

Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Great Brickhill
Annual Church Meeting : 27th April, 2018

Great Brickhill Bell Ringers - Tower Captain's Report

Ringling Activities

Sadly, since the last Annual Church Meeting, funerals have exceeded weddings, and for the one wedding at this church last year, bells were not required. However, we rang for the very sad and unexpected funeral of our church's dear friend and active contributor, Clare Amies, and we rang for another funeral only yesterday. I am as yet uncertain whether we have weddings for the coming year, but I hope also that we do not have more funerals. Nevertheless, we have managed to ring bells for most services during the year for the benefit of the Parish and the congregation, and we continue to hold practices each Wednesday evening when we have sufficient ringers available.

Shortage of Ringers

For each special ringing event, and for most practices, we have had to import ringers from elsewhere in the district, in order to ring all eight bells, and even for six bells only, illustrating the dire need for us to encourage more individuals from the village to learn or to come back to ring with us. Last year, we recruited one newcomer who came back to ringing after many years away from the district, but we lost three ringers, partly from injuries sustained from age, medical conditions and activities not related to bell ringing, and one from a young recruit to continue his education. Recently, we also have had two ringers hit by sickness and a need for surgery, so that we are very short of ringers, as I have mentioned in previous reports. Furthermore, we do not have strength in depth, so that when ringers have other activities, either in the church or outside, on a Sunday or for practice, particularly during the summer, we lose the ability to assemble a band to ring, and our ringing skills and performances are diminished. We have to rely on too few ringers to keep the bells ringing, and if the church and the village are not to lose the sound of bells here, we must all become evangelists for the bells as well as other church activities. Consequently, please join us, and encourage others, particularly adults, to learn to ring bells, or to encourage ex-ringers to come back to reawaken their skills as ringers.

David Middleton.