OXFORD DIOCESAN BELL FUND

(Registered Charity No. 268390)

Report of the Managing Trustees for the year ending 31st December 2025.

Trustees

In accordance with the Fund's Rules and Constitution, at the Annual General Meeting of the Governors of the Fund, held on Saturday 14th March 2025, the following Trustees were elected:

Chairman	Alan Marchbank
Secretary	Catherine Lane
Treasurer	Stuart Gibson
Additional Managing Trustees:	Graham Clifton, Brian Gatward, Ken Davenport, Jon Chamberlain

Public Benefit

The fund's object of raising, collecting and investing sums of money and applying the income arising from the investment, towards the repair, renewal and augmentation of church bells in the Diocese of Oxford, has been met, as detailed below. Awareness of the Charity, it's purpose and support to the Churches of the Oxford Diocese, has been maintained throughout the year.

Across the Diocese of Oxford, there is public benefit by the preservation of a unique tradition and heritage. Local communities will be able to hear the bells ring for Divine Services, for weddings and on other occasions. Members of the public are able to participate in an inclusive activity that benefits them both physically and mentally.

Fund Raising

The Trustees met twice during 2025, once in person and once by conference call. Additionally, emails were exchanged by Trustees to progress grant application matters.

New money received in 2025 amounted to £10,432 (2024; £264,451).

Regular fund raising included £6,343 from Branch donations; £550 from towers; pledge giving £300; donations from PCCs £475; Ringing Day £2,006; St Blaise Society £105.

Tax claimed on Gift Aid donations was £1,380.

The Managing Trustees would like to thank all who have contributed to the continued success of the Fund.

Grants

During the year, new applications were received, and provisional grants were allocated to, Middleton Stoney (£9,080); Wooley (£750); Littleworth (£400); Longworth (£23,000); Sutton Courtenay (£5,725); Appleton (£500); Tilehurst (£20,000); Shilton (£15,385) and Westbury (£1,900).

Grants were paid towards eligible works completed at, Shilton (£17,300); Shenley (£4,070); Stoke Manderville (£900); Great Chesham (£1,870); Sutton Courtenay (£1,872); Stowe (£400); Tadmartin (£400) and Eynsham (£5,200).

In accordance with the Trustees' Policy, an independent assessment of completed works is undertaken before each grant is paid. Members of the Towers and Belfries Committee carry out these inspections on the Fund's behalf. The Managing Trustees wish to record their gratitude for this service.

During the year the Managing Trustees increased the level of provisional grants to 25% for eligible restoration works and up to 20% for augmentation elements. If the final cost is materially different from the indicated cost at the time of application, the grant is reviewed and may be revised. The level of grant allocated depends on the number of applications and the income available and so may vary from year to year.

Investments

Investment income for the year was £46,532 (2024: £37,965).

Total investment value is £760,238.

The Diocese cannot provide investment advice.

A Sub-committee has been formed from ODG Members with financial and investment expertise who met twice during the year to review the performance of the investment portfolio.

They proposed the sale of 2 poorly performing investments, Black Rock Equities and COIF Fixed Interest Fund. The proceeds from these sales and the new money available for investment (£324,443) to be invested equally across COIF Investment Fund; CBF Income Share and CBF Global Equity Income Fund.

Market value of the Funds' assets on 31st December 2025, was £1,294,220, (2024 £1,257,559).

Alan Marchbank

Chairman.