

Modernising the bell installation at All Saints

A modern bell installation does the same job as its 16th century counterpart, and would immediately be recognisable by a 16th century ringer, but a lot of the technology has changed, and All Saints has benefited from those changes.

Bell frame

Historically frames were made of oak – prone to decay and joints needed tightening. In 1903 the 6-bell timber frame was replaced with a wrought iron 8-bell frame.



1903 iron frame (centre section removed)



Made of wood from old frame

Headstocks

Historically headstocks were made of Elm, and the 1903 ring of eight was fitted with timber headstocks (despite iron being available). They expand and contract with the weather and bolts need regular tightening.



1903



2004

They headstocks were replaced with iron ones in 2004.

Bearings

Historically bells were hung on plain bearings (iron gudgeon pins resting in bronze bushes, lubricated by fat or tallow). In 1958 the plain bearings were replaced with ball bearings, and one bearing block lay undetected in the tower for over 50 years.



1903 bearing block removed 1958



2004 enclosed ball bearing