

**A MESSAGE FROM THE VENERABLE JOHN REED
ARCHDEACON OF TAUNTON
ASSOCIATION VICE-PRESIDENT**

I really enjoy DAC meetings, To enlighten the poor ignorant of this world, the DAC is The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches. We meet monthly and assess applications for permission (faculties) for works to our churches. This all falls under the heading of what would be Local Authority Planning Permission for works on Listed Buildings, but which the church is granted by Parliament the authority to administer under Ecclesiastical Exemption. We advise the Chancellor of the Diocese, a High Court judge, who grants the faculties. Riveting stuff, you may say! But, strange as it may seem, I enjoy DAC meetings, even after fourteen years of them.

Around the table sit representatives of the Local Authority, English Heritage and the Amenity Societies; the three archdeacons, clergy, archaeologists, architects, and specialists in organs, clocks, glass, furniture, textiles, plate, heating and electrics, and, of course, BELLS.

For many years George Massey enthralled me with his encyclopaedic knowledge of the church bells of Somerset. I thought no one could follow him. But then Mike Hansford became our Bells Adviser and again I find myself wrapped up in fascination as he tells us about the history and unique idiosyncrasies of a tower. He speaks with infectious enthusiasm about each bell and about frames, headstocks, stays, crowns, clappers, gudgeons, wheels and bearings!

What Mike (as a good Churchwarden) and all of us on DAC keep uppermost in our minds is the life and wellbeing of the parish church concerned *and why it is there*: for Our Lord and the people of the parish. You, the faithful Ringers, are such a *crucial* ingredient in the corporate offering of Christian worship and service in our communities. And you, the members of Diocesan Association, are invaluable as a significant body of support to fellow ringers and parishes with your teaching, training, advice and grants. God bless you for this. I and all on the Bishop's Staff thank you and pray that you have a very good year ahead.

John Reed
Archdeacon of Taunton