



Shropshire Association of Church Bell Ringers

Newsletter – April 2025

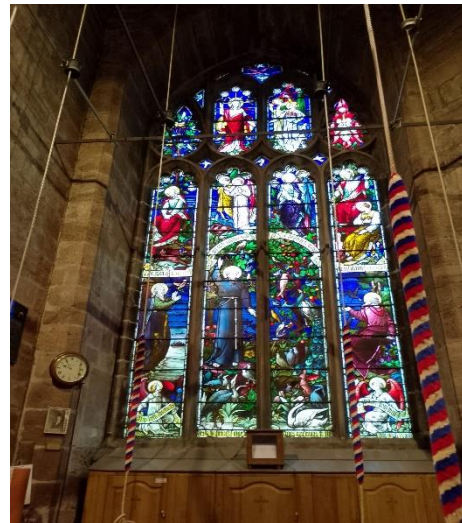
Hello,

This month's photo shows the beautiful west window at Edgmond church, very colourful in the spring sunshine. Thank you to Lisa Grimmett of the Meole Brace band for sending it.

This month we have an important update on Safeguarding Policy in the diocese of Lichfield.

There are also reports on recent activities and outlines of upcoming events.

Gill Glover, Editor



Dates for your Diary

Young Ringers Get Together, Saturday 5th April

An opportunity for our young ringers to ring together. This practice is from 2 pm to 4 pm, meeting first at Stanton on Hine Heath, and going on to Moreton Corbet at 3 pm. We invite all our young ringers to come along, whether they are a new learner or more experienced. Parents and tower leaders will also be very welcome.

At both these towers there is a short staircase to the ringing room, inside the church. Please park thoughtfully at Stanton; at Moreton Corbet there is plenty of room.

Quarterly meeting, Saturday 12th April at Oswestry

Ringling will be from 7 pm, and this will be followed by a short business meeting. Everyone is very welcome: there will be ringling for all levels of experience.

The Annual Report and Handbook, 2024-5, will be available for collection at this meeting. Please try to ensure that someone can collect the copies for your tower: this is a great help.

If you ordered SACBR logo clothing, that too will be available for collection. If you missed this order date please contact Biff to arrange for future production.

Safeguarding

As an organisation the Association has duties to look after its members interests and to aid interactions with the community in which we ring.

Safeguarding encompasses both.

The damage a safeguarding issue can cause to individual ringers and to towers and their captains is huge. You only have to look at what happened at York Minster in 2017

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-york-north-yorkshire-41021503#:~:text=The%2030%2Dstrong%20bell%2Dringing,will%20take%20over%20in%20September>.

The Church of England and the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers have worked together to produce a framework in which bell ringers can have the maximum support to make sure safeguarding issues either don't arise or can be picked up early. Part of this is to ensure all ringers can show they have been trained to identify safeguarding issues and know how to respond.

Paul Lewis has been making enquiries on our behalf whilst undertaking Safeguarding training as a Lay Reader. In discussions with the Safeguarding Training Officer for the Lichfield Diocese, Sarah Fullard, he established that there has been a repositioning of C of E Safeguarding Training. Sarah has confirmed that changes in necessary Safeguarding Training were implemented in January and will be the framework for the foreseeable future.

Details are on the Diocesan website

(<https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-training/lichfield-diocese--safeguarding-training-strategy-2025.php>).

For ringers the suggested training is as follows:

- Basic Awareness (national training) (available online for individuals) - required for all bellringers
- Foundation (national training) (available online for individuals) - required for tower captains and ringing teachers
- Leadership (diocesan training) (online (or in-person) in group training) - tower captains at prominent towers (including cathedrals, towers with frequent visitors or people learning) and the district chair / district safeguarding lead of bellringing guilds / associations). There seems to be no definition of what is a 'prominent tower'.

Paul has road tested the training material and writes: *"Earlier this week I completed the national Basic Awareness and Foundation courses again as it was three years since I last did them (and I needed to confirm completion ahead of my Lay Reader Leadership one starting next week) - both took me about 45 minutes each and interestingly both now have ringing options that you can choose as your case studies"*.

Please could I urge you to undertake the training that best matches the way that you participate in the life of your towers, it has been introduced to help and support you, your towers and bellringing in general.

Tony Freemont, Safeguarding Officer

In March

Spring ringing workshop:

Around 16 members of the Shropshire Association met up at St Peter's in Edmond on Saturday 8th March to enjoy a ringing workshop. It was a glorious Spring morning with the sun shining through the magnificent West window, into the ground floor ringing chamber. As one of the newer learners, I had my first go at raising a bell. Guided reassuringly by Mark and with Alan Glover offering extra tips, we raised the fourth without incident. I'll confess right now that, having had a number of "snakey" experiences with bell ropes going haywire in my early months of learning, I was rather trepidatious about it. Hearing of my nerves, Mark managed the sally. So whilst it wasn't a solo effort, I have gained more confidence.

After a great "icebreaker" of musical bells (pun intended), with us ringing then moving up a bell place each time for a few rounds to get the feel of them, we settled into rounds on eight and then focused on plain hunt on five with tenor covering. The seasoned ringers rang some complex methods beautifully during the morning but dedicated their focus to bringing on us learners.

With so many competent ringers to make up a strong band around the learners (about 6 of us) we each had masses of rope time. Dropping down to the back six enabled us to concentrate on timing and correcting technique. The bells rang smoothly and were of a reassuringly good weight; a contrast to the light bells at my home tower.

We all received plenty of encouragement and had lots of opportunity to make requests. Another first for me was practising leading then plain hunting on the treble. The true meaning of "rope sight" was demystified. The teaching was done in a really friendly, positive way, with bags of encouragement and many good hearted leg pulls and laughs.

Refuelling with tea and home baked treats gave opportunity for introductions to be made and "get to know you chats" with members from other towers. All in all, a fabulous day. Thanks to all involved.

Lisa Grimmatt



Some of the March students and teachers

National Twelve Bell Competition Qualifier, Shrewsbury

The Shrewsbury band played host to a heat of the National Twelve Bell Competition on 22nd March, at St Chad's church. The weather obliged, the ringing was glorious, and we all had a splendid, if hard-working, day. Lots of ringing friends dropped by for a listen and a chat. The catering team demonstrated that, although we don't have a 12 bell band good enough for the competition (yet), we can certainly meet the standard for excellent cakes, not to mention bacon butties.



Local ringers enjoying a rest

Ann Williams

Ann has been a stalwart of the Association for many years. Most recently she has represented SACBR on the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers (CCCBR) and has been the driving force behind the arrangements for our centenary year that will run from the AGM in January 2026 to that in January 2027.

Such is her longstanding contribution to the association that at our last AGM she was awarded the 'St Alkmund's Canons Trophy'. When the canons were removed from the sixth bell at St Alkmunds in Shrewsbury they were returned to the Association when they were mounted to form this Trophy to be awarded annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution to ringing in our area. This is the highest honour our Association can make to an active ringer.

Ann has had deteriorating health for a little while and has now asked that she gives up her two roles.

The work towards the centenary celebrations is well advanced and Ann has built up a group that will continue to drive forward her vision.

The Association would like to appoint a new member to represent its interests at CCCBR. This is one of two posts; the other representative is Paul Lewis. If you are interested in discussing this role further, could you contact our General Secretary Sue Dancey.

Tony Freemont

Further Ahead

Ringling for Peace, Thursday 8th May

This year sees the 80th anniversary of VE Day, on 8th May. There is a growing tradition of ringing our bells to mark such occasions, and in the hope of peace: I have already been asked if we will ring, by the secretary to Shrewsbury Town Council and by the vicars of both the churches where I ring. If possible, bands are asked to ring at 6.30 pm, but any time during the day would be a part of the national event.

Training morning, Saturday 17th May

Our next training morning will be at Meole Brace, from 10 am to 12.30. Places are limited, so contact Gill Glover, gill.glover407@outlook.com, to book your place. Let us know what you would like to learn or consolidate, so we can make sure we have enough helpers.

Summer Outing, Saturday 21st June

Arrangements are well-underway for the summer ringing outing in Leicestershire, which will take place on Saturday, June 21st. Ringing will start at Measham and a table is booked for lunch at The Queen's Head in Belton.

Please make a note of the date in your diary. Everyone is most welcome.

SACBR 100 Club

At present our 100 Club is not functioning. This raises funds for the Association's Bell Restoration Fund, usually between £400 and £600 a year, depending on the number of members that join. Four draws take place at the Quarterly meetings and several cash prizes are distributed from each draw.

We are looking for a volunteer to take over running the Club. If you are interested in doing this useful job for the Association, please get in touch with a committee member.

Set of 23 Taylors hand bells in 2 cases for sale. Good condition. For more information please contact Simon Rice (Dawley Telford) at sierice@hotmail.co.uk or 07952 305947

Summer Ringing Courses

Applications are now open for the **North West Ringing Course 2025** for both Students and Helpers. The Course will be based at Borwick Hall near Carnforth in Lancashire from Thursday 7th August to Sunday 10th August. All details can be found on our website at <https://nwringingcourse.uk> or contact us on enquiries@nwringingcourse.uk

Applications will open on Tuesday 1st April for the **Bradfield Ringing Course 2025** for both students and helpers. The course will be based at Bradfield College in Berkshire from Thursday 14th August to Sunday 17th August. All details can be found at <https://www.bradfield-ringing-course.org.uk/>