



Guidance Note No. 3

A Glossary of Bellringing Terms

The following table explains many of the more commonly used terms in bell restoration work in alphabetical order. Those words that are underlined are described elsewhere within the table. There are also diagrams of a bell at the end of this document.

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| Archdeacon's Certificate | Authorisation, issued by the Archdeacon, for minor works to bell fittings not requiring a <u>faculty</u> . |
| Association / Guild / Society | Ringling organisation, generally based on county or diocesan regions, whose main objective is the furtherance of church bellringing. |
| Augment | To add bells to an existing ring of bells, usually by adding lighter bells of higher tone. |
| Band | Collective noun for group of bellringers. |
| Bearings | These are fitted to the <u>gudgeons</u> and rest in housings on the <u>bellframe</u> either side of the bell, allowing it to swing. They may be plain brass, or ball or roller automotive-style bearings. The latter two are often self-aligning which will accommodate some frame movement or misalignment. |
| Belfry | The room in the tower where the bells are hung and sometimes known as the Bell Chamber. Can also be used to mean the whole tower. |
| Bell Adviser to DAC | An expert appointed by a Diocesan Bishop to provide advice to the <u>DAC</u> about bell related matters. The Adviser may or may not be a full member of the DAC. |
| Bell Chamber | See <u>Belfry</u> . |
| Bell metal | A bronze consisting of approximately 77% copper and 23% tin. |
| Bell Welding | There is at least one company that specialises in weld-repairs to bells. This is a particularly attractive solution for historic bells that would not be permitted to be broken up for recasting. |
| Bellframe / Frame | Timber or metalwork structure that supports the bells. |
| Bourdon | A, usually large, bell that does not form part of the main ring of bells in a church. |
| BRF | Belfry Repair Fund / Bell Restoration Fund - a fund set up by ringing <u>Associations</u> , etc for the purpose of making grants to churches to assist in the restoration or installation of bells. |
| BRO | Bell Restoration Officer - the Officer of an <u>Association</u> , etc who assists towers with bell restoration matters. |



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| Cannons | Loops cast onto the top of older bells when they were made, through which metal straps passed, attaching the bell to the <u>headstock</u> . Modern bells are flat-topped, drilled and bolted to their headstocks. Cannons have been cut off some bells which have then been drilled and bolted with either a wooden or cast resin pad between bell and headstock. |
| Casting | The process of pouring molten bell metal into a mould to produce a bell. |
| CBC | The Church Buildings Council (formerly the Council for the Care of Churches (CCC)). The CBC is a statutory body of the Church of England supporting dioceses and parishes in the use, care and development of parish churches and their contents. |
| Ceiling Boss | A metal or wooden ring fitted to the ceiling or floor, through which a bell rope passes smoothly and with minimal wear. |
| Central Council | Central Council of Church Bell Ringers - organisation (and charity) which represents all who ring bells in the English tradition with rope and wheel: the art of change ringing. |
| Chancellor | Officer (normally a barrister) appointed by a Diocesan Bishop to carry out his legal duties. He acts as a judge would, deciding on the merits of each application for a faculty. |
| Change Ringing | The particularly British art of ringing bells <u>full circle</u> to a <u>method</u> . |
| Chime | Verb - to swing a bell through a small arc to make the <u>clapper</u> strike the bell. Noun - a group of bells hung for chiming rather than full circle ringing. A lever is often used instead of a <u>wheel</u> in the case of swinging bells or hammers if the bells are <u>hung dead</u> . |
| Clapper | See diagram of bell. |
| Clapper Staple | The <u>clapper</u> swings on a pivot called the staple. This may be bolted through the bell (known as independent) or cast into the bell during manufacture (known as cast in). The latter are known to have caused stresses in the bell and are usually removed if the bell is taken down for any reason. Also known as the Crown Staple. |
| Clock Chamber | In many towers the turret clock is situated in a separate room between the <u>Ringling Chamber</u> and the <u>Belfry</u> . In such towers the Clock Chamber also acts as a <u>Sound Chamber</u> . |
| Clocking | A method of sounding a bell by means of a rope tied to the end of the clapper, which enables it to be pulled against the bell. It is a very undesirable method as many bells have been cracked by this process. |
| Crown Staple | See <u>Clapper Staple</u> . |
| DAC | Diocesan Advisory Committee - a group with expertise in the various aspects of church fabric like bells and organs as well as architects and structural engineers. They provide advice to the <u>Chancellor</u> of the diocese when considering <u>faculty</u> applications. |
| De Minimis Regulations (or List) | A list of minor works that may be undertaken without a faculty or <u>Archdeacon's Certificate</u> . The list varies from diocese to diocese and a copy may be obtained from the relevant <u>DAC</u> Secretary or <u>Registrar</u> . |



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| Dumb bell | A mechanical arrangement set up, usually in towers, to simulate a bell hung for <u>change ringing</u> . Used as a training aid, and often connected to a <u>bell simulator</u> . |
| Ellacombe Chiming Apparatus | A system of hammers, arranged to strike the inside of the bells and operated from the ringing chamber or ground floor, by pulling on sleeved ropes mounted in a frame on the wall. Intended for simple tune-ringing. |
| English Heritage | The Government's statutory adviser on the historic environment. Officially known as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England. It is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Often referred to as EH. |
| Fabric | The structure of a church building such as the walls, floor and roof but often used to include other substantial parts of the building such as a <u>bellframe</u> . |
| Faculty | A legal authorisation, issued by the <u>Chancellor</u> , to carry out specified work in a church. |
| Fittings | Ancillary equipment to allow a bell to be rung such as the <u>headstock</u> , <u>wheel</u> , <u>bearings</u> etc but not, usually, the <u>bellframe</u> . |
| Flat 6th | A bell added to a ring of 12 to enable 8 of the lighter bells to be rung and sound like a normal ring in a major key. |
| Foundation | Timber or metalwork that is let into the tower walls and supports the <u>bellframe</u> . Often referred to as Grillage. |
| Full Circle | Bells hung for change ringing are swung, by the ringer using the rope, from mouth up to mouth up through a full circle. |
| Garter hole | The hole that the rope passes through on the rim of the wheel. |
| Georgian Group | An amenity society that aims to protect buildings of the Georgian period - roughly 1700 to 1837. The Group will be consulted for faculty applications relating to such buildings and their contents. See also <u>Victorian Society</u> . |
| Grillage | See <u>Foundation</u> |
| Gudgeon | The shaft that runs from <u>headstock</u> to <u>bearing</u> . |
| Headstock | See diagram of bell. |
| Hung dead | A bell that is fixed in place and does not swing or rotate is said to be 'hung dead'. See <u>chime</u> . |
| Inscription | Lettering <u>cast</u> into the bell when made. Often details founder, donor, churchwardens or religious text. |
| Listed Bell | A bell included on the List of Bells of Historical Importance produced by the <u>Church Buildings Council</u> . There are restrictions on re-tuning, re-casting or disposing of such bells and a Faculty is required for any work to Listed bells. |
| Louvre(s) | Blade(s) of, usually, wood, slate or glass fitted into the window openings of a belfry to allow sound to exit the tower whilst deterring rain etc. from entering. |
| Method Ringing | Ringling a number of bells in a pre-determined sequence to a rhythmic beat. |

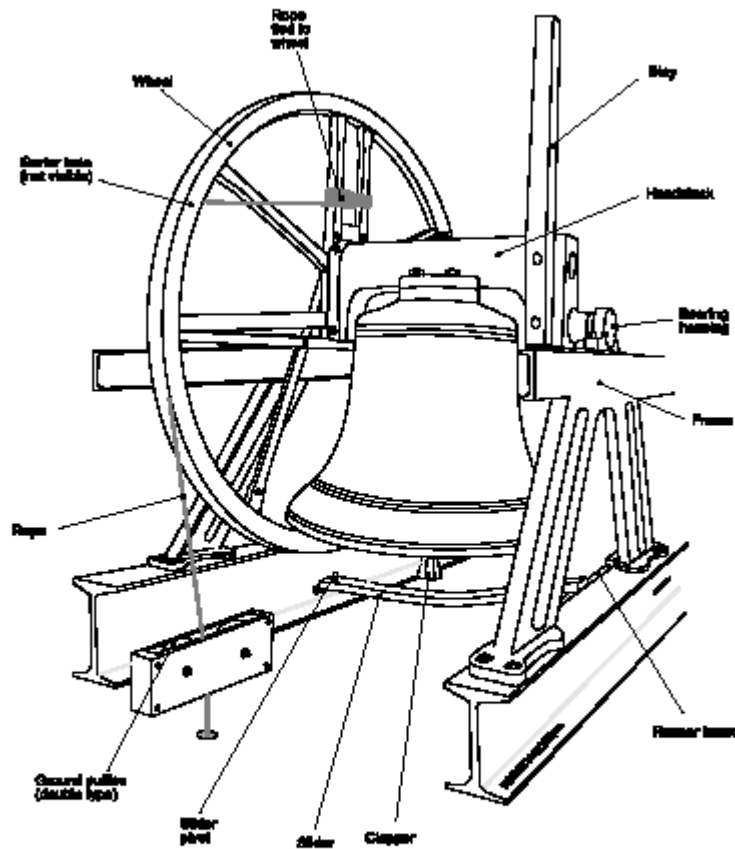


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| Pulley / Ground Pulley | See diagram of bell. |
| Quinquennial Inspection | A professional inspection of a church building and its contents required to be undertaken every five years by the inspecting architect. |
| Quinquennial Report | A report produced by the inspecting architect following a <u>quinquennial inspection</u> . A copy is sent to the <u>DAC</u> Secretary, the Archdeacon, the Incumbent and the PCC Secretary, |
| Re-cast | Something of a misnomer, this usually refers to replacing an existing bell with a new one, using the old bell metal. A new mould is made (not from the old) and the new bells are often <u>cast</u> as part of a batch. <u>Inscriptions</u> may be reproduced on the new bell and exceptionally casts may be made of parts of an old bell's <u>inscription</u> / decoration and transferred to the new bell. |
| Registrar | Officer (a solicitor) appointed by a Diocesan Bishop to carry out routine legal work. Applications for a <u>faculty</u> should be directed to him. |
| Re-hang | Significant work to a bell installation usually involving replacement of some or all of the bell <u>fittings</u> but not the bells themselves. |
| Ringling Chamber/Room | The room from which the bells are rung. |
| Ringling Master | The person appointed to take charge of the ringling, may be the <u>Tower Captain</u> . |
| Roller Box | Alternative name for <u>pulley</u> . See diagram of bell. |
| Rope Guide | A rigid metal or wooden framework supporting <u>ceiling bosses</u> or similar rings through which the bell ropes pass. A rope guide is usually fitted in high <u>ringling chambers</u> to improve the handling of the ropes and therefore bells. |
| Running board | The board with stops attached that supports and limits the <u>sliders</u> travel. |
| Sharp 2nd | A bell added to a ring of 12 to enable 8 of the lighter bells to be rung and sound like a normal ring in a major key. |
| Shrouding | Part of the bell <u>wheel</u> forming the sides of the channel guiding the rope around the rim of the wheel during ringling. See also <u>soling</u> . |
| Simpson tuning | A method of <u>tuning</u> the harmonics of a bell based on a 5 toned principle developed by Canon Simpson in the 1890's. Most modern bells are <u>tuned</u> this way. |
| Simulator | An electronic system, generally based on a PC, with sensors detecting the movement of some or all the bells in a tower, which allows the bell/s to be rung with the <u>clapper/s</u> disabled and the simulator generating the bell/s sound/s at the appropriate moment. Used as a training aid or to allow practice without any external sound. |
| Slider | See diagram of bell. |
| Soling | Part of the bell wheel forming the bottom of the channel guiding the rope around the rim of the wheel during ringling. See also <u>shrouding</u> . |



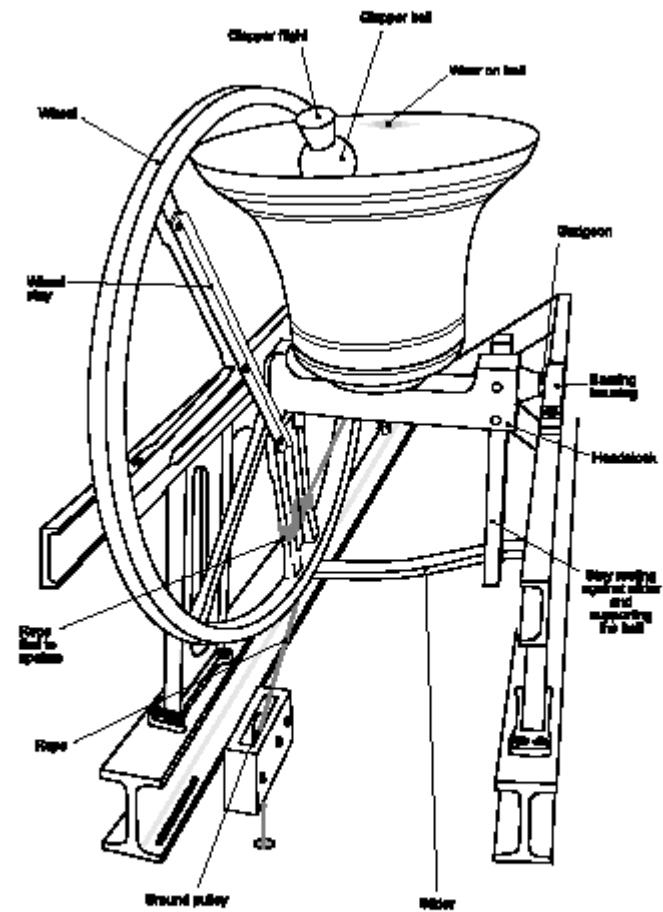
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| Soundbow | The slightly thicker part of the bell near its lip, on which the <u>clapper</u> strikes. |
| Sound Control | Any of various means to manage the sound level and balance of the bells both inside and outside the tower. Controlling external sound may be achieved by blocking all or part of the louvred sound openings (permanently or using adjustable shutters) or adding a <u>sound lantern</u> to the roof of the tower. Internal sound control may be achieved by putting additional floors or sound attenuating materials between bells and ringers to decrease levels, or pipe work to conduct sound to increase levels particularly if there is an imbalance between bells. |
| Sound lantern | A structure mounted on the roof of a tower fitted with openings to allow the sound out of the tower in a controlled fashion. They are fitted when there is a need to reduce the sound level close to the tower, but let it carry distances. Also improves the balance of the sound over conventional tower openings close to bells where a bell near the opening will tend to 'shout' compared with others further from the opening. |
| Sound / Intermediate Chamber | A room or space between the <u>Ringling Chamber</u> and <u>Belfry</u> which reduces the sound level heard by the ringers. See also <u>Clock Chamber</u> . |
| Spider | A device for hoisting the bell ropes towards the ceiling and out of reach. Can be especially important for safety in ground floor rings. |
| Stay | See diagram of bell. |
| Steeple Keeper | The person appointed to maintain the bells. |
| Technical Adviser / Tower Adviser | An officer of an <u>Association</u> , etc who will provide advice to towers within their area of responsibility. They are volunteers and, whilst probably having significant experience in bells and fittings, are often unqualified. |
| Tenor | The bell with the lowest note in the ring, usually the heaviest. |
| Tower Captain | The person appointed to take charge of the activities in the tower. |
| Treble | The bell with the highest note in the ring, usually the lightest. |
| Tuning | The process of removing metal (on a large vertical lathe) from various parts of the inside of the bell to adjust its note and harmonics. |
| Victorian Society | An amenity society which aims to protect buildings of the Victorian period - roughly 1837 to 1900. The Group will be consulted for faculty applications relating to such buildings and their contents. See also <u>Georgian Group</u> . |
| Wheel | See diagram of bell. |
| Wheel stay | Usually made of steel angle, it provides stiffening to the <u>wheel</u> . |

This and other guidance notes produced by the Bell Restoration Committee may be downloaded free of charge from the Bell Restoration Committee section of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers web site: www.cccbr.org.uk/bellrestoration. Please check the web site to ensure you have the latest issue.



A bell hung for ringing

(Cable not seen; headstock and frame, based on the sketch, bell, at Christ Church, Oxford, 1870)



A bell set at handstroke

(Cable not seen; headstock and frame, based on the sketch, bell, at Christ Church, Oxford, 1870)