

# **Central Council of Church Bell Ringers**

## **Redundant Bells Policy**

### **Introduction**

In an age of declining church attendance, churches are being declared redundant and, on occasions, secular buildings (including former churches) with bells may also no longer be required for their most recent use.

The Council considers that it should take a position on what happens to bells in buildings which become redundant or which change use in order that, where appropriate, bells or rings of bells may be saved and re-used.

### **Scope**

This document refers to buildings no longer required for their original purposes, whatever that may have been, and to buildings which have previously changed use but are no longer required for that subsequent use.

For the purposes of this document, a ring of bells is any set of 3 or more bells tuned to a scale.

“Historic” includes, but is not confined to, old bells, listed bells, bells cast by rare founders, bells cast for special reasons, e.g. war memorial bells, bells associated with historic ringing achievements, bells of particularly high quality casting, bells with special inscription.

### **Objectives**

In the matter of redundant bells, the Council’s objectives are:

1. To save good quality bells and rings of bells in order that they may continue to be rung;
2. Where bells and bell-frames are of historic or other interest, to save them as historic artefacts for the nation.

### **Priorities**

As resources, both human and financial, are limited, it is necessary to prioritise what bells should be targeted for saving. The Council’s stated priorities are:

1. To save complete rings of bells with greater priority being given to rings of higher numbers of bells;
2. To save individual bells of particularly good quality, by rare bellfounders or of other particular interest;
3. To save bells, bell-frames and fittings of particular historic or other interest.

## Implementation

In order to implement this Policy, the Council has set up a Committee for Redundant Bells whose Terms of Reference should reflect this Policy.

The Committee shall develop appropriate strategies to meet the objectives and reflect the priorities. In particular, the Committee shall:

1. Establish and maintain good communications and relationships with relevant Church and other bodies at a national and, if appropriate, local level in order to reflect and promote ringers' interests and concerns;
2. Obtain details, from all available sources, of buildings with bells which are to be made redundant or are subject to change of use or ownership and where there is a risk of the bells no longer being available for ringing;
3. Provide advice and information to local ringing associations and other bodies with an interest in the bells at risk;
4. Maintain and manage the Bells Rescue Fund on behalf of the Council;
5. Promote the interests of ringers and access for ringing when any ring of bells is at risk of destruction or being put out of use;
6. Where possible, retain rings of bells in their original buildings and available for ringing. Where this is impossible, consider relocation of bells, including frames and fittings, as appropriate;
7. Seek to support the English bell founding industry by encouraging augmentation and recasting as appropriate in the context of relocation.

Robert Wood *Chairman - Committee for Redundant Bells*

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