

CHEDISTON BELLS RESTORATION PROJECT

"Give us a Ring!"



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**Heritage
Lottery Fund**

10 April 2008

Heritage Lottery Fund will enable restoration of Chediston's bells

Chediston's bells will ring out once again, with the help of a £40,000 grant awarded by The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), it was announced today.

The six historic bells of St Mary's church in the small Suffolk village, the oldest of which dates from 1640, have not been rung for thirty years. One of the bells is cracked and the bell frame and fittings are derelict. In addition, newly discovered cracks in the 14th century tower need to be repaired.

Now, thanks to the HLF grant, together with local fundraising, work can be undertaken to repair the tower, weld the cracked 5th bell and rehang the entire ring in a new fabricated steel frame which will be installed beneath the existing 17th century oak frame.

"We are absolutely thrilled by this award," commented Veronica Downing of Chediston Parochial Church Council. "Local people have worked so hard towards the restoration of the bells in this small parish. We believed eighteen months ago that we were close to raising the necessary funds to re-hang the bells, but then the cracks in the tower were discovered, which greatly increased the cost. Now this grant will enable the project to go ahead at last."

It is hoped that the bells can be removed from the tower during summer 2008, after which they will be taken to the Whitechapel Bell Foundry for re-tuning. At the same time, repairs to the tower can be undertaken, allowing the installation of the new frame and the rehangings of the bells to take place in the first quarter of 2009.

HLF Regional Manager, Robyn Llewellyn said: "We are pleased to be able to help towards the repair of the tower and restoration of these historic bells. As well as conserving an important heritage asset in Chediston, the project will give the public much wider access to the bells both physically and through the installation of CCTV, disability ramps and new interpretation."

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Notes to Editors

The Heritage Lottery Fund enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and countryside or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history. HLF grants open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. HLF has awarded grants totalling more than £250 million to over 2,500 projects across the East of England. For more information about Heritage Lottery Fund, please visit www.hlf.org.uk