

Guidance for ringers using GSM tower

This guidance is for those ringers going up and down GSM tower when it is open to the public.

This does not apply to Sunday morning service ringing or Monday evening practices.

This does apply to Sunday evensong and daytime ringing on Saturdays and Sundays, especially during the busy summer months.

This may apply to weekday ringing that starts late afternoon and ringing for special occasions.

Tower open times to the public

Monday to Saturday: 10am to 6pm

Sunday: 12pm to 5pm (BST) or 4pm (GMT)

These times may change

Phone numbers for GSM staff

These numbers are available on the Noticeboard in the ringing room.

Beforehand

Well before a ringing activity, GSM staff must be informed. It must not be a surprise to GSM staff operating the main desk that there will be ringers using the tower when it is open to the public

For ringing activities that are routine (e.g. ringing for evensong) it is reasonable to assume GSM staff will know about them, therefore no additional steps will need to be taken.

Some ringing activities are regular events but not routine (e.g. Sunday lunchtime quarters, Saturday peals, weekend training sessions) and steps will need to be taken to ensure that GSM staff are expecting to see ringers.

There are a few one-off events (e.g. ringing for University occasions) and steps will need to be taken to ensure that GSM staff are expecting to see ringers.

If there is any doubt that GSM staff are expecting to see ringers, please contact the Ringing Master or Secretary beforehand.

Going up the tower to ring

On arrival make yourself known to GSM staff at the desk and they will let you know when the way is clear for you to go up the tower.

If you are the organiser, check with GSM staff who will be on duty when ringers need to leave the tower, and whose mobile number to use.

Coming down after ringing

Before leaving the ringing room to come down the tower you must phone GSM staff at the main desk. Only come down when they say the way is clear. You will need to be patient as this may take a little time, especially during busy periods.

The above approach applies irrespective of how many ringers need to come down the tower (one, some or all).

Having ringers tailgate visitors coming down the tower can be disconcerting for GSM staff who won't necessarily understand what is happening.

If a group of tourists is coming down the tower steps do not tag along behind them

Making trips between the ringing room and bell chamber

It is routine for one or two ringers to make trips between the ringing room and bell chamber during a ringing session (e.g. to open or close the shutters, to tie or untie the bells).

It is not necessary to phone GSM staff to check that the way is clear before making these short trips.

It is the responsibility of the ringers concerned to listen out for any approaching tourists and to wait until sure that it is safe to traverse the short distance between the ringing room and bell chamber. If in doubt, please wait.

If you meet someone on the tower steps coming the other way you must turn back, do not attempt to pass them

Other scenarios

There are other scenarios besides the commonest ones listed in this guidance, e.g. a maintenance visit. Please use your common sense and, if in doubt, make yourself known to GSM staff upon arrival and provide them with key facts that will help them, or contact the Ringing Master or Secretary beforehand who can liaise with GSM staff.