The progress reports published on the village website during the

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project

All photos are by Geoff Pullin except when otherwise attributed in the caption.

St Mary's Church, Badby

BELLS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT 2025

To our neighbours

w/c MONDAY, 16 JUNE
Our project will begin on Monday. The immediate effect will be that the church clock will not chime the quarters and hours and the bells will not announce Sunday services or weddings until September!

We expect the bellhanger, Neil Deem, from Dorset to arrive midday Monday with all the equipment that he, and our volunteer helpers, will need to lower the bells to the ground floor of the tower ready to be taken away to the bellhangers' workshops in Bridport.

THURSDAY 19 JUNE
We anticipate that the bells will be pushed across the churchyard from the tower door and lifted on to the lorry across the churchyard wall in Church Hill next to the Old Forge that morning.
We would ask for your cooperation in keeping this area, which we will mark with cones on the previous evening, clear of parked cars to make this process as easy and quick as possible. This phase of work is likely to finish by the end of this week.

MONDAY 21 JULY
Local electricians will be upgrading the lighting within the tower.

w/c MONDAY 28 JULY
The bellhanger will return with restored parts of the bell frame and, with our volunteers, will proceed to de-rust and protectively repaint the bell frame ready for the bells to return which may take the whole week.

MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER
The current plan is for the bells, complete with their brand-new headstocks and clapper assemblies, to arrive back from Bridport to be unloaded across the churchyard wall. **We would ask for your cooperation in keeping this area clear of parked cars again.** We will update you on the timing nearer the time.

The whole project should be completed that week or early the following week.

You will know we are nearing the end of the project when you hear single bells being tried out and the clock chime hammers get back into place and are active!

More details of the work are available on line at:
https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/16443/page/83805/view/

Thanks for your cooperation!

The Churchwardens
Judy Jordan and Frances Williams.

Bells Improvement Project – help wanted.

21 March 2025

The project will get underway when the bells are dismantled and removed from the tower during the week starting on Monday 16 June 2025.

We need one or two more able-bodied volunteers to help Nicholson Engineering Ltd's technician with this heavy and dusty removal work. Later, currently scheduled as week commencing 1 September 29, the repaired bells, complete with new headstocks and fittings will be hoisted up the tower and installed into the repainted frame.

When the bells are away, the frame will be de-rusted, repaired and repainted during two weeks (dates not yet fixed) for which the same or other additional volunteers will be needed.

This unusual voluntary work will make a great financial and physical contribution to the village's heritage. If you could help, please contact Geoff Pullin. gcsspullin@yahoo.com, 01327 871806

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project starts

14 June 2025

The six bells at St Mary's Church were installed in a new frame and retuned to a high standard by John Taylor & Co in 1932. Because three of the bells were cast in 1623, and the other three in 1821, 1932 and 2000, the peculiarities of the bell mechanics make it more difficult than it should be to ring all six bells suantly. It also makes the raising of the bells with the clappers on the right side very difficult.

Despite that, since 1981 they have been regularly rung for weekly practices and services. 114 people have been taught to ring from this and surrounding villages and another 50 had a good try including all year six at Badby School in 2013-5. Over 400 different people have rung the bells in the last 40 years, either regularly or for special visits.

Prompted by the 400th birthday of the three oldest bells (they are older than the tower!) and the finding of some corrosion in the foundation beams and frame, professional opinions were sought and the best solution was chosen.

Nicholson Engineering Ltd of Bridport, Dorset, with site foreman Neil leading a team of volunteers, will remove the bells, take them away to deal with incipient cracks found in the crown of the 3rd bell, and come back to re-hang all the bells on new specially designed headstocks with new clapper assemblies so that they readily ring as a coherent ring of six bells.

The last practice before the bells come out was held on Wednesday (11 June) evening and ended with 'diminishing rounds' followed by each bell being swung 'down' one at a time. There is no service on Sunday so that was the last ringing.

The next effect will be the loss of the church clock quarter chimes, no ringing to announce services or weddings and quieter Wednesday evenings until September!

The schedule is expected to be:

Commence	Work	Duration
14/5/2025	Site meeting with all concerned	Half day
18/6/2025	Remove some masonry from tower doorway	Day
16/6/2025	Dismantle bells and lower bells to tower floor	Approx 3 days
19/6/2025	Bells to be loaded on lorry to go to workshops	Morning
21/7/2025	Upgrade tower lighting	Approx 2 days
28/7/2025	Repair corrosion in bell frame, de-rust & paint	To confirm
1/9/2025	Install bells & restore masonry at doorway	5 – 7 days

We hope to put a CCTV monitor in the church so that anyone interested can see work in progress in the belfry.

There will be progress reports and photos published on the parish website badby-pc.gov.uk – subscribe now to get notifications!

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #1

16 June 2025



At 8.30am on Monday June 16, Martyn Parratt cut out the two blocks of stone from the tower doorway. The two largest bells will not fit through the doorway otherwise. The two pieces of stone had been cemented back into place in 1932 after the bells had passed through the door.



Neil Deem, a professional bellhanger of Nicholson Engineering, arrived from Dorset at 11am and boarded over the ringing room floor and brought in chain hoists and lifting straps. Our volunteers (Anne Prestwick, Martin Walton, Pete Johnson and Steve Brooks) turned up as the clock marked noon by chiming for the last time until September. After a commonsense safety briefing, they all set to work in the belfry in the fine but rather hot weather.

By 4pm they had dismantled the stays, wheels, clappers, pulleys and loosened the bearing block holding down bolts and some cross bracing.

Tomorrow will be Church Coffee morning so there will be the added entertainment of watching work in the belfry on the cctv monitor as well as the hoisting of the equipment to start lowering the bells to the tower floor.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #2

17 June 2025



After some difficulty threading the lifting strops through the tower roof timbers on Tuesday morning, the chain hoists were soon put to use lowering bell 3 down to the ground floor. Then each of bells 2, 1, 4 and 5 were manoeuvred one by one over the central floor openings, vacated by bell 3, also to be lowered to the ground.

Left: Threading the lifting strops over the tower roof timber beams

This leaves bell 6, the biggest and heaviest and the most awkward to remove for Wednesday morning.

People at the church coffee morning were able to see the project in action and on the cctv monitor in the church.

The aim for Wednesday is to have it down and all the bells moved into the churchyard ready to be lifted on to the lorry

Progress has been so swift, thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, that the lorry has been brought forward to arrive at 2PM ON WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, when all six bells will be brought out of the tower and loaded.



Right: Shifting one cast iron bellframe out of the way to get the bigger bells down through the trap doors

You are welcome to come and see the bells being loaded. The last onto the lorry will be bell 3 which will be dropped off at the specialist welders in Cambridgeshire for welding repairs to its cracks whilst the rest will continue to the Bridport workshops.



Left: Bell 5 reaches the ground ready for loading on the lorry

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #3

18 June 2025

Another hot fine day greeted our intrepid volunteers as they gathered in the belfry for today's (Wednesday) tasks. The first thing was to lift the tower door off its hinges. A roadway of boarding was laid across the churchyard and bell 5 was pushed on a pallet truck from the tower door as far as manpower could cope until it was dropped onto bearers and parked *(Right)*.





The next task was to reposition the tenor (largest 14cwt, 711kg bell) over the trapdoor holes. As it was lowered people were stationed to guide it through the openings in the two floors so that its lip didn't damage the timbers *(Left)*. This was completed by 11am.

The next stage, getting it through the tower door, was likely to be the day's biggest risk of delay. However, by clearing a little more masonry along the track of the lip scratched into the wall when it went in during 1932, the job was done by noon. It was necessary to pull it out on the pallet truck taking several lowerings onto bearers for repositioning of the bell at a slight angle so the lip just cleared each side of the doorway *(Right)*. Before raising the truck again. This involved manually passing the pallet truck over the bell *(Left)* from inside to outside!



This earned a lunch break during which the specialist eight-wheeler



arrived to hoist and take the bells away. With very skilful manipulation, the lorry's crane pulled the bells one at a time along the boardway and lifted them carefully onto the vehicle *(Right)*. The last bell paid a visit to next-door Sue and Neil Berry's front drive for a family photo! The last bell on was bell 3 from which the headstock had been removed so that it can be dropped off first at Soundweld for repairs before joining the other three again in the Bridport workshops. By 2.45pm they were all strapped down and the lorry made an elegant departure backwards down Church Hill





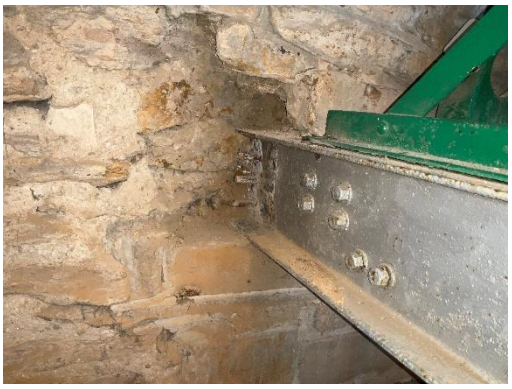
Despite the anti-climax after the departure, the volunteers were quickly rounded up into the next tasks which involved replacing a displaced bell frame member *(Left)* and then bringing down all the bell wheels *(Right)*, clappers, stay dingle guides, ladders, chain hoists and strops, fitting the tower door and loading everything into the bellhanger's van. All done by 6pm – grateful thanks to Neil and especially the volunteers – Anne, Martin, Pete and Steve.



On Thursday, Neil will uncover the corrosion in one of the main beams.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #4

19 June 2025



Investigation of the end of the main beam within the west wall, which holds the bell frame in the tower, showed very little corrosion. The cause of the masonry cracking was put down to there being less concrete around the end than would be expected and that the mortar around the concrete had cracked.



There was a lot of corrosion along the bottom angle of the south frame *(Right)* and this had to be lowered down the tower to be taken away by van for repair. Volunteers had to be called in for this, so thanks to Pete and Simon who assisted at short notice.

The van had to be partly unloaded to get the frame in, but it all fitted in well.

That left the floor pulleys for two bells to be removed from the clock-room floor

Neil was due to finish late afternoon and set off home. We next expect to see him when the frame painting begins in July.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #5

25 July 2025

On 25 June Andrew Nicholson, bellhanger, measured all the dimensions he needs to make new plates to ensure that the new self-aligning roller bearing housings fit the existing frame holes. He also measured up for fabricating a safer access platform and ladder to maintain the bells in the future.



The day before, he advised us that Soundweld, the specialist bell welders, reported that although there had been a suspected crack seen from inside the crown of bell 3, after cleaning and undertaking dye penetrant crack testing, no crack could be found *(Left)*! So their charge had been reduced accordingly.



Right: Bell frame bearing housing mounting slots and new batten lights under the frame.

On Monday 21 July Richard Gibson led RG Electrical Solutions' team of three to upgrade the lighting in the tower:

- In the bellchamber: two 30W LED floodlights above the bells and two 5ft 29W weatherproof LED batten lights under the bellframe
- In the clock room: a 5ft 29W weatherproof LED batten light
- In the ringing room: two 30W LED floodlights and a replacement emergency light
- On the stairs: an additional lamp between the ringing room and nave door.

The tower is ready for the frame de-rusting and repainting to start on Monday 28 July 2025 with the return of site bellhanger Neil helped with a rota of two volunteers a day for a fortnight.

In the meantime, Badby bellringers have held Wednesday practices by kind permission of the local authorities at Newnham (3), Staverton (2), Everdon (1) with Welton and Charwelton to come.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #6

1 August 2025



On Monday 28 July, bellhanger Neil arrived from Dorset at 9.30am bringing the paint and equipment to de-rust and protect the bell frame. He also brought five new ropes from Avon Ropes made for us.

Neil, with Chris Cozens also from Nicholson Engineering, unbolted the clock chime hammers so as to better paint the frame work and disconnected the system safely. Each day we had two volunteers to help and between them they will have contributed 13% of the total cost of the project. Many thanks! Anne Prestwick and Steve Brooks had the first shifts which involved carrying the stuff up the tower and the two-day filthy task of getting the rust and old paint off the main steel girders and then sanding any corrosion and loose green paint off the cast iron frames. Three power sanders can produce a lot of noise and dust very quickly! It found its way into the church so a bit of extra dusting was needed before Sunday!

Above: Down to bare metal on one main beam already - dust everywhere!

On Tuesday, Peter Wakeford inspected the revealed west end of the southern beam, which had been thought to be corroded. It was found to be in good order.

Neil also completed the shuttering, made by Steve on Tuesday, ready for cementing the west end of the southern beam, already protected with a new coat of anti-corrosion paint, back into the wall.

On Wednesday Steve Chandler and Mike Thompson started the almost as dirty job of sweeping down the dust and dirt from the walls *(Left)* and vacuum cleaning the frame and floor of dust and dirt.



Neil concreted the exposed beam end with over six bags of sand, grit and cement (3-1-1) plus the water, all carried up the tower and vibrated in place.



Right: Anne ready to paint on Thursday

A start was made on the first of two coats of Rust-Oleum Noxyde Plus light grey anti-corrosion and weather proofing paint.



On Thursday Anne and Steve C carried on painting. By Friday morning two coats had been completed *(Left)* and Steve C, now joined by Sue Sutherland, got things ready for next week.



Neil prepared the frame bolts *(Right)* for re-use before making his way back to Dorset for the weekend.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #7



8 August 2025

On Monday 4 August the first tin of Teamac Metalcote plant enamel RAL7038 Deutz green paint was opened and was brushed onto the bell frame by Neil with Anne Prestwick *(Right)* and Steve Brooks *(Left)* helping while Storm Floris blustered through the louvres and the wind vanes grunted at their stormy motion. Fortified by Carole's cheese with pickle sandwiches and cake at lunchtime and with a late finish, all the first coat green was completed and two thirds of the light grey on the foundation beams.





Tuesday saw Sue Sutherland *(Right)* teamed with Anne to use their artistry on the second gloss coat of green and light grey with the use of little rollers to

get into obscure parts. Sue was so taken with the shade of green that she went home with green highlights in her hair!



Neil *(Right)* used a magnetically clamped drill to tackle the tough corroded bolt which broke off during dismantling. Eventually a hole appeared ready for the end brace frame bolt when it returns in September.



By Wednesday the end of painting was in sight and last volunteers Steve Brooks and Dale Sutherland had finished after lunch and the Thursday volunteers were stood down.

Left: Gleaming paint under the 4th and 5th bays

Neil had a few chime hammers to paint red before tidying up and setting off home into the west country on Thursday morning. All is ready and waiting for the surge of heavy activity when the bells return!

Badby bells are coming back!

24 February 2026

After a very long unanticipated delay, our bells are scheduled to return from the bellhanger's workshops in Bridport around 2pm on Monday 2 March.

The lorry will drive up Church Hill and lift the bells over the churchyard wall and put them down as close to the tower as it can reach. The volunteers will help Neil Deem, the professional bellhanger, to move them one by one through the tower door.

During the week the bells with their new headstocks and all the new fittings – clappers, crown staples, wheels, sliders, stays will be hoisted to the top of the tower and put back into the frame. The last task is likely to be the refitting of the chime hammers so that the 'Westminster' clock chimes can be heard for the first time since noon on 16 June 2025!



We hope to have a cctv monitor in the church so you can see live work in progress at the top of the tower.

Progress reports with photos will appear here as the work progresses.

In the meantime, Andrew Nicholson *(Left)* paid a visit on 12 February to measure and confirm dimensions for the new hinge pins and slider runner boards.

The visit also discovered a gremlin in the new lighting which was put right the next day.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #8

2 March 2026

As you know September came and went with no sign of bells. It was not until January that we heard that the re-installation would start on 2 March 2026.



Monday dawned surprisingly sunny and warm. The van and crane lorry had such a free run that they arrived before the organiser with the tower key! With a full turn-out of volunteers, boarding sheets from the van were soon laid over the tower floor and a runway across the churchyard. New clappers, wheels, sliders, brackets were unloaded. Then the crane lorry lifted each bell, starting with the treble (the smallest, weighing 300kg) into the churchyard as far as it could reach for manual transfer into the tower.



Right: Bell 3 approaches the tower door



The trickiest part was getting the tenor (heaviest, over 700kg) through the doorway which had to be widened back in June. All went so well that the bells were safely inside *(Right*) by 2.30pm.



It took longer to get the door back on its hinges! By 3pm after a cup of tea the lorry was on its way home after carefully reversing down Church Hill.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #9

3 March 2026

Day 2 starts with a ginny wheel being affixed to the tower roof beams and the new half wheels hoisted. The bottom halves of the wheels went into the bell chamber because they have to fit around the bell as it is lowered into its frame pit. The top halves were stored in the clock chamber to keep them out of the way until needed.

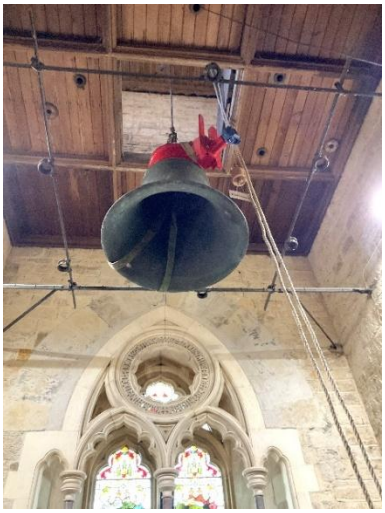
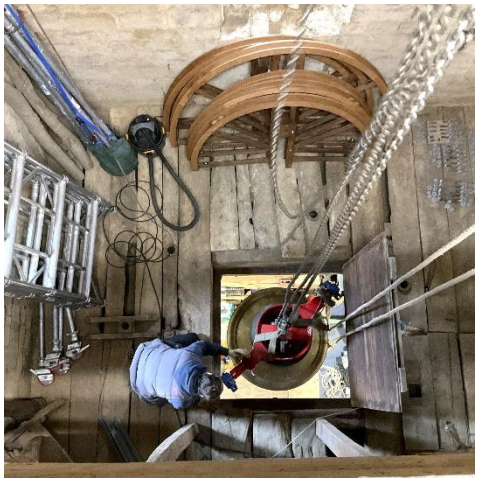


Left: Hoisting half wheels up from ground level to clock chamber.

The cast iron frame between bells 2 and 3 had to be unbolted and moved sideways to provide enough space for the bigger bells to pass through.

The first bell to be hoisted using a manual chain hoist was bell 5.

When it was at frame level another chain hoist was fixed over the north west corner tower roof beam and attached so that the interplay of the two hoists could swing the bell over the frame and into its pit – back home after 258 days away! It is now resplendent with its new canon retaining headstock (red) complete with new bearings (blue)


Left: Bell 5 leaves the floor.
Centre: Bell 5 approaches the clock chamber.
Right: Bell 5 in the clock chamber.





Left: Keeping the hoist chains steady.
Centre: The hardest work was up here.
Right: Bell 5 pokes up through the bell chamber floor. The cast iron frame between bell pits 2 and 3 is shown displaced on the right.





Left: Neil fixes the second chain hoist to the north west roof beam.
Centre: Bell 5 moves across the top of the frame.
Right: Bell 5 back 'home' after 258 days away. This is the bell that sounds the clock hours.



While all this was going on there was an artist at work *(Left)* in the clock room painting new brackets (green) and wheel braces (red).

By working through till 6.30pm, the treble bell (bottom right) *(Right)* was hoisted and parked back in its place, joining 5 (top left) and tenor (heaviest top right).



Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #10

4 March 2026

More volunteers than expected turned up on Wednesday morning to help Neil Deem, the professional in charge. He managed to keep them occupied. The clappers and much of the timber fittings – stays, sliders and slider guides, pulley boxes and frame side were hoisted and stored in the bell chamber.



Left: Timber fittings stored on the floor under the treble bell

Bell 4 needed to have its new bearings fitted and then Neil was free to supervise the hoisting of bells 4, 2 and 3. The most fit volunteers took the brunt of the hard work operating the manual chain hoist to haul them some 40ft above ground. There is insufficient headroom in the bell chamber to fit in an electric hoist and leave enough space for smaller manual hoists to help move the bells from the central access trap to the different parts of the bell frame.



Right: Bell 4 has lift off! This bell was recast in 2000 so it is the second time this century that it has been hoisted up the tower!



Bell 4 went straight to its place, but just resting until final positioning.

Bell 2 *(Left)* then 3 were 'parked' on supports until they can be moved into their proper places to the right. This allowed the cast iron frame member between bell pits 2 and 3 to be moved back into place before the bells were moved back to their final pits.

While this was going on, the top half of the wheels for bells 5 and 6 *(Right)* were mated to the bottom halves and bolted onto the headstocks (red).





Some metal fittings were getting a second coat of enamel in the clock chamber *(Left)*.

By the end of the day 3 bells had their clappers installed. This is not an easy job because the heavy clapper and its top bolting assembly ('crown staple') have to be held by someone crouching inside the bell while the first nut is quickly spun down!



Accurate bolting down of the bearing blocks *(Right)* continued until 7.50pm.

Meanwhile some Badby ringers were having the last of their 35 Wednesday practices elsewhere, this last time at Staverton.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #11

5 March 2026

On Thursday morning, the first task was to sort out a modified plate for the treble eastern bearing. With Dale's expertise and facilities, the part appeared at lunch break.



Meanwhile, aloft, the tower-wide south-side frame brace (*Left:* green - standing vertically at left of photo) was refitted to the new bottom angle (being held vertically) which replaces the severely corroded original.



Right: With the south-side frame brace (centre bottom of photo) in place, the wheel of bell 2 can be assembled.

The wheel stay angle braces were brought up from the clock room 'paint-shop' and two were bolted to each wheel. The modified bearing parts for the treble were soon fitted and the bell hoisted from its temporary resting place on to its bearings.

The two halves of the bell 2 wheel (timber) were mated and bolted to the headstock (red) followed by the crown staple and clapper assembly.



The modified bearing parts for the treble were soon fitted and the bell hoisted from its temporary resting place on to its bearings. The two halves of the bell 2 wheel (timber) were mated and bolted to the headstock (red) followed by the crown staple and clapper assembly.

Left: Martin gets the nut on the crown staple while Jim holds it up in place crouching within the bell



Right: The problem bearing pad is part obscured by the hoist chain at right. The bell is standing on support timbers awaiting the bearing base being ready.

The diagonal bracing bars beneath the frame had to be re-fitted.



The first bell chosen to be completed for ringing was the treble. A major critical adjustment is for the clapper to lie exactly in the middle of the bell *(Left)*. 'Twiddle pins' are built into the headstock so that the crown staple shaft can be moved by a small amount to get this dead-on.

Then the new bracket acting as the slider hinge pin had to be measured out and bolt holes drilled in the frame, followed by the slider running board on the opposite site of the bell pit. These latter were clamped until all had been tested out before holes were drilled. The timber stay had to be measured and drilled so that it would engage with the slider bar to enable us to leave the bell stopped mouth upwards.



Right: On the left under the bottom of the wheel is the slider pin bracket (green), the timber slider is hinged at the pin and passes under the clapper and on the right sits on the running board with the slot. The slider is moved along by the stay tapping it as it rotates past. The stop this end leaves the bell "stood at handstroke" and at the far end "stood at backstroke"!



The treble was not being helpful and several adjustments to the wheel braces, bearing blocks and running board mountings were needed, taking four hours with Neil leaving at 8pm.

Left: Neil swinging the treble up by hand to check for any collisions with the frame!

It was now certain that the flapping boards will not get fitted before the weekend, but that doesn't stop us ringing the bells. So fingers are crossed for Sunday ringing. But the chime hammer solenoids have to be remounted and checked which means that another specialist will be needed, so it seems the clock may not chime for a few more days.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #12

6 March 2026

The north wind made its presence felt in the tower this morning, as bell-hanger Neil started early to try to make up for delays in completing the fitting out of the treble yesterday. Alas, bell 4 had similar but less easy to resolve problems and then bell 5!



Left: Busy in the north wind



Above: It's warmer down here!

Right: Getting six new ropes ready for fitment by stretching them out for the length of the church



By lunch break at 2pm it was very clear that despite resourceful work and fetching of extra parts by the loyal team of today's five volunteers, there was no chance that the work could be completed before Neil's need to get home to start a holiday abroad. So, by 6.30pm he had departed after loading all his power tools, tool boxes and paraphernalia into the van.

We wait with apprehension for news from Nicholsons as to when the work will be completed.

Three bells are ready to ring but diagonal cross braces under the frame are not back in place so it is not wise to ring them. So sorry – no bells on Sunday nor clock chimes.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #13

12 March 2026



Richard Piner chimed bell 2 for service on Sunday 8 March using the new a-bit-stretchy rope.

Better news came on Monday morning when Nicholson's advised that another bellhanger, Chris Cozens, would arrive on Wednesday 11 March at 8.30am to refit the clock chime solenoid hammers, establish ways of overcoming difficulties from last week, then return, the following week with any modified parts to finish the work. Steve Brooks answered the call for one volunteer at short notice and saw the work through until late.

The outcomes were that the clock chimed 5.30pm and 5.45pm – the first time since noon on 16 June 2025! Then the chimes were switched off until work in the belfry was completed.

Left: The clock chime solenoid hammer for bell 2 back in place

The bells have been turned through 45 or 90 degrees during the fitment of the new headstocks so the clock hammers are striking a different part of each bell and may need fine adjustment and bedding in.

The fitting out of bells 4 and 6 was completed. The clapper assembly *(Right)* for bell 5 presented more difficulty and has had to be taken away for rectification of the thread on the top of the crown staple.



Fitting of the rest of the new ropes has been completed. The only task not yet started is the fitment of 'flapping' boards in the clock room to prevent 20ft of ropes looping about as they sometimes used to.



Chris intends to return on Wednesday 18 March and, with volunteers, work through to get the bells ready for the formal 'try out' of the bells at a special version of our practice night before the project can be signed off with Andrew Nicholson, the company's MD.

Left: Boarding ready for use in guiding the ropes as they pass through the clock chamber

Depending on speed of progress, it may be necessary to touch up later all the paint damage inevitably caused when swinging large lumps of metal around the tower later!

Nearly there!

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Report #14

19 March 2026

Although not properly finished, we were able to ring bells 1 – 4 and 6 to call changes before Mothering Sunday service.



Alison raises the treble on Sunday

On Wednesday, 18 March Chris Cozens arrived with his full tool kits and the repaired clapper for bell 5 *(Right)* and the new under frame cross braces for bell 6.





Left: Adjusting the chime hammer on bell 1.

Right: Final adjustment of the clapper of bell 5.



Volunteers moved the kit up the tower. Chris with help then fitted the clapper and braces. Each bell in turn was then adjusted to get the clock chime hammers in the optimal positions to give the best sound.

Each bell was then rung up to check that the clappers were correctly centralised and that there was adequate movement of the sliders for the bells to set readily mouth upwards.

Work then moved down to the clock chamber where the 5m lengths of timber were assembled into "flapboards" with hoops to guide the ropes (or stop them flapping!) through the 17ft high chamber.







Left: Increasing the handstroke 'set' of the treble (bell 1).
Centre: Making up the flapboards in the clock chamber.
Right: Threading the rope through the hoops of a flapboard.



Left: Unconventional way of fixing the top end of the flapboard for bell 3.

All was ready for the bells to be tried out on our first home Wednesday evening practice night in 2026. The new ropes were still a bit springy and will take a bit of getting used to for a while. We anticipate that all the new bits will soon get run in and will settle down for a long life!



Right: Chris Cozens surveys the job



18 March 2026 - Working late - photo by Janine Day

A final clean up and touching up of the paintwork remains to be completed and repair of the cctv which unfortunately stopped working just before this phase of work started.

Right: Ghosts of painters?



Look out for details of Badby Bells & BBQ on the afternoon of Sunday, 28 June 2026.

Badby Church Bells Improvement Project Final Report (#15)

27 March 2026

As the village will have heard, the clock is striking, the bells are ringing before services and practices started again on Wednesday. The ropes are still a bit stretchy and we are getting used to the new 'feel' of the bells. We won't be practising next week traditionally as it is Holy Week, the week before Easter.

After that, we shall then be looking out to recruit some more ringers – did you learn at school? rang a long time ago or always thought it would be nice thing to do? After Easter come and have a look or refresher! Zack Pope, a Daventry young ringer, kindly diagnosed a failed power unit and has now restored our cctv so we can again see the bells as they ring.

The last piece of the £67,000 project took place on Friday, 27 March when Martyn Parratt restored the masonry to the tower doorway. He had volunteered to remove it back in June 2025 to make room for the biggest bell to pass through. He has left his card in a plastic bag set in the mortar to be found the next time!





Left: 16 June 2025 Slots made ready for the biggest bells to pass through
Centre 2 March 2026 The tenor squeezes back in.
Right: 27 March 2026 Masonry back in place.

Martyn started and finished the job, but in between we had lots of fantastic voluntary help for the bellhanger from Steve Brooks, Anne Prestwick, Pete Johnson, Martin Walton, Dale Sutherland, James Grennan, Mike Thompson, Garry and Chris Malloy, Steve Chandler, Sue Sutherland, Simon Pullin and Richard Piner.

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- Legacy (Sally Bush) £20,000,
- Sponsorship £750,
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GHP