August/September/October 2026 Newsletter

District Events

AUGUST				
10/12 Bell Practice	Thursday	6th August	7.30pm-9.00pm	Bishop's Stortford
8 Bell Practice	Saturday	8th August	10.00am-12noon	Harlow Common
10/12 Bell Practice	Wednesday	12th August	7.30pm-9.00pm	Waltham Abbey
Joint N/NW Districts Surprise Major Practice	Friday	14th August	2.00pm-4.00pm	Felsted
Advanced 6 Bell Practice	Tuesday	18th August	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham/Matching
Surprise Minor Practice	Friday	28th August	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham
Ring and Ramble	Saturday	29th August	All day	Chelmsford area
The George Eve 30th Anniversary Event	Monday	31st August	2.00pm-4.00pm	Margaretting
SEPTEMBER				
12 Bell Practice	Thursday	3rd September	7.30pm-9.00pm	Bishop's Stortford
10/12 Bell Practice	Wednesday	9th September	7.30pm-9.00pm	Waltham Abbey
Joint N/NW Districts Surprise Major Practice	Friday	11th September	2.00pm-4.00pm	Felsted
8 Bell Practice	Saturday	12th September	10.00am-12noon	TBC
Advanced 6 Bell Practice	Tuesday	15th September	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham/Matching
Surprise Minor Practice	Friday	25th September	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham
District Meeting and The Stan Clark Memorial Call Change Striking Competition	Saturday	26th September	9.30am Meeting followed by competition OR competition followed by meeting TBC	Ashdon
OCTOBER				
10/12 Bell Practice	Thursday	1st October	7.30pm-9.00pm	Bishop's Stortford
EACR Management Committee Meeting	Saturday	3rd October	2.30pm	Danbury
Joint N/NW Districts Surprise Major Practice	Friday	9th October	2.00pm-4.00pm	Felsted

EACR Annual Dinner	Saturday	10th October	6.30pm	Essex County Cricket Club, Chelmsford
8 Bell Practice	Saturday	10th October	10.00am-12noon	TBC
10/12 Bell Practice	Wednesday	14th October	7.30pm-9.00pm	Waltham Abbey
Joint NW/N Advancing Practice	Saturday	17th October	2.00pm-4.00pm	Wethersfield
Advanced 6 Bell Practice	Tuesday	20th October	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham
Surprise Minor Practice	Friday	23rd October	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham
EACR Trustees Meeting	Saturday	24th October	2.30pm	Danbury
The Charlotte Parsons Memorial Trophy Plain Hunt Competition	Saturday	31st October	AM	Matching
NOVEMBER				
12 Bell Practice	Thursday	5th November	7.30pm-9.00pm	Bishop's Stortford
District Quiz	Saturday	7th November	7.00pm	Old Harlow
10/12 Bell Practice	Wednesday	11th November	7.30pm-9.00pm	Waltham Abbey
Joint N/NW Districts Surprise Major Practice	Friday	13th November	2.00pm-4.00pm	Felsted
8 Bell Practice	Saturday	14th November	10.00am-12noon	TBC
Advanced 6 Bell Practice	Tuesday	17th November	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham/Matching
Surprise Minor Practice	Friday	27th November	7.30pm-9.00pm	Henham
EACR Training Day	Saturday	28th November	All day	Districts TBC

District Meeting and Method Striking Competition

The meeting and competition took place at Nazeing on Saturday, 16th May 2026, with eight bands taking part. The results were:

Place	Band	Faults
1st	Waltham Abbey	61
2nd	Bishop's Stortford/Sawbridgeworth	66
3rd	Willingale	76
4th	Great Parndon	102
5th	Old Harlow	108
6th	Henham	134
	Bambis and Pink Perfection	Did not finish

Waltham Abbey:
L-R: Hilary Walls, Vicky Richards, Oliver Lee, Ben Gaigher, Jane Walters, Steve Lee

Anne Bray and Vicky Richards

Bishop's Stortford/Sawbridgeworth:
L-R: Anne Sloan, Ro Kelsell, Nick Hughes, Gary Howard, Fred Bone, Andrew Westwood

Paul Bray and Fred Bone

It was a thoroughly enjoyable morning and many thanks to Nazeing for hosting this event; as usual the refreshments were extremely well received so thank you to all those who provided the cakes and savouries. The competition was judged by Paul and Anne Bray who, prior to announcing the results, gave some very encouraging and constructive feedback on the ringing.

Normally the two bands who took first and second places would go forward to the Association finals during the afternoon on Saturday, 11th July at North Ockenden, a tower with an anti-clockwise ring. However, as Bishop's Stortford/Sawbridgeworth were unable to make the final, Willingale took part in their place.

It was an extremely hot day and a long afternoon with ten towers taking part. Waltham Abbey did really well and came 4th, unfortunately Willingale didn't fare quite so well.

Waltham Abbey:
L-R Back: Steve Lee, Ben Gaigher, Vicky Richards
L-R Front: Jane Walters, Oliver Lee, Hilary Walls

Willingale:
L-R Back: Ian Kerwin, Denise Kerwin, Kieran Kerwin
L-R Front: Sue Evans, Gemma Crouchman, Penny Lowen

The 8 bell competition took place during the morning at South Weald. Very disappointingly, the NW District was unable to find eight sufficiently experienced ringers who were willing to participate in this competition – we were the only District not to field a band.

District Competitions 2026

The last two District competitions due to take place this year are:

- District Meeting and The Stan Clark Memorial Call Change Striking Competition – AM Saturday, 26th September 2026 at Ashdon;
- The Charlotte Parsons Memorial Trophy – AM Saturday, 31st October 2026 at Matching;

As always, it is helpful for towers to confirm they are entering a band [or bands] in good time.

NW District Practices

The monthly Advanced 6 Bell practices take place on alternate months at Henham and Matching and the monthly 8 bell practices take place at various towers across the District. Both practices are well attended but ringers who have not previously attended will be welcome. The Surprise Minor and Surprise Major practices continue to be well attended. As usual, experienced helpers are always needed so do come and help the less experienced ringers.

The first of the N/NW joint practices took place on the 21st March at Wethersfield CM7 4BY from 2.00pm-4.00pm and the second will take place on 27th October.

NW Ringing Tour – 13th June 2026

Philip Waterfield and Kevin Nicholas worked very hard to organize such an enjoyable day, and the weather was certainly on our side. It was an early start to reach the first 6-bell tower at Brinkley where Philip provided everyone with their 'goody' bags for the day – most welcome! The temporary stay on the 3-bell unfortunately fell out which meant that the bell couldn't be stood, so the ringing continued with Mike Slowe alternately ringing and holding the bell to balance ready for the next band! Well done, Mike!

We then moved on Western Colville, a ring of 5 and not the easiest ring, and very noisy!

We continued our journey to Balsham, where after a ring, some of the group headed off to the nearest pub for some well-earned lunch, and some of the group enjoyed their picnic lunch and games on the green.

The final two towers visited were Hadstock and Linton and at the end of the day, all the ringers were still smiling!

It was an immensely enjoyable day and the work which had been put in by Philip and Kevin to ensure the day ran smoothly was very much appreciated by everyone. Looking forward to next year ……

Ring and Ramble – Saturday, 29th August 2026

Thanks to Kieran Kerwin for organising the day's Ring and Ramble on Saturday, 29th August. The itinerary is as follows:

- 9.00am-10.00am – St John the Evangelist, Ford End CM3 1LH; ladder to ring of 6;
- 11.30am-12.30pm – St Mary and Lawrence, Great Waltham CM3 1AS; staircase to ring of 8, toilet;
- Approximate 30-minute walk to The White Hart pub in Little Waltham for lunch or Little Waltham church for a picnic;
- 2.45pm-3.45pm – St Martin, Little Waltham CM3 3LJ; ladder to ring of 6, toilet;
- 4.30pm-5.30pm – St Mary, Broomfield CM1 7BD; ground floor ring of 6, toilet.

Parking should be available at Ford End and Broomfield. There will, however, be available transport for those who are not planning/decide not to walk from tower to tower. Please do let me know as soon as possible if you will be joining in the day's outing, whether for part or all of the day, to enable transport arrangements to be made.
We look forward to seeing many of you there, and if you have any queries, do contact me.

District Events

- Old Harlow is hosting a District quiz on Saturday, 7th November so make sure this date is in your diaries.
- Carol Service at Great Hanningfield on Saturday, 5th December.

If there are any District ringers who would be happy to arrange any other social events please do let Ian or Sue know.

REMINDER - EACR 71st Annual Dinner

If you haven't already got your tickets for the EACR 71st Annual Dinner at Essex County Cricket Club, Doug Insole Pavilion Room, Ambassador Cruise Line Ground, New Writtle Street, Chelmsford CM2 0PG on Saturday, 10th October, then please don't forget to order them as soon as possible and submit your Booking Form with Menu choices. Tickets can be booked using Google Forms at this link https://forms.gle/UXZYPUa1kg3cEEyD9 .
Ticket price is £46.00 - please complete and submit the booking form no later than **Friday, 26th September 2026.**
Preferred payment is via BACS transfer using the following bank details:
Sort Code: 60-05-13
Account No.: 25260928
Account name: 'Essex Association of Change Ringers' or 'EACR'
Please use the reference: 'Dinner 2026'

Menu Options
Choice of Starter
Roasted Plum Tomato & Basil Pesto Soup with Herb Croutons (V, Ve, DF, GFa)
Beetroot Cured Smoked Salmon with Dill Mayonnaise, Mixed Leaf, Brown Bread & Butter (DFa)
Parma Ham, Vine Tomatoes & Olives with Mixed Leaf, Herb Croutes, Olive Oil & Balsamic (GFa/DF)
Choice of Main
Seared Chicken Breast, Goats Cheese & Sun Blushed Tomato Farce, Herb Crushed Potato Cake, Thyme jus (GF)
Seared Sea Bass Fillet, Potato Champ, Fennel, Caper & Sun Blushed Tomato Confit (GF)
Aubergine, Plum Tomato & Courgette Filo Stack with Tomato Salsa (V/Ve/GF/DF)
Choice of Dessert
Warm Chocolate Brownie with Chocolate Sauce & Vanilla Ice Cream (V/GFa)
Spiced Apple & Sultana Crumble with Hot Devonshire Vanilla Custard (V)
Seasonal Fresh Fruit Salad (V/Ve/GF/DF)
V – Vegetarian
Ve – Vegan
GF – Gluten free
GFa – Gluten free available
DF – Dairy free; DFa – Dairy free available

Could you be the next Association Communications Officer?

We are currently looking for an enthusiastic and organised person to step into our vacant Communications Officer role. Whether you are a seasoned communicator or simply passionate about sharing the joy of bell ringing, please take a look at the attached overview and full role description to see how you can get involved, connect our community, and help shape the future of the Association.

"We are looking for someone to help us share the story of ringing in Essex!
The Essex Association of Change Ringers is on the lookout for a creative and organised person to join us as our Communications Officer. If you enjoy connecting with people, keeping our members in the loop, and helping us spread the word about our wonderful tradition, this could be the perfect role for you.

What's involved?
As our Communications Officer, you'll be the friendly voice of the Association. You'll look after our online presence, help put together our newsletters, and find new ways to shout about the fantastic things our ringers are doing across the county. You don't need to be a professional PR expert, just someone with a passion for ringing and a knack for getting the message across!

Key bits of the role:
• Keep us connected: Help manage our website and social media to keep everyone up to date.
• Shout about ringing: Help us promote our events and encourage more people to discover the joy of bell ringing.
• Plan ahead: Work with the rest of the sub-committee and other members to dream up new ways to keep our community buzzing.

Is this you?
• You're a natural communicator who enjoys writing and sharing updates.
• You're comfortable using (or happy to learn!) online tools and social media.
• You're genuinely enthusiastic about bell ringing and the EACR.
• You're an organised, proactive person who loves working as part of a team.

Why join the team?
It's a brilliant way to give back to the ringing community, meet new people, and play a real part in the future of the Association. Plus, you'll have a great team supporting you every step of the way.

Interested?
We'd love to hear from you! You can find the full role description here: https://eacr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Communications-Officer-v2.1.pdf

If you'd like to find out more, or just fancy an informal chat to see if it's the right fit for you, please get in touch with comms@eacr.org.uk. Otherwise, just send us a quick note or your CV."

Heritage Open Days and Grand Recruitment Weekend – 19th-21st September 2026

Heritage Open Days provide a fantastic opportunity for churches across the country to open their doors, welcome their communities, and share the remarkable story of church bellringing. Every year, thousands of visitors discover the history, heritage and people behind our towers, many stepping inside a ringing chamber for the very first time.

To help Associations, Guilds and individual towers make the most of this opportunity, the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers has created the Heritage Open Days Publicity Toolkit. Designed to be practical, inspiring and easy to use, the toolkit brings together a wide range of ready-made resources to help you promote your event with confidence. From press release templates and newsletter articles to social media graphics, photography guidance, media invitations and activity ideas, the toolkit has been developed to save volunteers time while helping create a consistent and engaging message across the country.

Whether you're opening your tower for the first time or building on a successful Heritage Open Days event, we hope these resources will help you inspire curiosity, welcome new visitors and celebrate everything that makes church bellringing so special.

If you have any questions about the toolkit, or require additional publicity materials, please get in touch with Gemma at gemma.groom@cccbr.org.uk

Together, let's open our towers, share our stories, and invite people to discover what happens Behind the Bells.

The latest Central Council resources to support Heritage Open Days with a full Publicity Toolkit can be found at:
https://cccbr.org.uk/2026/07/09/introducing-the-heritage-open-days-publicity-toolkit/

Church Bells

I'm pleased to say that a ringing couple have moved into Rickling and are planning on starting to ring for Sunday services. The bells do need some work to get them ready for regular ringing. Steve Ashley, our Association Technical Advisor, visited prior to us ringing for a wedding there and following his brief report I've arranged for Andrew Nicholson, Nicholson Bell Hangers, to undertake an inspection with recommendations and costs for the bells to be serviced and overhauled.

We recently rang for a wedding at Clavering, and the new Incumbent, Gary Fleming (formally the driving force at White Roding to get their bells ringing again) and the Church Warden have expressed a real interest in getting their bells ringing regularly again. Perhaps Clavering, Manuden, Arkesden and Rickling could work together. With this in mind, Andrew Nicholson is visiting there too.

The bells of Fyfield are well maintained and rang regularly but over the last year or so the back bells have become troublesome and will need to have some work done on them. Andrew Nicholson is also looking at these.

I'm hopeful that once costs, faculties and grants are awarded, with a driving force behind each tower, that all the bells will be in good order for a few more generations to come.

Ian Kerwin, District Master

EACR Website

Why not take a look at the Association website, there is lots of information and links to various items and each District has its own space. I can add items to our District section, as I will do with this newsletter, but if anyone has any news or information they think would be of interest or useful to other ringers, please do let me know.

District Officers

As time is swiftly moving forward, a reminder that neither Ian nor I will be standing for re-election after this year and are looking for other District ringers to step up to take over these roles, preferably as early as possible to allow shadowing and a smooth handover. If you think you may be interested in taking on one of these roles, please do contact Ian or Sue to discuss, job descriptions also on the Association website.

District Master	Ian Kerwin	iankerwin@btinternet.com	07837 170816
Deputy District Master	Philip Waterfield	nw-district-deputymaster@eacr.org.uk	07803 850226
District Secretary	Sue Evans	sue.evans.nwsecretary@gmail.com	01277 896601 07514 620114
District Treasurer	Fred Bone	nw-district-treasurer@eacr.org.uk	01279 726159
District Trustee	Fred Bone	nw-district-treasurer@eacr.org.uk	01279 726159

Training Co-ordinator	Anne Sloan	Annesloan70@hotmail.com	07920 339941
Tower maintenance	Mike Slowe	mike.slowe@virgin media.com	07505 145314
PR/Comms	Margaret French	perry.margaret.french@gmail.com	07971 297730
Bell Restoration Grants Committee	Fred Bone	nw-district-treasurer@eacr.org.uk	01279 726159

And huge congratulations to …….

Bill and Liz Griffith-Jones, who reached their 60th wedding anniversary on the 18th June 2026.

Together with some of their friends, Bill and Liz celebrated their anniversary at Henham with ringing, followed by drinks and nibbles and a delicious strawberry cake. They were presented with a bell inscribed with the words:
To Liz and Bill. In celebration of 60 years together.
From Henham Tower.

It was a lovely evening, enjoyed by everyone, and we all felt very privileged to share in their celebrations. Long may the years continue!

And further congratulations go to:

Scarlett Roddam-Powell, one of Essex's young ringers who has reached a significant milestone as Scarlett celebrates her 18th birthday.

Scarlett has been bellringing for around two years, having first becoming involved after her mum, Karen, took up the hobby. She rings regularly at her five-bell tower, St Giles in Great Hallingbury, and also attends Willingale practice night under the stewardship of Ian Kerwin. During her time as a ringer, she has represented the Essex Young Ringers at two national competitions, this included conducting on her first year and most recently taking part in the 6-bell Call Change band. Next year's competition will be held in Guildford, Surrey although Scarlett will be too old to compete.

However, all being well on A-Level results day, she plans on studying Civil Engineering at the University of Surrey where she has secured a scholarship. She intends to continue bellringing whist at university, which is next door to Guildford Cathedral, ensuring she stays part of the ringing community which will hopefully enable her to help out at next year's National Youth competition.

A highlight of turning 18 is finally being able to go out with her friends to Wetherspoons. One of her favourite presents were some delicious homemade cupcakes which caused a few disagreements with her younger brother over how many he was allowed to have, but spare a thought for Scarlett's dad, who didn't manage to get any!