

Ashford-in-the-Water Bellringers



**2025
RETROSPECTIVE**

Bell ringing at Holy Trinity 2025

Bell ringers have been busy at Holy Trinity during the last year. We ring regularly for Sunday services and we have rung for weddings and for other special services such as our Flower festival and for state occasions such as the anniversary of VE Day. We also ring set pieces such as quarter peals. Unless you come into the church you would not be aware of all the other ringing that is happening because we tie the clappers and ring using simulated sound. Three or four times a week we have classes and practices. Like learning any musical instrument it takes more time to learn than to play. Visitors to the church will often find us practising ringing and enjoy a chat about what we do.

Holy Trinity bells are the best local bells for learning for many reasons. Most importantly they are melodious and a pleasure to hear. Ringers consider the Ashford bells to be the best ring of six in the Peak District. All the bells handle well, and they offer a good range of weight and speed of turn and can be clearly heard as you ring. In addition, the ground floor ringing room and other facilities in the church make Ashford a unique and ideal hub for training new ringers.

This year we have three training groups covering different stages of competence. One group comes twice a week and there are other ad-hoc classes in between. Currently our trainees number 16 and come from, Great Longstone, Baslow, Chapel-en-le-Frith and Taddington. So we are training for much more than Ashford and we are intending to start a new cohort in February. Our classes are known for the high standard of ringing being taught.

We have had 17 quarter peal performances this year. They are an opportunity for the locals to hear good bell ringing. Experienced ringers can keep up their good ringing and our improvers can be part of an actual piece of ringing. We are lucky to have experienced ringers from other towers coming to help us with these.

Our practice night is the most advanced six bell practice in the Peak District. Ringers from around the district come to ring things that would otherwise be unavailable to them. This becomes a good opportunity for our developing ringers too of course.

Our Sunday service ringing does not stop at Ashford. We have formed a group so that we can ring at neighbouring churches as well. After ringing at Ashford we often ring at Great Longstone, or Edensor, both of which would otherwise be silent. We are planning to include Baslow but service times clash. We want to build a big enough group of steady and capable ringers so that we able to ring at more than one church at a time.

In October last year we celebrated with an Open Day the 1954 dedication of Ashford's three recast bells, one new bell, and a new bell frame; and the installation and dedication of two further new bells in 1966. We also marked this anniversary at a special church service on the following Sunday – along with a celebratory drink!

Recently the bell ringers have enjoyed an invitation to join the rest of the congregation in their harvest supper, which we heartily enjoyed. We are delighted with the welcome and support we receive from the members of the church, congregation and choir.