

Bellringing in Balsham

A talk and demonstration at the Church



This is a very brief outline of a demonstration and talk which I have done before, and am happy to do again. It is best suited to relatively small groups, as the space upstairs is limited, and not everyone will get a chance to have a go if there are too many people. I would hesitate to fix a rigid upper limit, however. With children I will need some adults, although as should be clear from the following, I am very conscious of safety aspects, and will have at least two helpers, at least one an experienced ringer, with me to cover 'bell safety' (even with an adult group!). I need adults to be responsible for the children before and after, and (just in case) for their good behaviour during the demonstration. If there is a legal requirement for an adult:child ratio, I should like you to be responsible for that (although you may count me as an adult!)

I hope that those attending will enjoy seeing bits of the church which they may not be familiar with, and learn a bit about a skill and art form which remains virtually unchanged since the Middle Ages. I will involve people as much as they wish, and certainly not just talk at them. And, of course there's the opportunity to have a go.

My hope is that perhaps someone will be inspired to have a go properly, and come back to learn to ring. However, If I only succeed in spreading a bit of interest and awareness, I shall consider my time well spent. There is no obligation!

For more details, contact Richard Pargeter at balsham.bells@gmail.com

~~~~~

## Outline

### Welcome & Introduction

#### Will

- Visit upstairs
- See bell in motion upstairs
- See bell being rung from downstairs
- Learn about change ringing (including a 'dance' with handbells)
- Have a go!

#### **MUST**

- Do as you are told
- Be careful on the stairs - they are very worn in places
- Put your fingers in your ears upstairs when a bell is ringing
- NOT touch bells or ropes without direct instruction

### Upstairs

- Explain how a bell works
- See who can spot the difference between the new bell (No 1, 1988, cast by Whitechapel, in memory of John Houghton & Thomas Sutton) & the old ones
- History
  - Guess the age of the old frame
  - Guess the age of the oldest bell
- No 2, 1774, Cast by Pack & Chapman / Whitechapel. See who can spot the difference in this inscription
- See (and hear!) a bell in operation

### Downstairs

- Safety - prove that you can't tell a rope which is safe to touch just by looking
- Explanation of English change ringing
  - Reasons (based on limited control of speed of bell)
  - Called changes and method ringing
  - Opportunity for 6 volunteers to demonstrate a simple method by moving with handbells
- Listen to a tape of Italian tune ringing
- Rewards of ringing
- Social side of ringing
- Questions (which haven't already come up)
- Chance to have a go (until time runs out)