

The Hertford County Association of Change-Ringers

Established 29th October 1884
Registered Charity No. 1037400

The Bishop's Stortford District Bell Restoration Fund

1. Title

This fund shall be known as "The Bishop's Stortford District Bell Restoration Fund" referred to hereinafter as the Fund.

2. Objectives

The objectives of this fund are:

- i) to provide financial assistance to church towers within the District for essential maintenance, improvement or repair of their bell installations.

3. Membership

The beneficiaries of the fund shall consist of the towers within the Bishop's Stortford District.

4. Administration of the Fund

- i) The administration of the fund shall be by Committee. This will consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and one additional person who is attached to a tower within the Bishop's Stortford District. (Hereinafter referred to as the Committee).
- ii) There will also be three Trustees who will assess all grant applications but do not form part of the Committee.
- iii) An Independent Examiner, who will not be a part of the Committee or grant assessment process, will be called upon to audit the annual accounts of the fund.

5. General Meetings of the Fund

- i) The Annual General Meeting of the Fund (hereinafter referred to as the AGM) shall follow on from the Bishop's Stortford Annual District Meeting. This will take place in January every year unless extreme circumstances prevent such a meeting, which will then be arranged at the earliest opportunity.
- ii) The business of the AGM shall include the presentation of reports which shall include an audited statement of accounts and balance sheet, the elections of positions as identified in section 4 and any other business relating to the Fund.
- iii) In the case of a dispute or unforeseen circumstances, Special General Meetings may be called by the Fund Committee or on receipt of a written requisition signed by not less than 10 members. The meeting shall be held at a suitable time and place as the Committee shall determine, but within six weeks upon receipt of a written requisition. Any notice or requisition of such a special meeting shall state clearly the business of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted. Twelve members shall constitute a quorum (this number will exclude the Trustees and the Committee).

6. Consideration of Grants

- i) Due to limited income streams and the potential amount held at any given time, the Fund is not suitable for large restoration projects or continuation of such works. However, the Fund will be available for consideration of relatively smaller and more immediate projects.
(A list of restrictions can be found in appendix 1)
- ii) An application for a grant shall be made by completing an application form obtained from the secretary of the Fund. Once completed and returned to the secretary it will be passed on to the Trustees for assessment.
- iii) It is the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure value for money when granting funds and that they are received where they are needed the most.

As a consequence, Trustees may need to seek assurances regarding existing funds held by the applicant and other grants schemes being pursued regarding the proposed works. It is recommended that each tower holds a small fund for emergencies.

- iv) As part of the assessment process Trustees may wish to carry out a site visit and engage in further discussion with the applicant.
- v) Due to the limited funds being held at any given time, precedents may not necessarily form part of the granting process.
The amount of any grant will primarily be based on;
 - The net balance of the Fund at the time
 - potential income to the fund within a reasonable amount of time of the application being made
 - other applications being considered at any particular time
 - funds held by the applicant (including potential funds)
 - nature of works being proposed
- vi) If after assessment the Trustees are unanimous in their decision to grant financial assistance they will agree a sum to be awarded and will inform the Chairperson of the Committee.
- vii) If the Trustees are unable to reach a unanimous decision to award a grant then the application will be returned to the Chairperson of the Committee with the decision and reasons. The Chairperson will notify the applicant of the decision and reasons.
- viii) Should the grant be refused, the applicant may appeal to the Chairperson of the Committee. If the applicant wishes to appeal the decision it will be referred to the Committee, who after consultation with the Trustees, will need 3 out of 4 members of the Committee to agree. If one or more of those members is linked to the applying tower, they will be excluded from the decision-making process.
- ix) Should an application be made by a tower where one of the Trustees is attached, they shall not contribute to the grant assessment process.

7. Disbursements

- (i) Any payments from the Fund shall be made by the Treasurer and one other bank account signatory.
- (ii) All administrative and other expenses incurred in respect of the administration of the Fund shall be made from the Fund.
- (iii) Normally, if financial assistance is granted the money will be paid upon receipt of a final invoice. Any payment will only be up to the amount originally granted. If the final invoice exceeds the granted amount the applicant will need to pay the difference. If the final invoice is less than the amount granted only the amount of the invoice will be paid.
- (iv) In special circumstances a grant may be paid before the proposed work commences with the understanding that if the final invoice is less than the awarded amount, the difference will be returned to the Fund. If the invoice exceeds the granted amount the applying tower will need to pay the difference.
- (v) In addition to (7.iv), if through other funding streams the applicant receives in excess of the cost of the original proposed works, part or all of any money granted in advance by the Fund shall be returned. Where funds are paid to the applicant in advance the Committee reserves the right to request a statement of income and expenditure from the applicant regarding the proposed works.
- (vi) All applicant towers must give accurate information during the grant assessment process. Information given that is knowingly misleading or incorrect may reduce the sum awarded or the application refused. If monies have been paid in advance part or all of the grant will need to be repaid to the fund.

8. Accounts

- (i) The Treasurer shall prepare accounts consisting of a Balance Sheet as at 31st December in each year, and an Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending on that date.
- (ii) These accounts shall be presented to the Independent Examiner who shall satisfy himself/herself as to the correctness thereof.
- (iii) These accounts duly audited shall be submitted for approval to the Annual General Meeting next after the 31st December to which the accounts of the Fund have been prepared.

9. Investments

- (i) The Committee shall have the power to invest or otherwise deal with the assets of the Fund and such sums as shall be contributed to it, in such a manner as they think fit.

10. Dissolution of the Fund

- i) If it shall be decided to dissolve the Fund, the membership would need to be given no less than a year's notice that a proposal is being made to dissolve the Fund. Agreement would require a majority vote at the following AGM. If the decision is approved, the assets shall be transferred to the Bishop's Stortford general account.

11. Provision for changes of Rules

- (i) The rules governing the fund will be reviewed at least once per year by the Fund Committee and Trustees. Any potential amendments will be presented to the members at the District AGM or at an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- (ii) No amendment, addition or deletion shall be made except at the Annual General Meeting (or Extraordinary General Meeting) and approved by two thirds or more of those members present and voting.

12. Any eventuality not covered by the above rules will be agreed by the Trustees and Committee.

Last updated: 05/06/2026

Appendix 1

Examples of qualifying works (Not exhaustive)

Wheels
Sound insulation
Ropes (Limited)
Clappers
Bearings
Bell frame
Rope guides
Pulleys

List of works that do not qualify for funding (Not exhaustive)

Boxes
Ladders
Safety equipment
Stays
Tools
Paint / lime wash
Decoration
Chiming equipment
Consumables e.g. grease, oils
Tower furniture
Electrical supplies
Lighting
Ringing mats