

Pre ABRP Hatch (Oct 2017)

Bells & Clock Preparation

The ceiling in the Ringing Room is lath & plaster with no provision for a trap door or hatch which would allow the bells to be lowered. The belfry floor has cut boards in the middle of floor and some more in the SW corner under the Tenor. Having measured both it was obvious that the new hatch would have to be in the middle of the floor. The bells were prepared the day before the agreed start date. This involved withdrawing each bell rope up into the belfry, coiling and individually bagging them. Since cutting through the lath & plaster ceiling would produce a vast amount of dust and debris it was essential to have everything masked up, covered and protected.



Bell ropes coiled & bagged up



Clock stopped and mechanism covered



Clock drive mechanism in the belfry masked

Day 1 (09 Oct 2017)

The clock was stopped and switched off at 08am. The access tower was erected in the centre of the ringing room. All of the boards in the belfry were lifted and floor joists removed to reveal the space required to fit the hatch. The remaining cut timbers were treated and the ceiling marked out for cutting.



Existing ceiling showing circle of rope bosses for 8 bells



Access tower erected in the ringing room



Floorboards lifted and floor joists removed in belfry to reveal ceiling joists. Note 5th rope vertical chute

Day 2 (10 Oct 2017)

Tarpaulin fitted under the ceiling to catch cut section to be removed. Ceiling joists cut through and removed. Lath & plaster ceiling cut through and removed. Redundant materials bagged up and carted away.



Tarpaulin fitted to collect ceiling debris



Lath & plaster ceiling cut through & removed



Ceiling joists cut back in line with hole cut out

Day 3 (11 Oct 2017)

The solid oak hatch frame had to be raised piece by piece into the belfry then assembled and trimmed to fit existing floor/ceiling depth had to be trimmed to match. The hatch pieces were glued and screwed together, lifted into position and secured to new and existing trimmers/joists.



Oak hatch frame in position as seen from above



Oak hatch held in place by temporary joists as seen from below

Day 4 (12 Oct 2017)

Ceiling gaps were filled. New joists cut and fitted. Rope boss hole in ceiling cut. Rough plastered.



Gaps filled



New joists cut and fitted. Ceiling rope boss hole cut.

Day 5 (13 Oct 2017)

Finishing coat of plaster applied to the ceiling then allowed to dry before painting. Architrave fixed in place and new rope ceiling boss for the 5th also. Fixed lifting rings to ceiling and floor panels. Final plaster coating applied. Existing floor boards cut to size and reused. Hole for new floor boss for the 5th cut and fitted. New plaster left overnight to dry out. Lots of clearing up before painting tomorrow.



Architrave fitted and plaster finishing coat applied



New floor boss hole for 5th rope being cut.

Day 6 (14 Oct 2017)

The final coat of plaster took a long time to dry and so mist coat painting to ceiling delayed. This had a knock-on effect as the access tower frame could not be removed until the final of 2 coats of paint on the ceiling and gloss on the architrave and ceiling panels had been done. Monday practice night had to be cancelled.

Day 7 (16 Oct 2017)

Ceiling panels fitted and secured by screws. Lifting ropes fitted to the back of the ceiling panels. Insulation 200mm thick fitted. Floor panels fitted and secured with screws. First paint coat applied to ceiling and left to dry overnight. Final coat tomorrow.



Ceiling panels fitted



Lifting ropes fitted to back of ceiling panels



Floor panels fitted and secured with screws

Day 8 (17 Oct 2017)

Completion today. Second coat of ceiling paint applied. Tower frame dismantled and removed. Site cleared and left clean. Keys returned. Clock restarted. Bell ropes put back in place and wall pictures returned to previous positions. Job done.

