

## The Bells Ring Out.

After 2 years of planning and 9 months of hard work the bells at Hartpury, Corse and Staunton churches are all back and working.

Staunton bells have new steel beams replacing the original badly corroded ones supporting the bells and frame and all new fittings to the bells. Corse has had the badly rusted frame painted, new bearings, wheels and rollers fitted and the Ellacombe chiming mechanism repaired to working condition.

Hartpury has been subject to major works; a new floor being installed creating a new ringing room higher up the tower with an exhibition room in the old ringing room for visitors to learn about the history of bellringing. Two additional bells have been added so there is now a peal of 8 bells, the only church in our benefice to have 8 bells.

Training bells have also been installed at Staunton and Hartpury so learners can be taught to ring safely without having to use the actual church bells.

The bells at Hartpury were rung for the first time at 7pm on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November by local ringers, just in time for the dedication services at all three churches on the following day. Delivered, as they say, “just in time”, although there is still a lot of work to be done to finish off the project – but the pressure is off.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November, The Rt. Rev'd. Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester and Rev. John Longuet-Higgins, conducted a Service of Thanksgiving, Dedication and Rededication and Celebration for the bells at each church. These were well attended by parishioners, friends and representatives of the Gloucester and Bristol Association of Church Bell Ringers.



**Current and future ringers with Rachel Treweek and John Longuet- Higgins at Hartpury Dedication**

Following the dedication there was open ringing at each church which was enjoyed by local bellringers and others who had travelled considerable distance to ring the bells.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people who have generously given their time, skills and labour to make the project a success. Also, to John Taylor and Co of Loughborough who delivered the project and their skilled team of workers.

But we would not have been able to do any of the work without the financial support from

Benefact Trust  
Church Buildings Council  
Forest Branch Bellringers  
Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Church Bellringers  
Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust  
Hobson Charity  
Ironmongers' Foundation  
Julia and Hans Rausing Trust  
Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme  
Sharpe Trust

and donations given by members of the local community.

We now have the bells to ring and train people – what we need now are more bellringers. Have you rung in the past and would like to start again, or would you like to start? If so, please contact: -

David Butler on 01452 700160 or [DGButler.mail@gmail.com](mailto:DGButler.mail@gmail.com).

Over the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 it is planned that peals will be rung on all three sets of bells to celebrate the completion of the project; each peal will last for about three hours.

Peals at these churches are rare, Hartpury has had 8 since 1927, the last in 1998, Staunton 7 peals since 1902, the last in 1974 and Corse 14 peals since 1907 with the last once as recently as 2022.

Later in 2024 it is planned to have an open day where people will be able to visit the Hartpury bell exhibition room and have a chance to ring on the training bells at Hartpury and Staunton – date to be advised.

The work at each church was extensively recorded and this is being compiled into video which will also be available later next year.