

## **TOWER ADVISER'S REPORT**

During this Association year twenty-one inspections were carried out, three less than last year, and I am again grateful to Assistants Roland Backhurst and Bernard North for their continued support in carrying out their share, based mainly on geographic location. Roland also represented the Association Tower Advisory Service at the Church Buildings Council fourth annual meeting held at Southwell Minster.

Seven of the twenty-one tower visits were for final inspection reports following work being completed, and twelve were initial inspections. A further two were to give assistance in monitoring sound levels.

The seven final inspections were at Hutton (augmented to six with a new treble and all re-hung on a new steel frame), Long Ashton (refurbished wheels, clappers and pulleys and rehung onto the refurbished frame), Bathwick (refurbishment of ground pulleys and sliders surfaces and new clapper bushes fitted), Bishops Lydeard (new clappers and suspensions, new headstock bearings, re-modelled wheels, improved roping and new pulleys), Norton St Philip (retune and re-hang on new fittings), Wrington (structural and frame renovation, bells two and three rehung, overhaul of clappers, pulleys and headstock bearings) and Durlleigh (tenor headstock replaced).

Of the twelve initial inspections five resulted in straightforward recommendations covered by minor maintenance and repair. These were at East Brent, Wembdon, Dunkerton, Milborne Port and Holford. Long-term improvement options were discussed at Yeovil and suggested refurbishment at Timberscombe and at Crewkerne. Nettlecombe, currently with one bell, has a frame for five and future options were discussed. Specific investigations were requested and carried out at Oake (access), Durlleigh (cracked tenor headstock) and at Charleton Mackrell (cracked 4th).

Investigations into sound levels were requested at North Petherton (local complaint) and Rodney Stoke (10dB(A) improvement following local insulation work).

The Tower Advisory Service section on the B&WDACR website has links giving suggestions for suitable reading material, and in particular I would recommend the booklet "Schedule of Regular Maintenance" as a good basic overview for those aspiring steeple keepers who wish to keep their bells in good order. Additionally most Branches have Bell Maintenance Contacts and they will happily share their experience and give advice locally.

JOHN HALLETT