

## CHRIST CHURCH BURBAGE

2nd July 1996

Request for inspection from Mr G.E. Barnes, Churchwarden, on behalf of the PCC

### TOWER.

The bells are rung from an upstairs ringing room which is 11ft. above ground level and which is approximately 11ft. square and 10ft. 6ins high. The bells are reached by an iron ladder in the N-E corner of the ringing room which leads first to a clock room.

The clock room is 9ft high. The clock mechanism is housed in a wooden clock case mid way along the south wall. There are two louvres, 55ins wide, on each side of the tower level with the bells, there is also a single louvre 2ft wide on three sides of the tower at a higher level above the bells. On the south side at this height is the clock face. Some of the louvres are covered with wire netting to stop birds getting in; others have pieces of wood stuck in the openings between the louvres that serve the same purpose. Whilst this is effective it does look a bit untidy.

Above the bells there is a large disused clock case.

There are some gaps in the floor under the second bell. Small gaps let through a lot of noise so, they should be closed off.

### THE BELLS.

These are in sound condition i.e. none of them are cracked. Bells No 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 were 1/8 turned, when the bells were rehung in 1899 in the present new frame. There is now a significant amount of indentation into the bells at the clapper strike points indicating that the bells have been well used. All the bells have had their canons removed. Details of the bells are as follows:

Bell	Diameter	Weight	Date	Founder	Note
Treble	2' 3 1/2"	4-1-7	1883	J. Taylor.	E
2	2' 6 1/2"	5-0-10	1861	J. Taylor.	D
3	2' 8 3/4"	5-3-24	1861	J. Taylor.	C
4	2' 9 3/8"	6-1-0	1861	J. Taylor.	B
5	3' 0"	7-0-15	1861	J. Taylor.	A
6	3' 3 3/8"	9-0-2	1861	J. Taylor.	G

The inscriptions on the bells are as follows:

Treble: J:TAYLOR AND Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1883

No 2: JOHN TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1861

No 3: JOHN TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1861

No 4: + JOHN TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1861

No 5: JOHN TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1861

No 6: JOHN TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH A:D 1861

### HEADSTOCKS.

All the bells have box section cast iron headstocks. All are in a serviceable condition. The iron and steel work of the installation has been wire brushed and repainted in the last two years. This was done quite well in parts but unfortunately some areas have been missed. The underside of all headstocks and a side face of headstocks on bells No 5 and 6 have been missed. These parts should be wire brushed and given two coats of rust preventing paint e.g. Red oxide or Hammerite.

### WHEELS.

All are in good serviceable condition. The wheel on No 6 is newer than the others due to a previous accident with the clock hammer. The supporting metal work on the wheels is corroded. It was missed in the painting operation. Treat like the headstocks.

### BEARINGS.

All main bearings are ball bearings. As no problems are reported with the bells it is assumed that they are in sound condition. If a failure was suspected the bearing would have to be stripped down to examine the condition. Ball bearings are greased on assembly; they should never be greased again from then on. Ignore the greasing points.

#### CLAPPERS.

All bells have independent wrought iron clappers. They are well flattened at the strike point. There is an acceptable amount of wear at the clapper pin. The clapper pins are fitted with greasing caps. Continue to grease the clapper pins twice a year. All clappers are tight in their headstocks.

#### PULLEYS.

Bells No 2 and 5 have double pulleys; all the rest have single pulleys. All pulleys have been restored in recent time and probably now run on ball bearings prepacked with grease and so there are no greasing points. The pulleys are in excellent condition.

#### STAYS AND SLIDERS.

All stays and sliders are of the Hastings type. The dingle on the end of the stay engages with a hard wooden block fixed at each end of the S - shaped runner. In case of bells No 1 and 2 the dingle has ploughed into the wooden block. This was probably caused by making a new stay too short when it replaced a broken one. As a result of this ploughing action the bell sets deeper than it should. This makes it more likely that energetic action will cause the stay to break more often. It would be nice if the blocks on these two bells could be replaced or repaired. Some stays do not fit the headstocks for which they have been made.

#### BELL FRAME.

The bell frame is a standard high sided metal H frame design. It sits on a steel grillage which comprises two lower RSJs which run east to west and three upper RSJs which run north to south. All RSJs are built into the walls as they should be. The upper level of the H frame is also firmly built into the centre of the tower walls. Cast iron H frame sides carry the bells themselves. At first sight the bell installation looks well cared for as it has been wire brushed and repainted in the last couple of years. However some parts, not visible by line of sight to the eye or difficult to get to, have been missed e.g. underneath the RSJs, between bells at lower level, the underside of the headstocks, the steel supporting plates on the wheels. It is suggested that an effort should be made, now, to eliminate these omissions. In addition it would be useful to paint the steel parts of the installation. Steel corrodes much more quickly than cast iron. The metal work should be wire brushed to remove scale and given at least two coats of rust preventing paint. The first coat always leaves pin holes for rust to start again. If this work is to be done by volunteers, aim to fully complete a section in each work session. Give priority to doing the steel grillage as this is the most crucial part of the installation.

#### SUMMARY.

The bell installation is in excellent condition. The bells can be rung indefinitely.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS.

Priority 2 TO BE DONE AS SOON AS CONVENIENT

- (1). Wire brush the metal work that was missed and paint with at least two coats of paint. Red Oxide or Hammerite is suggested.
- (2). Paint the steel work again with one or two coats of paint.
- (3). Continue to grease the clapper pins.
- (4). Close off all small gaps and unnecessary holes in the floor under the bells.
- (5). Repair/replace wooden end blocks on sliders on bells 1 and 2.
- (6). Consider refurbishing the clappers so as to restore the spherical shape of the balls.

Advice given in good faith; no liability accepted.

G.A.HALLS

Diocesan Adviser on Bells