



Chew Branch

Newsletter: January 2026



Welcome to the first newsletter of 2026. And thank you to those who have sent news and photos for this edition.

There are plenty of ringing opportunities (and something for everyone) in the coming months: please put the dates in your diary.

Branch Events

Saturday Branch Practices

Our regular Branch Practices are held on the third Saturday of the month, so even if the venue hasn't been confirmed you can put the date in your diary. Winter practices are 3.00pm – 4.30pm and Summer ones (British Summer Time) are now 4.30pm – 6.00pm. Tea, coffee and cake after ringing is usually a popular feature!

Everyone is welcome and there will be ringing for all abilities, from rounds and call changes to surprise methods. If you've not been to one of these practices before, do think about attending. It's an opportunity to gain valuable experience by ringing on different bells and meeting other ringers in our area.

Saturday 21st February

3.00pm – 4.30pm

**St Michael
Clapton in Gordano**
BS20 7RQ

(6 bells: tenor 6-0-15; ground floor)

There is limited parking at the church so car-sharing might be a good idea. There is also a relatively small area of off-road parking along the road to the west of the steep track to the church.

Saturday 21st March

3.00pm – 4.30pm

Compton Martin
BS40 6JQ

6 bells, tenor 15-1-23

Saturday 18th April

4.30pm – 6.00pm

Backwell (tbc)
BS48 3JJ

10 bells, tenor 17-3-9, toilet

Saturday 16th May; 2.30pm

Branch Striking Competition

Publow

BS39 4HP

6 bells; tenor 21-0-16

Saturday 21st November

Branch AGM

St Andrew's, Clevedon
BS39 4HP

8 bells; tenor 14-1-20

10-Bell Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm

on 1st Saturday of month, alternating between **Wrington** (36cwt) – March, May etc and **Backwell** (17cwt) – Feb, April etc (changes to programme are occasionally necessary)

Grandsire Caters to Surprise Royal

Surprise Major Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm

Yatton

on 2nd Saturday of each month
from Cambridge to Spliced Surprise

Congratulations to . . .

James Humphries on ringing his first peal of Triples (St Andrew's, Clevedon; 17th December)

Phillipa James on ringing her first peal of Triples (St Andrew's, Clevedon; 17th December)

Will Rogers on ringing his 200th quarter peal (Ilminster; 28th December)

Tower News

Clevedon, St Andrew

A peal was rung at Clevedon St Andrew's on the 17th December 2025 to mark 100 years since the first peal on the current bells. It also marked 100 years since the 7 Taylor bells were cast (1925) and 300 years since the Bilbie tenor was cast (1725). Included in the peal were local tower ringers, with help from the wider ringing community.

James Humphries



The board for the peal on 17th December 1925

Chew Stoke

Whilst we don't have a band to ring regularly at the moment, the tower is available for visitors. Contact regarding availability via the tower captain: hazelwedlake@gmail.com / 07470 201 246

For access contact Derek Hollomon orchardhse@ukgateway.net / 01275 333 143 who can also take payment and give you any information about our historic Bilbie bells.

Hazel Wedlake

Portishead

The ringers who gather at Portishead each Tuesday always seem to be up for a party without any excuse, so Christmas and New Year mean lots of social as well as ringing celebrations.

This year we had a Christmas meal together on the Tuesday before Christmas; we chose The Albion where we have had good food on many occasions. Unfortunately, the food was not so good this time, however we had lots of fun moaning about it and planning a raid on the next table when our table ran out of spoons.

On Christmas Morning we ring at 7.30am (yes, we really do) for 8.00am communion. You may think we are crazy to get up so early and maybe we are: 14 of us were in the tower ready to make a joyful sound and wish Portishead a Happy Christmas.

On New Year's Eve we had a supper party in Church before the midnight ringing. Pasties were on the menu along with an excellent salad all sourced and prepared by Annie and we all endured Jan's playlist again.

Jan Wyatt



Ringers at Portishead, from left: Jim, Annie, Mary, Angela, Christine, Les and Jan

Ubley

As we continue our Tuesday practices with our fabulous teachers, a few of us are now becoming reasonably handy at Plain Hunt. We've also recently welcomed a few beginners, with Amy and Charles having been elected to Branch membership at the AGM and now making great progress.

That means that with the experienced ringer that is Lester, who moved to Ubley recently, we now have an 8-strong band. Who would have thought it when Ubley had no local ringers at all just two years ago!

Ronan Dorvillers

Yatton

The Yatton ringers held their annual Christmas dinner at the Butcher's Arms on 16th December.



The pub put on a good meal for us including turkey and all the trimmings, but the highlight was probably the Coconut Bombe dessert which was very tasty. No one was sad that we skipped the formal after dinner speeches; instead 5 of us rang a dinner touch on handbells of 3 leads of Kent Treble Bob Royal. The other diners in the pub were appreciative if slightly bemused.



Ringing Kent on handbells (from left): Bernard, Peter, Christine, Lucy, Alan

The following week we skipped practice night again and instead had an evening ringing carols on handbells at the Hills' house. Although most of the band hadn't done much handbell ringing we quickly picked it up and worked our way through Jingle Bells, Good King Wenceslas, Hark the Herald and Silent Night. The ringing was followed by mince pies and mulled wine, and a resolution to get our act together next year and practice before the dinner so we can entertain the other diners in a more understandable manner.

In spite of people being away and illness, we were pleased to ring our tower bells for the main Christmas services.

Christine Hill

Reports of Branch Events

The final Branch Practice of 2025 was held at Abbots Leigh on the afternoon of Saturday 20th December. It was well attended, with ringing for all levels of ability. After the ringing members gathered in the church to enjoy mulled wine and mince pies.



Some of the ringers, many suitably attired in their Christmas jumpers, enjoying their mulled wine and mince pies

It was very encouraging to see a record attendance at the first Branch Practice of 2026. Held at Winford on Saturday 17th January, over 30 members made full use of the easy-going eight. As usual, there was a wide variety of ringing, with plenty of opportunity for the less experienced to ring rounds and call changes while the more experienced could practice various triples and major methods.

Two new members were elected, both from Wrington: **Mark Bath** and **Penny Synczysz**

As has become customary at many of our Branch Practices, the afternoon was rounded off with tea, coffee and cake in the church, making it an enjoyable social, as well as ringing, occasion.

Other News and Notices

For those of you interested in statistics, here is a summary of the number of peals and quarter peals rung during 2025 at Branch towers. Whilst not all have been rung by Branch members, it is true to say that a good number of them have either been rung entirely by our members, or have included at least some members.

(Figures as reported on *Bellboard*)

Tower	Peals	QPs
Abbots Leigh		2
Backwell	7	23
Barrow Gurney	6	
Butcombe	0	0
Chew Magna	0	0
Chew Stoke		2
Clapton in Gordano	2	29
Clevedon, All Saints		3
Clevedon, St Andrew	1	5
Clevedon, St John		3
Clevedon, St Mary		1
Clutton		2
Compton Martin	0	0
Congresbury	1	4
Dundry	0	1
East Harptree	0	0
Easton in Gordano		1
Kingston Seymour		2
Long Ashton	2	2
Nailsea	1	3
Nempnett Thrubwell	0	1
Portbury		10
Portishead		11
Publow	1	1
Stanton Drew		2
Stowey		7
Tickenham	1	
Ubley		2
Weston in Gordano		11
Winford	6	3
Wraxall	0	0
Wrington	2	6
Yatton	1	5
Wyatt's Yard, North Weston	5	9
Total	36	151

Sunday 8th March International Women's Day

In recent years this day has been marked by women ringers getting together for general ringing, a quarter peal or even a peal.

Might there be an all female Chew Branch band this year to ring a quarter peal?



Customised Clothing

Clothing with the Bath & Wells logo and your tower name embroidered above can be ordered from Jan Wyatt. Many colours and sizes available. Polo shirts £19, sweatshirts £25, hoodie £28, Regatta Fleece £33

Allow 2 weeks for delivery.

£1 from each garment sold goes to the Association. This raised £110 in 2025 and £13 already for 2026.

Checkout: Linela Embroidery Ltd

Contact Jan for more information and payment details: janwyatt@live.co.uk

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Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will probably be published in **April**. Please send your news, and photos, to the editor as soon as you have any. It will be kept on file until the next edition is put together.