

Hartpury, Corse, and Staunton Bell Project

At last, the bells are back – well Hartpury bells at least, six weeks later than planned. The eight bells for Hartpury were delivered to the church on the 28th of September, these included the new bells as part of the augmentation from six to eight bells. Over that weekend they were on display in the church for people to come and see before they disappear from public view for the next hundred years. **Xx** visitors came to see them raising a further **£xx** towards the project.

[Insert picture]

While the bells have been away; work has continued in Hartpury tower. A new intermediate floor has been installed above the old ringing room, creating a new higher ringing room and allowing the old lower ringing room to be redeveloped into a **[Jim, can you add a description]**. The old dangerous near vertical ladder allowing access to the bell chamber has been replaced by a modern safe staircase. In addition, the intermediate floor to the bell chamber, badly affected by woodworm has been replaced and the bell frame painted ready for the bells and fittings to be installed.

At Corse, the bells fittings were removed in August for refurbishment, the opportunity was taken to apply a second coat of paint to the bell frame ready for the return of the fittings.

On the following Monday, the 2nd of October, Steve, the professional bellhanger from Taylors Bell foundry arrived at Hartpury to start the installation of the bells and fittings helped by local volunteer labour. Fortunately, an electric hoist was available for lifting all the bells and fittings back into the tower.



The work on Hartpury bells should take three weeks and be completed by the time you are reading this article!

The work on Staunton and Corse bells is planned to start immediately after completion of the work at Hartpury and be finished in time for the rededication service. This includes returning the refurbished fittings at Corse and the much larger project at Staunton of refitting the bell frame with new supporting girders, bells, and fittings. An update on this work will be given in the next magazine.

The re-dedication service for the bells at Hartpury, Corse and Staunton churches is planned for the 8th of November by the Bishop of Gloucester, *[name]*. Details of this are included in a separate article in this magazine.

Arrangements for the dedication services were made at the beginning of the project, the 6-week delay in the bells returning from the bellfounders resulted in a bit of an “Anika Rice” challenge – but we won’t compromise on the quality of the work.