

The Bath & Wells Ringing Support Fund

Rules of the Fund

(an accompanying document gives guidance on the processes which underpin application of these rules)

Objects

1. The Bath & Wells Ringing Support Fund operates as an incorporated Charity, regulated by the Charities Commission. The Charity Registration Number is 273962 and Inland Revenue Reference is XN 44116. Its objects shall be:
 - i. The provision of support to a tower advisory service as relating to the maintenance and repair of church bell Installations
 - ii. The provision of support to education activities as relating to the instruction of new and developing bands to promote the art of church bell ringing, augmenting the training support available through the Association Education Officer.
 - iii. The provision of grant aid toward the repair and renovation of church bells and their fittings
 - iv. The provision of grant aid toward sound control where this is recommended as beneficial to the community surrounding the church tower
 - v. The provision of grant aid towards augmentation of church peals where this is seen as increasing the opportunity for ringing for divine service or promoting the art of church bell ringing
 - vi. The provision of grant aid towards training facilities where these are beneficial to training new bands or where they have wider training benefit across the local Branch

Governance

1. Object iii of the Rules of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers requires that the Association provides a Ringing Support Fund to support the furtherance of it Objects.
2. The fund is a self-standing Charity, and therefore requires its own Governance. In order to maintain the connection with the Association and its Objects and Rules, the Trustees of the Fund are the Master (Chair), the General Secretary, The Treasurer, The Ringing Support Fund Officer, The Tower Advisor and the Education Officer. The Trustees shall have the power to co-opt up to two further Trustees, who are confirmed each year, but may serve a maximum of five years.
3. Decisions on grant awards from the fund are made by the Trustees and can be made at any time. Decisions will be reported on an annual basis to the General Committee.
4. The Fund will be administered on a day to day basis by the Ringing Support Fund Officer.
5. The Association's Treasurer will also act as Treasurer for the Fund.
6. The financial year for the fund will be 1st January to 31st December.

Eligibility

7. Eligibility for grant aid is restricted to those Churches within the Diocese of Bath & Wells who are affiliated to the Association
8. Consideration will also be given to churches within the Diocese under the care of an appropriate registered charity, where this charity is affiliated to the Association, and where the bells are either of significant historical importance or an opportunity for the development of an Association Training Facility exists.

9. Eligibility additionally requires evidence of the payment of at least five years affiliation fees and a written undertaking to continue affiliation for a minimum of a further five years. Where a prospective applicant has not been affiliated for five years a single payment to bring the fee paid up to the affiliation requirement may be made at the time of formal request for grant aid.

Consideration & Approval

10. Applications for grant support for works on towers or bells must be led by the Incumbent or PCC Secretary. Where the church is in the care of a registered charity the application must be made by an authorised Trustee of that charity.
11. Works to bells, frames or structures is subject to the Church of England Faculty process. Evidence of the appropriate approval level is a precursor to the approval of any grant.
12. Where the support requested is for bell maintenance, repair, sound control or augmentation an inspection by the Tower Advisory Service will be required, this is an essential requirement, and forms a part of the application process.
13. Where the support requested is related to Education or Training a recommendation from the Education Officer will form a part of the application process.
14. Grant support must not be assumed prior to decision by the Trustees.
15. Consideration will not normally be given to support for works undertaken prior to any grant application (see also rule 16).
16. If emergency repairs are required urgent inspections can usually be arranged, and a fast track approval process used. The waiving of this requirement may only be made in extreme and rare cases by the Association's Tower Advisor and would require a compelling reason.
17. Grant funding can only be applied to the specific works approved. Where works outside the agreed scope become necessary these must be prior approved before funding can be assumed.
18. All works must be completed within two years from the date of grant approval unless a specific extension has been approved by the Trustees.
19. Works to bells, frames and other structures must be completed to the satisfaction of the Tower Advisor before final funding is released.
20. Support for training must be completed to the satisfaction of the Education Officer before final funding is released.
21. Generally funding is released upon satisfactory completion of the approved project. In exceptional cases where staged payments were approved by the Trustees, these are subject to full claw back in the event of satisfactory completion not being achieved.