



Visitor Information to Worcester Cathedral Bells

At Worcester Cathedral we aim to welcome visitors. We must, however, consider security, safety, safeguarding and our local reputation obliges us to monitor access to the tower carefully.

Access to the Teaching Centre and ringing room is by a door inside the north transept. We are always mindful to protect the security of the Cathedral and doors are closed for security and safety reasons. Therefore, we organise all visits in advance and we meet all visitors downstairs.

We always expect all visiting ringers to observe the guidelines in this document and to behave appropriately.

If you would like to visit Worcester Cathedral and ring our amazing bells, please get in touch. It is best to communicate via email to secretary@worcesterbells.org.uk.

This paper will give you an overview of what to expect when you visit us.

Mark Regan
Ringling Master

Health and Safety

1. Please read the Health and Safety sections on the worcesterbells.org.uk website, particularly those parts relating to fire.
2. If you are ringing one of the larger bells please take care when climbing onto/stepping off the boxes used for 9th, 10th, 11th and tenor bells
3. If you think you need a box to ring any of the bells, please ask the Ringing Master or his nominated deputy and they will assist you.
4. Please keep your feet on the floor when sitting on the benches around the ringing room.
5. There is no talking whilst a touch is being rung.
6. Please do not bring any food or drink into the tower.
7. If you feel unwell or require first-aid please let the Ringing Master or his nominated deputy know.
8. Children must always be supervised whilst in the Training Centre and Ringing Room.
9. By attending the ringing session, you are deemed to have accepted these guidelines and attend at your own risk.

Security

1. Your name will appear on the register for this ringing session. You need to sign in and out in the folder at the bottom of the tower.
2. If there is need to exit the building in an emergency, please follow the instructions given by the Ringing Master or his nominated deputy.
3. Please make sure that you do not leave any bags unattended. Once you are in the ringing room or Teaching Centre there are coat hooks and places around the side of each room to leave your belongings whilst you are actually ringing.

Safeguarding

1. As part of Worcester Cathedral's commitment to safeguarding, every visitor is asked whether there is any 'sexual risk order', 'sexual harm prevention order' or 'volunteer agreement' in place with any parish, tower or diocese about themselves. That is the standard procedure for everyone enquiring about coming to ring at Worcester Cathedral. This will be done by asking each visiting ringer to sign a visiting ringer's agreement.
2. We have some members of our volunteer ringing team who are under 18. They may well be at the ringing session you attend. Please do feel free to talk to them (and they may well talk to you) about ringing and matters in general, but please do not divulge or ask them for any personal information. Please be polite and sociable with them but keep all conversation general.
3. If visitors want to have a photo, the Ringing Master or his appointed deputy, will ensure only those comfortable with being in such a photograph are in shot (and in the case of any under 18s or vulnerable adults that their carer's permission was gained in advance)
4. If you wish to post anything on social media, please ask the Ringing Master or his appointed deputy.

Can Anyone Come and Ring at Worcester Cathedral?

1. If you have only just started to ring you will need to wait until you can handle a bell very confidently and be able to strike the bell well when ringing with others. Worcester Cathedral bells are the fifth heaviest in the world and pose particular technical challenges. We try to ring on 12 as much as possible. That is not something most people can manage in the early stages of learning to ring. The best thing would be to ask the person who is teaching you to ring whether they think you would manage to ring on a heavy 12 and listen to their opinion before asking to come and visit.
2. You also need to be capable of climbing 137 steps up to the ringing room, so that is another consideration for you before asking to come and join us.
3. If you are a competent ringer and want to come and ring with us, please contact us via email at secretary@worcesterbells.org.uk. Our regular practice night is Monday from 1930 – 2115. We also hold a teaching practice beforehand in the Teaching Centre from 1830 – 1930. Sunday Service ringing takes place between 0915 – 1030.

Beforehand

1. Please inform the Ringing Master or the Secretary of any medical conditions that you consider appropriate for us to know about and who to contact in an emergency (e.g. if you have diabetes or asthma it would be useful to know just in case you become unwell when up the tower). We would only pass on this information should you become ill in the tower.
2. The Ringing Master or his appointed deputy will ask you where you usually ring and what methods you ring, to help them judge what to ask you to ring whilst at Worcester Cathedral.

Expectations of ringing

1. In an average parish church, a touch or set of call changes will normally take about 5 – 10 minutes and during an average practice there could be 18 sets of ringing. At Worcester Cathedral, each touch or set of call changes will take 10 – 15 mins, so during a practice of 90 minutes, there will be a maximum of nine sets of ringing.
2. You will appreciate that we must cater for our own band and sometimes there will be over 30 ringers present. Practising as a team to make our Sunday Service ringing as good as possible will take up the bulk of our practice. We will ensure that you get an opportunity to ring at least once. We hope you will understand why there will be periods of time when you are not ringing. Our own ringers are used to sitting for perhaps 20 – 30 minutes between touches. This can be an unusual experience for people if they are used to ringing at a tower where ringing happens faster!
3. The bells here are heavy. In addition, the unusual “wig-wam” wooden frame and tower movement make the bells technically difficult to ring. As a rule, ringers need to pull significantly harder at handstroke than in other towers. Our ringers will give you support if you need it.
4. Please note that we always place bands for each touch whenever we ring.
5. All our ringers are used to being helped with their striking Please don't be offended if you are asked to adjust your striking – that is just common practice here. We hope you understand that our bells, though magnificent, are loud and widely heard so we need to make sure our ringing is as good as possible for the local residents who have to listen to it!

Parking arrangements

1. When you come to ring at Worcester Cathedral you should be able to park on the driveway on the north side of the Cathedral, subject to available space. Please do not park in front of residents houses in College Yard.
2. Parking at the Cathedral is a privilege not a right – but as you will be joining the bellringers on ‘Cathedral business’, (which is the requirement for anyone using the car park), you should be able to use a parking space as long as there is room.

Access to the Cathedral

1. On Mondays, please meet at 1830 or 1930 outside the Friends' Door, located on the north side of the Cathedral at the top of a small ramp. On Sundays we meet outside the tower door in the north transept at 0915.
2. You will be met and signed into the tower by a member of the Worcester Cathedral Guild of Bellringers.

Toilets

1. There are toilets in the Cloisters only. These are not available on Monday evenings. The nearest public toilets are located at the Crown Gate bus station, off Broad Street.

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