

# St Michael's Church

## Alnwick

### Tower Project

St. Michael's Church, Alnwick is a Grade 1 listed building and features in Simon Jenkins' famous book 'England's Thousand Best Churches.' It has been described as an 'architectural gem' and, apart from being a living centre of worship, it is in constant use for those who come to mark important milestones in their lives and also receives a regular stream of visitors all through the year.

As the County Town of Northumberland, with such a significant history, many folk have asked why the ancient Parish Church does not have a ring of bells. We really do not know the answer to this but have now been offered an exciting opportunity to remedy the situation and provide a ring of ten bells. Interestingly, the only other parish church in Northumberland with a ring of ten is Hexham Abbey.

This could be a lasting and long-term legacy from our generation – bringing a new and exciting aspect to church and town life not only in our own time but also for many years to come.



*Courtesy of the Association of Ringing Teachers*

## The Proposal

Briefly, the current proposal is being made possible through the generosity of a local entrepreneur and a trust, known as the Keltek Trust. In recent months a peal of six bells has been removed from the former parish church of St. James, Newton Hall near Corbridge, where they have served their time, - and could find a new life here in Alnwick. St. Michael's has been offered these bells – refurbished and retuned – as the basis for a ring of ten.

The project aims to prepare the tower to receive this ring of six, supplemented by a further four new bells. Of the 3 existing bells the 2 medieval bells will be cleaned and hung 'dead' in the ringing room; the metal of the 3<sup>rd</sup>, which has already been recast and is cracked, will be recycled into one of the new bells.

There has been a revival of interest in bell ringing in Northumberland in recent years and this exciting project has already enthused a core of interested people.

Bell-ringing is a unique combination of co-ordination, musical timing, mathematics and, above all, teamwork. Apart from the traditional opportunities to call the faithful to worship and to mark important occasions in family, civic and national life, bell ringing is also a great framework for personal development and, unlike many other activities, has the potential to engage people for a lifetime – from 9 to 90 years!



*Britain's youngest Bell-ringer?*

## Our Appeal

Our appeal creates the opportunity to sponsor one of the bells. You may wish to make a donation towards the cost of a bell or even become its sponsor by giving the full amount. In either case, you could have an inscription placed on the bell in memory of a family member, to celebrate a family event such as an anniversary or wedding – or simply to support the provision of a traditional activity here in Alnwick.

It is possible to have numerous inscriptions on an individual bell. Alternatively, you may wish to make a general donation to the cost of the Tower project.



*Bells from JohnTaylor & Co., Loughborough*

The opportunity to donate and inscribe a bell was common in Victorian times when many peals were installed – but, these days, the opportunity is relatively rare. Here, in Alnwick, we now have this unique possibility in prospect. Bell inscriptions will never wear out and can never be removed or replaced: they last forever!

More detailed investigations are still being carried out and will update the estimate of the cost of the project.

## **Catch the Vision**

There are several potential options for those who ‘catch the vision’:

- Donate a family bell
- Place an inscription on a bell in conjunction with others
- Donate to the general cost of the project.

If you are interested then please initially be in touch with the vicar, the Rev’d. Canon Paul Scott

The Rev’d. Canon Paul Scott  
St. Michael’s Vicarage  
Howling Lane  
Alnwick  
Northumberland NE66 1NH

Or email Paul at [paulscott1957@btinternet.com](mailto:paulscott1957@btinternet.com)