is held for people who are new to bellringing, so that they can master the basics and learn basic bell handling skills. These initial training sessions are usually held on Saturday mornings.

Once the basics have been mastered, the new ringer then starts to practice with the other bellringers at the main Wednesday evening practice, and when they have reached a certain standard they can then take part in service ringing on Sundays.

In Swanage we use the Learning the Ropes training scheme, which is a structured, progressive scheme to learn the art of bell ringing – similar to music grades or karate belts. Ringers get an individual Personal Progress Logbook and at the completion of each Level are presented with a certificate of achievement from the Association of Ringing Teachers. <http://www.learningtheropes.org/>

Membership of Swanage Bellringers

Membership is free and tuition is provided free. In return, members are expected to help ring the bells for Sunday services when they are available, and for other services such as weddings as and when required.

To join St. Mary's Bellringers, either come along to the tower when we are ringing on a Wednesday evening or Sunday, or phone Tower Captain, Matthew Pike on 01929 423203 to find out about joining the bellringers and learning bellringing.

Here in Swanage we have a fine ring of 8 bells, with the heaviest weighing over 22 cwt.

Until 1888 St. Mary's church had only four bells, three of them by John Wallis of Salisbury and the fourth by Lester & Pack of Whitechapel. These were taken to the Loughborough foundry in that year where Wallis's bells were re-tuned, and the Lester & Pack bell was replaced, by John Taylor & Co. Three trebles and a tenor were then added. The new ring of eight bells was dedicated on 27th September 1888.

Bell	Weight	Diameter	Note
	cwt-qtr-lb		
Treble	4-2-14	27½"	E/Eb
2nd	5-0-1	28.625"	D#/D
3rd	5-3-4	30½"	C#/C
4th	6-3-6	33¼"	B/Bb
5th	7-3-0	35¼"	A/Ab
6th	10-0-26	38.375"	G#/G
7th	14-2-23	43"	F#/F
Tenor	22-0-24	49.125 "	E/Eb

Bell	Inscription
Treble	1888/IN MEMORY OF Mrs ELIZABETH BURT/OF PURBECK HOUSE/WHO DIED JANUARY 6. 1886/(Taylor mark in rectangle)/RECAST 1940
2nd	1888/IN MEMORY OF Mrs ELIZABETH BURT/OF PURBECK HOUSE/WHO DIED JANUARY 6. 1886/(Taylor mark in rectangle)/RECAST 1940
3rd	1888/IN MEMORY OF Mrs ELIZABETH BURT/OF PURBECK HOUSE/WHO DIED JANUARY 6. 1886/(Taylor mark in rectangle)/RECAST 1940
4th	THINKE ON GOD IW 1594
5th	A RE GOD FE 1612 IW
6th	1764 RECAST 1888/ (Lamb and flag)/(Roundel with bell in trefoli surrounded by JOHN TAYLOR & Co. LOUGHBOROUGH)
7th	HONOR THE KING 1621 IW/ 19(Taylor mark in roundel)40
Tenor	1888 /IN MEMORY OF Mrs ELIZABETH BURT/OF PURBECK HOUSE/WHO DIED JANUARY 6 1886//(Lamb and flag)/(Roundel with bell in trefoil surrounded by JOHN TAYLOR AND Co. LOUGHBOROUGH)