

ORGAN REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Now we are in 2024 it is appropriate to briefly look back on what has been achieved since the project began in July 2022 but perhaps more importantly to look forward and see what it is planned to achieve in 2024.

A concert given by the Kelvedon Singers was the formal start of the project and it was at that event that a massive anonymous donation gave the financial side of the project real impetus.

Since that time many individuals, local and national Charities and some local Companies have kindly made donations and there have also been several concerts together with various fund-raising events, most notably a 24 hour "Organathon" over the 2022 August Bank Holiday weekend. These have all contributed to a total of £288,419 having been raised by the end of 2023 towards the overall cost of £300,000 that has been budgeted for the project.

Other key events in the last 18 months were as follows:

A Faculty (Church planning permission) was applied for and approved, application to Historic England and contracts with Nicholson & Co were signed

Visit from the Diocesan Organ Advisor who supported the planned project

The organ and console which will be installed in Dedham Church was removed from its home in the Harvest Church (formerly Mossspark Parish Church) in Glasgow and moved into storage in Kidderminster

Pipes have been removed from storage for cleaning and, where necessary, repair and design and construction started on new chests and soundboards

Detailed measurements of the existing organ loft were taken and the design of how the new organ will fit into the space available ongoing

Information boards have been displayed in Church and regularly updated as progress has been made

Claims for repayment of VAT under the Government Listed Places of Worship Scheme and Gift Aid on donations were made and have been received.

The original plan was for the existing organ to be removed in the autumn of 2024, with the renovated 1902 Binns organ being installed and ready for use by mid-2025. In December 2023 Nicholson & Co contacted the Church to ask if the programme could be accelerated as they really needed the organ loft to be empty to take very detailed and precise measurements that were impossible with the existing organ in place.

In addition, extensive delays in the restorations of the buildings at Leeds and Manchester Town Halls, where Nicholson & Co are also working, has meant that they could now install our new organ by the end of November 2024, so in time for the myriad of services that we have leading up to and over the Christmas period.

The PCC agreed that this new timetable was both feasible and highly desirable and whilst it means that we will be without a pipe organ for the majority of 2024 the benefits of bringing the timetable forward outweigh the potential disadvantages.

Nicholson & Co will be loaning the Church a digital organ until the new organ is installed and working, so the Church will not be without music during this period.

*David Druitt
On behalf of the Organ Replacement
Project Committee.*

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