

How long does it take to learn to ring?

There is no easy answer to that, as people learn in different ways and at different paces, but it is likely to be months rather than days.

What you can expect from us

The ringing master will make every effort to work with you to turn you into a competent ringer. This takes a lot of time from everybody, and practice night has to give everybody a go. You will be given practical and theoretical tuition, and homework to do. The more you put in, the quicker you will progress.

What we expect from you

We expect you to keep in touch, turn up on time, and let us know if you cannot make practice night. If you are given homework to do, please do it, and come along to the tower with your serious head on, be prepared to try hard and listen to what you are asked to do.

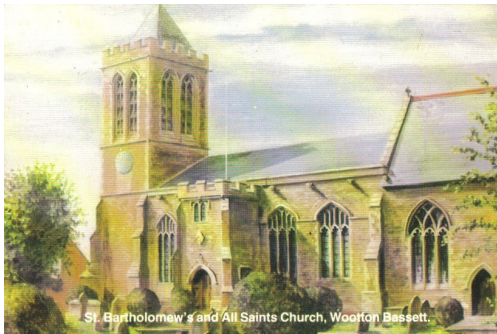
How will I know when I have made it?

The ringing master will ask you to come along and ring for Sunday service!

We do have to be honest and admit that some people will never make it. There may come a time when we have to call it a day. If this happens, this is not because we don't like you, it is more the case that we have to agree that bell-ringing is not your forte!



WE HOPE THAT WE HAVE NOT FRIGHTENED YOU OFF... if you are still reading this, then obviously not. Hopefully you will realise that these points are best made up front, so that we can all enter into what we hope will be a mutually rewarding, long term relationship between you, us and the bells.



Welcome to Wootton Bassett Bellringers

Practice Night: Mondays 19.30-21.00

Contact: David Whipp 01793 731016

Welcome to the bell tower of St Bartholomew and All Saints

Church.

Congratulations .. you have taken the first step towards being a bell-ringer!

We would like to share with you our aims, and how we can work together to achieve them.

- 🔔 To help you learn to ring church bells
- 🔔 To enable you to become a valued member of our band, ringing for Sunday church services
- 🔔 To make you proud of being a St Bartholomew's bell-ringer
- 🔔 And to make all of the above an enjoyable experience for you and us!

Bell-ringing is an excellent pastime – it is fun, active and helps you to make good friends, whilst encouraging discipline and team work, combined with a form of Christian worship. The main reason to ring bells is to call people to church and to remind everybody that the church is still active in our community. Everybody who learns to ring in our tower will be expected to turn up to ring for the Sunday morning church service once competent. If you are not able or willing to dedicate this time, then perhaps bell-ringing is not for you.

About us...

We are a friendly band of ringers, who get on well and support each other both in the tower and outside of it. There is a social side to bell-ringing and for our tower this tends to take place in the “5 bells” after practice.

When do you ring?

We practise on a Monday night from 7.30 – 9.00 pm. The first part of the practice is for our learners, and we concentrate on the basics of bell-ringing - the most important part of this to learn to handle your bell. Once you have done that, you can go on to bigger and better things, but this really is the first step. As a new learner, therefore, it is important to turn up ready to ring at **7.30pm sharp** so that you can get as much ringing in as possible.

The later part of the session is for the more experienced ringers to hone up on their skills, learn new methods, and generally to have a bit of fun doing it. Learners are encouraged to stay for this part of the practice as it is a good way to get used to the jargon.

Apart from the Sunday morning church services (we ring 9.30 – 10.00 am) we also ring at weddings, special occasions and sometimes arrange outings and extra ringing for fun. We have to be a bit careful about how much we ring as it is a noisy pastime, which does not always go down well with the neighbours, so we like to keep people informed as to what is going on and respect our position within the town.

How to behave within the tower

As with most pastimes, we have to have a few rules. There is a reason for each of these, and we are happy to explain why if you want to know more.

- 🔔 Whilst in the tower, it is important to remember that you are in church, so your language and behaviour should reflect this.
- 🔔 When you are inside the tower, the Ringing Master is in charge. If (s)he tells you to do something, you should do it straight away. If (s)he shouts at you, it may be because you are in danger, so please do not take it personally. Just do it, and ask questions later.
- 🔔 You must not touch a rope unless you are an experienced ringer or are invited to do so by the ringing master. When you are seated, do not cross your legs or dangle your feet. Your feet should be on the floor at all times, to prevent getting a rope wrapped around your feet.
- 🔔 Please turn your mobile phones off as this can be distracting.
- 🔔 Do not talk when people are ringing, as this can also be distracting. If people get distracted, they can miss a rope and this is quite dangerous.
- 🔔 A ringing chamber is an enclosed space, and any bad smells linger, so please pay attention to personal hygiene. The person teaching you will get quite close, there is a lot of raising of arms as part of the ringing process, so body odour is not appreciated
- 🔔 If you have a cold or flu, please stay at home. Nobody will thank you for your germs, and sneezing whilst ringing can be messy!
- 🔔 For Health and Safety reasons, please do not turn up in the bell tower if you are under the influence of drink or drugs.
- 🔔 You should wear a top which is loose fitting and quite long (polo shirts are ideal) so that when you raise your arms, your midriff and underwear are not on show for all to see. Please avoid flappy belts and scarves as these can get tangled in the ropes, which is dangerous.