

<b>Autonomous Community / Department / State</b>	ENGLAND
<b>Town</b>	LONDON
<b>Building</b>	The Collegiate Church of St Peter (Westminster Abbey)
<b>Adress</b>	
	51.500107 -0.127224
<b>Protection</b>	
<b>Description</b>	

## **History**

It is probable that the Abbey built by Edward the Confessor, dedicated in 1065, and which had a central tower and two western towers was furnished with bells. The first recorded information concerning Abbey bells, however, is found in the Close Rolls of King Henry III where an instruction in 1230 to Edward of Westminster required that he make for the Abbey a bigger bell than any of those he had made previously. In the following year Edward was commissioned to make a small bell "that shall be in tune with the great bell".

The chronicler Matthew Paris in 1255 noted that five bells were in use, and this was depicted in his illuminated manuscript. A bell cast for the Abbey c.1310 by Richard de Wimbis (Wymbish) bearing the inscription "Christe Audi Nos" still exists and will be on display in the new Jubilee galleries at the Abbey (due to open in 2018). By the late fifteenth century a ring of six bells was installed and although recasting occurred the number of bells at the Abbey remained at six until the twentieth century.

In 1919 King George V and Queen Mary were present at London's Whitechapel Bell Foundry when two Abbey bells were recast and two bells newly cast to form a ring of eight. Restoration of the Abbey's bell installation had become necessary when ringing for the Armistice in 1918 was almost impossible due to the poor condition of the bell frame and fittings. The eight bells continued in use for 52 years ringing out in 1937 for the coronation of King George VI, in 1953 for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and on 8 May 1945 for VE Day (MP3)The weight of the tenor, the largest bell, was 28 cwt [hundredweight] (1,410kg).

In 1971 a bequest to the Abbey by Dr Eric Perkins, the brother of the Reverend Jocelyn Perkins who was Sacrist at the Abbey from 1900 to 1958, enabled a ring of ten bells to be cast. The Whitechapel Bell Foundry again was instructed. From the ring of eight the two oldest bells, which dated from the sixteenth century and the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, were retained. They are chimed (MP3) daily prior to evening service.

## **Bells**

### **Clochard**

In the mid thirteenth century (1249-53) under the aegis of King Henry III rebuilding the Abbey in the Gothic style commenced. At this time a separate bell tower or campanile was erected on the north side of the Abbey and bells rang out from this for 300 years. The remains of this structure were demolished in 1750. It was about 75 feet square and about 60 feet high.(This site is where the present Supreme Court stands)

### **North West Tower**

During the sixteenth century six bells were installed in the incomplete north-west tower, the height of which was lower than the nave roof. In the early eighteenth century Sir Christopher Wren proposed the completion of the towers and the work was later undertaken by the Surveyor Nicholas Hawksmoor and his successor John James. At last in 1745, five centuries after the building of King Henry III's Abbey commenced, the colossal task was completed. The two towers were raised to their present height and the bells moved to a higher belfry in the north-west tower.

### **Ten bells**

The 1971 ring of ten bells was dedicated at a service in the Abbey attended by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 9 November that year. The tenor bell has a diameter of 4

<b>Pictures</b>	11
<b>Current bell ringing</b>	Change Ringing Method, with 10 bells.
<b>Conservation, maintenance</b>	
<b>Proposals</b>	
<b>Authors of the documentation</b>	MARTÍNEZ ROIG, Eliseo
<b>Date</b>	02-02-2017

## Existing bells

Location	Bell	Bellfounder	Casting year	Diameter (in cm)	Weight
	<a href="#">Bell 1</a>		16th Centu		
	<a href="#">Bell 2</a>		16th Centu		
north west tower	<a href="#">Treble (1)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		<b>246</b>
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (2)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (3)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (4)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (5)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (6)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (7)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (8)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		
north west tower	<a href="#">Bell (9)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971		

north west tower	<a href="#">Tenor (10)</a>	<a href="#">WHITECHAPEL BELL FOUNDRY</a>	1971	137	<b>1530</b>
south transept	<a href="#">Cymbalum (0)</a>		1742		

Información completa: [The Collegiate Church of St Peter \(Westminster Abbey\) - LONDON \(ENGLAND\)](#)

PDF (19-05-2026)