

LLANDAFF AND MONMOUTH DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION OF CHURCH BELL RINGERS

BELL RESTORATION FUND - Notes for Applicants

Undertaking work on church bell usually involves significant cost. Grants or loans from our Bell Restoration Fund are meant to be supportive at times of large expense; but we do not aim to remove responsibility from a parish in carrying out regular and effective maintenance, nor to supplant the local contribution that must form the principal component of any major fund raising activity.

Set out below are some questions intended to assist those who propose to do restoration work, mainly for their own consideration. BUT ALSO, the Management Committee of the Association, in assessing how much assistance from our Fund might be appropriate, will wish to know how these matters have been addressed. To avoid undue delay in considering any request for support (which should take the form of a letter from the Incumbent or PCC Secretary and addressed to the General Secretary of the Association), applicants should give an indication of the parish's intentions in these regards. It may well be that not all of these items are relevant in every case. On the other hand, it sometimes happens that unusual circumstances pertain and these should be drawn to our attention:-

1. Precisely what work is to be undertaken (copies of the successful contractor's report or estimates are necessary)? A proposed timetable of works is also helpful to all concerned.
2. Are there any structural weaknesses in the tower fabric, or other problems such as excessive dampness, which need attention prior to the work being done on the bells? If so then details, including the question of funding of such work are necessary.
3. Has a Faculty (or Archdeacon's Certificate) for the work been obtained?
4. In the case of a project for rehangng or extensive refurbishment, what would happen to ringing if the work was (a) delayed, or (b) not undertaken? What is the rate of deterioration? What steps have been (or will be) taken to prevent a similar rate of deterioration of the renewed items?
5. If augmentation is proposed, what is the state of the present installation and what is being done to bring this up to modern standards? Will the tower fabric withstand the additional stresses? Does the quality of the existing bells justify augmentation or is recasting desirable? If the bells are to be recast, details of their founders, dates, inscriptions, etc., are important so that their archaeological merit can be assessed. Has the question of welding an historically important bell been considered as an alternative to recasting? What is to happen to the canons (if any)? Remember to consider the merits (or otherwise) of the bellframe, too. Are any unusual items to be preserved for display?
6. Once work is completed, are there likely to be any environmental problems with unduly high levels of sound within the vicinity of the church? This is particularly important where a tower has been silent for some time.
7. What schemes and quotations have been considered other than that now proposed? Why were they rejected?
8. What is the expected cost (including VAT) of the various categories of work (fabric/bells/sound control/etc.)? How much has already been raised? How much has been promised? What size of Grant is sought from the Association? What other funding bodies have been (or will be) approached? Would a loan be a better alternative? If so, a repayment profile should be suggested to us. (We may deem it necessary in certain circumstances to make a loan offer subject to interest charges in an endeavour to retain the

purchasing power of the Fund's capital).

9. Experience has shown that a parish needs a band of at least twice as many ringers as there are bells in the tower (i.e. 16 people for 8 bells, etc.). Can a regular local band of ringers be raised and maintained? Is tuition needed? Who has been approached? Can it be supplied? Is it already in progress? Have you a potential Tower Captain with sufficient capability for the task?
10. Is there any likelihood of the church being declared redundant in the foreseeable future?
11. To what extent has the PCC been involved and how enthusiastic are they about this project as compared to other capital projects that the parish has in mind? How large is the parish (population/Electoral Roll)? Has the parish contributed regularly in recent years to the Association's "Tower Affiliation Scheme"?
12. What is the extent of local commitment to the project (both in the tower and the parish) in terms of (a) fund raising and (b) DIY assistance?

The Fund's Trustees and the members of the Association's Management Committee are very conscious of the fact that we administer funds that are charitable in nature and mainly raised by members' hard efforts. Therefore, we have not only a legal obligation to see that the money is used for the purpose for which it has been raised but also we wish to see that the money is wisely spent.

Grants in recent years (where made) have typically been around £1,000 to £2,000 with an unusually high maximum of £5,000, and in certain circumstances (such as cases amounting to "routine maintenance") we have decided to make no Grant at all. Offers of Grants or Loans may be made subject to certain conditions.

No money will be paid over until the work has been carried out to the Association's satisfaction and this usually involves an inspection after all qualifying work has been completed. If, after a Grant or Loan has been awarded, there is any change to the specification of work to be undertaken then the Association must be informed without delay as it may well wish to change the level of support. The offer of a Grant or Loan will lapse if not claimed within two years of it having been made. We will not enter into any correspondence or discussion about the reasons for our decision on any particular Application.

November 2000