



# Chew Branch



Newsletter: May 2026

## Chew Branch Striking Competition

The Branch Striking Competition was held at All Saints Church, Publow, on the afternoon of Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May. Six teams entered, from 5 different towers within the Branch, four ringing methods and two ringing call changes. It was good to also see a number of members who, although not actually taking part in the competition, came along to support those who were. At the end of the official competition several of these were able to ring in a mixed band (who aptly named themselves “the best of the rest”), thus gaining valuable experience of competition ringing.

The judges, Andrew and Gill Deamer from Wells, were listening attentively from the neighbouring Old Vicarage garden – possibly a little chilly but at least it stayed dry.

The local ringers provided us with a delicious afternoon tea, with scones, jam and cream and an excellent selection of cakes.

The bands, in the order they rang during the afternoon, standing in order treble to tenor from the left.

### Portishead



Annie Holland, Jan Wyatt, Gerry Skelly, Will Rogers, George Wyatt (C), Les Curwood.

### Backwell A



Elizabeth Smith, Tony Cox (C), Glenn Taylor, Rebecca Cox, Tim Waller, Steven Cox.

### Backwell B



Lisa Parker, Alison Pemble, Lionel Smith, Glenn Taylor, Rebecca Cox (C), Huw Parker.

*(Storm, who was well behaved throughout the afternoon, didn't in fact ring in the competition!)*

## Wrington



Penny Synczysz, Janet Walters, Simon Medd, Mark Bath, Ally Grieveson (C), Philip Kinsman.

## Yatton



John Pilkington, Russell Toogood, Christine Hill, Lucy Reading, Alan Reading (C), Peter Hill.

## Kingston Seymour



Shirley Pilkington, John Pilkington, Ronnie Rogers, James Saunders, Russell Toogood, Will Rogers (C).

## “The best of the rest”



Sue Davison, Rosemary Allmont, Dawn Scott, Lesley Chandler, Phillipa James, Peter Hill (C)

## The Results

The judges made a few general comments on the ringing before giving the individual results, noting that it had been of a good standard with no major clashes or method mistakes. Good, consistent leading had been a key factor.

They also felt that the two minutes allowed for the practice ring was rather too short.

## Method Ringing

<b>FIRST : BACKWELL A</b> Grandsire Doubles. Peal speed 3.26	89%
<b>SECOND : YATTON</b> Grandsire Doubles. Peal speed 3.19	84%
<b>THIRD : PORTISHEAD</b> Grandsire Doubles. Peal speed 3.14	83%
<b>FOURTH : BACKWELL B</b> Grandsire Doubles. Peal speed 3.25	82%

## Call Changes

<b>FIRST : WRINGTON</b>	160 faults
<b>SECOND : KINGSTON SEYMOUR</b>	179 faults

The judges commended the less experienced ringers who took part in the “best of the rest” band.



Tony Cox, on behalf of Backwell A, receiving the method ringing trophy from Andrew Deamer



Ally Grieveson, on behalf of Wrington, receiving the call change trophy from Andrew

**All Saints Church, Publow**



Publow church has 6 bells with a tenor weight of just over 21cwt. The oldest bell, the treble, was cast in 1776 by William Bilbie. The 4th dates to 1862 and bells 2, 3 and 6 are Taylor's, dated 1905. The 5th, also a Taylor's bell, is from 1958. The bells were rehung by Matthew Higby in 2019/2020.

(Information from *Dove's Guide for Church Bell Ringers*)

**Forthcoming Branch Events**

**Saturday Branch Practices**

Our regular Branch Practices are held on the third Saturday of the month, where ringing is aimed at all levels of ability. When possible we aim to provide tea, coffee and cake after ringing, to allow for socialising as well as ringing.

*Everyone welcome*

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June: 4.30pm – 6.00pm**

**All Saints, Long Ashton**

BS41 9LU

8 bells, tenor 30-3-23, toilet

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July**

**Branch Mini Outing / walk**

details to follow

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August: 4.30pm – 6.00pm**

**Branch Practice**

**Nempnett Thrubwell**

BS40 8YH

6 bells; tenor 7-3-12

Very limited parking – please car-share

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**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September: 4.30pm – 6.00pm**

**Branch Practice**

**Backwell**

BS48 3JJ; 10 bells; tenor 17-3-9; Toilet

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**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October: 7.15pm**

**Branch Quiz at Yatton**

a fun social occasion

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**Saturday 21st November**

**Branch AGM**

**St Andrew's, Clevedon**

BS39 4HP; 8 bells; tenor 14-1-20

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**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December**

**Branch Practice**

details to follow

## 10–Bell Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm

on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of month

alternating between

**Wroughton** (36cwt) – July, September etc  
and **Backwell** (17cwt) – June, August etc

(changes to programme are occasionally necessary due to other events in the churches)

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## Surprise Major Practice

7.30pm – 9.00pm

Yatton

on 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month

from Cambridge to Spliced Surprise

## Congratulations to ...

**Mark Bath** on ringing his first quarter peal of Triples (Plain Bob Triples; Wroughton; 17<sup>th</sup> May)

**Bernard North** on being made an Honorary Life Member (HLM) of the Bath and Wells Association

**Dawn Scott** on ringing her first quarter peal at her first attempt. She rang the tenor to Plain Bob Doubles (Backwell; 3<sup>rd</sup> May)

**Jill Stanton** on ringing her first quarter peal of St Simon's Bob Doubles on an inside bell (Nailsea; 17<sup>th</sup> May)

**Esmond Taylor** on his 50 years membership of the Bath and Wells Association.



Bernard with his certificate for Honorary Life Membership

## Tower News

### Kingston Seymour

Wednesday 8th April marked the end of a long wait for the Kingston Seymour bellringers to achieve their dream of a rope guide. Ringing is now safer, easier and much more enjoyable.



The Kingston Seymour ringers, from left: James Travis, Ian Norton, Shirley Pilkington, John Pilkington, Ken Kingcott, Will Rogers, Robert Walker, James Saunders, Majeed Travis

In February 2024, through the B&W Association, we were able to get a thorough report from Bernard North, indicating that, though the bells were well maintained and go well, the provision of a rope guide would be advantageous. The churchwardens and architect were sympathetic, so there was no difficulty in getting the PCC to let us go ahead.

Tenders were obtained, two schemes were considered, and the PCC preferred a circular format. Could we raise the money?

We started with an Open Day in September 2025, which has been reported. This was followed quickly by applications for grants, resulting in very generous promises from the B&W Association and the Friends of All Saints Church. We could now apply for the necessary faculty.

The Diocesan Advisory Committee had a consultant who did not like our architect's sketch, but that was soon overcome by a comprehensive specification of the work by Nicholson Engineering. In due course the faculty was granted and the work could go ahead. A slight delay in production altered the date, which meant that our ringing master, Will Rogers, could take time off work to provide volunteer labour, saving almost £500 on the cost of the project!

Our first practice with the new guides was on Monday 13th April. The ringing room was filled with excitement and amazement at how much

difference the guides have made. The rope guide was dedicated by the rector, Rev. Denise Calverley, at a Songs of Praise service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May.



Many people have been involved with, and contributed to, this project, and the thanks of the ringers go out to all of them. We hope our future offerings will be worth the efforts.

*John Pilkington*

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## Portishead

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George Wyatt often arranges a Bank Holiday outing for Portishead Ringers and friends, and Easter Monday 2026 was no exception. Most of us met up at Wyatt's Yard to share cars and make an early morning start to Melksham. The bells of St Michael & All Angels are a celebrated feature of this Wiltshire landmark. Recently, the church has undergone a significant transformation with the installation of new bells, 2 new Allancoi trebles added to the original 1924 Taylor 8 (tenor 18cwt). Their addition has greatly enhanced the sound quality in my opinion, offering a richer and harmonious tone. We really enjoyed ringing here for the easy go and rewarding music.

Our next tower was a complete contrast, Holy Saviour, Erlestoke, which is home to a ring of six bells, tenor 9 cwt. The light weight and unique character provided a different challenge for our ringers. Don't be fooled by the weight, we had to work very hard to get any reward.



Erlestoke Church

We had lunch at The Bell at Great Cheverell - lovely pub I would thoroughly recommend.

Then we set off to St Giles' Church, Imber, a notable and atmospheric site located on Salisbury Plain. Though the village of Imber itself was evacuated during the Second World War and remains uninhabited, the church survives and is occasionally open for special events, including ringing outings. The tower houses a ring of six bells, with the tenor weighing just 2 cwt, making them exceptionally light and offering a unique experience. They did present us with a challenge, as handling these lighter bells required a precision that made us grateful for all the practice on George's mini-rings. Visiting Imber and ringing at St Giles provides both a sense of history and an opportunity to enjoy the distinctive character of its bells amidst the remote surroundings. We did see lots of tanks as we drove across Salisbury Plain and kept a look out for the UXO signs which we were warned stand for Unexploded Ordnance!

Thanks to George for arranging an excellent day.

*Jan Wyatt*

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## Stanton Drew

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It was lovely to welcome Chew Branch ringers for a beautiful quarter peal in March. We also have the Axbridge Training Officer organising a visit with a group in late July, which we are looking forward to.

The new WhatsApp Group has certainly helped us to make up our ringing team for Sunday services when we don't have enough of our own ringers - huge thanks to those who have helped us.

We have one new ringer who is being trained superbly by Bec and again huge thanks for this. She is coming along well.

*Shirley Edwards*

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## Tickenham

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Tickenham ringers enjoyed a meal out at The Rising Sun in Backwell recently, having failed to fit it into our Christmas schedules. We also held our annual tower meeting. Looking back over the previous year, we recognised that we had just about reached our tower goal so patted ourselves on the back before setting individual and tower aims for the year.

*Lynne Purcell*



## Association News

### Report of Association AGM: 9<sup>th</sup> May

Nine of us from the Chew branch attended the Association AGM, hosted by the Axbridge Branch, with some of us enjoying ringing at various towers during the morning. The meeting itself covered the usual items - the Annual Report includes the agenda and papers.

The following points may be of particular interest

No changes to Association Officers for 2026/27, although Richard Newman (Axbridge branch) was elected Deputy Master for the year (a post filled by someone from the hosting branch).

Esmond Taylor (Dundry) received (in his absence) a long service award for 50 years' membership.

Bernard North (Yatton) was elected an Honorary Life Member – awarded for long and valuable service to the Association.

Membership fees: no changes for 2027. A motion increasing the age limit for Junior Members from 18 to 25 for those in full time education was passed. This has the benefit of a reduced membership fee.

A printed leaflet has been produced providing information about the Ringing Support Fund, aimed at churches not familiar with this source of funding for bell projects. Copies will be sent to Lesley for distribution via Tower Contacts.

A rule change was agreed to ensure that performances consisting of majority junior members would still be classified as for the Association. (Previous updates to membership categories had inadvertently created this anomaly.)

Our Chew Branch request for a rule to ensure branches can have their own funding (a proportion of membership fees) had not made it to the agenda. It is covered by guidance, but not in the rules. We will need to raise again next year in a more appropriate format. (This requirement was discussed at our own AGM last November.)

A proposal was made (from the floor) to reintroduce a minimum standard for membership. Following a wide-ranging discussion, particularly around our wish to be inclusive, the proposal was defeated.

Revised rules/guidelines for the Association Striking Competitions were proposed and agreed, with a recognition that they can be reviewed again if needed. This follows discussion at the General Committee meeting, requested by Chew branch.

Concerns were raised about the Association website, which is still proving problematic. It was noted that each branch has a trained 'web officer',

who is the first point of contact for any missing or incorrect information. NB Please contact our Chew Branch Web Officer, Lesley Chandler, if you notice anything wrong or missing.

The Association Striking Competitions will be held on **Saturday 26th September**: The 6-bell competition at Ilton (Crewkerne branch) and the 8-bell at North Curry (Taunton branch), with results for both announced in North Curry church.

The next AGM will be hosted by Bath Branch and held on **Saturday 8th May 2027** – make a note in your diaries now!!

*Lesley Chandler, Chew Branch Secretary*

### Chew Branch Treasurer

Our current Treasurer will be retiring shortly so we need someone to come forward and volunteer for the role. If you are interested (even vaguely), then please have a chat with Glenn or Shirley. It would suit someone who's organised and happy working with spreadsheets, although we can provide training and support if needed.

### Next Newsletter

It is hoped to publish the next newsletter in early **September**. But don't wait until then; please send your news, and photos, to the editor as soon as you have any.

### Contact Details

**Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth Smith**  
lizandlionel43@gmail.com

**Branch Chairman: Glenn Taylor**  
ChewBranch.Chairman@bath-wells.org

**Ringing Master: Rebecca Cox**  
ChewBranch.RingingMaster@bath-wells.org

**Deputy Ringing Master: Peter Hill**  
ChewBranch.DepRingingMaster@bath-wells.org

**Secretary & Web Officer: Lesley Chandler**  
ChewBranch.Secretary@bath-wells.org

**Treasurer: Shirley Edwards**  
ChewBranch.Treasurer@bath-wells.org

**Tower Maintenance Contact: Bernard North**  
bernardnorth@btinternet.com  
07508 297263