



HLF OH-12-12352
St Mary & St Giles Stony Stratford
Willis Pipe Organ Restoration and Reach-out project

Quarterly evaluation report for Q6 Jul - Sep 2015

Project overview

Date/ Project element	Apr- Jun 2015	Jul- Sep 2015	Oct- Dec 2015	Jan- Mar 2016	Apr- Jun 2016	Jul- Sep 2016	Oct- Dec 2016	Jan- Mar 2017
1. Restore organ & trial								
2. Research & record organ history								
3. Produce learning resources incl DCD								
4. Train volunteer guides								
5. Community Music Programme + organ								
6. Education Programme								
PLUS Fundraising for non-heritage items								

Below we report against each of the active strands of the project on the amended schedule reported last quarter.

Element 1. Restore organ

Work carried out in this quarter:

- Organ is now fully rewired.
- New Peterson Swell engines have been installed and in full working order.
- All soundboard actions and stop actions installed and re-connected.
- Wind pressures set.
- Pipework has now started to be re-installed, all Choir and Great Flue work and we have now started on the Swell. New slides made for some of the flue work, pitch re-set to A440
- Case work is nearly complete and ready for fitting.
- Front pipe repairs carried out.

Element 2. Research & record organ history

Only one short visit was paid to the archives in Edinburgh during this time (making the most of a work trip to Edinburgh) to try and find a particular piece of information about the original commissioning of the Willis organ. A further visit is needed however this will not take place until early 2016. During this time the exhibition was used at the Pipe Organ Open Day in September, with further information added from the organ archive and the project team reviewed the effectiveness of the temporary display. The material was also used in a school visit to the church in September.

Element 3. Produce learning resources including DVD

Junior school visit trials were begun in September, with a great deal of learning to be drawn from them. Plans are being developed to work with a pilot secondary school.

A sample of the comments made by Year 5 upon their return to school:

- I enjoyed learning how the organ works.
- I learned so much that I didn't know.
- Learning about the organ was awesome, playing the grand piano, electric piano and bell plates was really cool.
- I loved everything and learned lots too! I do not think you should change anything! Thank you for a fun time!
- I didn't enjoy leaving because I loved everything I did.

No progress on any other learning resource development this quarter.

Volunteers

A Thank You Tea Party was held on 04 July in the gardens of a volunteer's house, to appreciate how much has been achieved so far and outline plans for the future of the project; this was a lovely occasion with a delicious tea, a short talk from the Project Leader and plenty of time to relax. It had a significant impact on some who had not thought they were worthy of an invitation - "I've only made a cake", "I just put up a couple of posters", "I haven't really done anything to help". It was good for everyone to see who else is involved and this produced a few "I didn't expect to see you here!" moments among the guests.

Volunteer name badges have been developed and introduced from September so that it is easier for the public to identify volunteers to talk to.

6 volunteers have joined the team this quarter and 1 new leader.

However, some key volunteers are experiencing ongoing overload, which needs addressing as a risk (see below)>

Publicity

During this period the new Music for All at SMSG website came online and content from the old organ appeal website and separate blog was migrated to the new site. Both Twitter and Facebook continued to be used to advertise events, now linking to the new site. On Twitter in particular @SMSG_organ is picking up a pleasing number of followers from near and far who are commenting on tweets. Followers of the Facebook group are also commenting on posts and confirming if they plan to attend events.

Project management

Project management The Project Team did not meet this quarter, there being no need due to the delay in the programme.

Risk register This has been updated at the end of the quarter. Key risks are considered to be: overload on volunteers leading to fatigue, volunteer numbers hampering expansion, impact of schedule changes, uncoordinated event bookings, lack of event leaders deputies, and slump in energy due to the delay in the schedule. These risks will be addressed at the next Project Team meeting.

Quarterly account The project budget was overspent this quarter, with Browne's expenses to date totalling £2269 over total budget, with further expenses to be charged from Aug 2015-Mar 2016. This has been added to the risk register, so that a mitigation plan can be developed.

Lessons learnt Key lessons learnt this quarter are:

- In terms of events, what was a very big setback in the delay of the works only affected the Heritage weekend event and caused the Sinfonia to change their programme for November. Everyone has been very supportive and taken it in their stride and bookings are still coming in.
- Flexibility is key.
- There is still a great deal of enthusiasm for this project and many visitors to the church (both regular and one-off) have commented favourably on seeing the pipes going back in.
- From September to April - heating to be on for an event regardless of assessment of weather, especially now that we have measured heating cost for a concert. May need more heating control adjuster team members.
- Ensure that events are not also performed locally only a few weeks before
- MK Chorale lost their booking at The Venue apparently because The Venue took MKC's booking for the following year but did not have a suitable calendar to record it so that when another group asked to book they were given the OK. Lesson for us all - Keep a calendar available for at least two years forward.
- Wine bottles on their sides in the fridge will be wet with condensation and slide out dramatically onto the floor - be careful when removing before serving.

Report on additional project: Fundraising for non-heritage items

Fundraising this quarter from all sources brought in a total of £2,700 from all sources, including events.

Events Programme (without organ) this quarter - including case studies

Strand 1: SMSG Programme - focus on TT@TT

There have been three Third Thursday at Twelve-Thirty events - 45 minute relaxed drop-in free concerts, inviting all ages to bring their packed lunch and be entertained for as long or short at time as they can spare. Tea and coffee and small treats are available, donations welcome, but not mandatory. SMSG Handbells rang a new programme of music in July; August

saw Joe Laredo and Jacob Collins perform outstanding pieces for piano, violin and viola; and SMSG Church Band set the second season of TT@TT going in September.

At the end of our first year of TT@TTs there is a momentum building which we hope to sustain at the very least. We are indebted to many volunteers, but especially Fiona King, Jean Viard and Gill Millar who have been the kitchen crew for all TT@TTs between them.

During this period we have become fully booked for the next 15 months!

The impact of these sessions in building our work with young people and ‘new faces’, including those who are not able to come to evening events and those with small children. For example:

Thursday, 16th July TT@TT SMSG Church Handbells: 19 children came down with the Headmaster at SMSG school and were invited to come and 'have a go', and so many who have never rung before were tutored by our team and we had an impromptu peal of bells ringing all together. Although not a large audience, there were still some new faces and many who like to come each month.

Thursday, 20th August TT@TT Joe Laredo and Jacob Collins: Lots of new audience today - staff from our Church School who had taught Jacob, neighbours of Joe and some who have noticed the posters outside. We gained 3 email addresses, someone interested in giving a concert, and £106.50!

In August we presented a **Bank Holiday Cream Tea followed by a chamber music concert**, when we benefit from the increased footfall generated by the Town Fair. Once again our energetic cake makers of the Parish Family provided the scones, our MFA team served the teas and the music was provided by Voice Versa - a local professionally trained vocal ensemble. They commented ‘we like singing here - great acoustic’. We were very fortunate that, once again, Voice Versa gave their skills free of any fee.

Strand 2: SMSG Welcomes Other Promoters

This quarter we welcomed **Milton Keynes Chorale** again - the third time in 6 years. We received a desperate plea from their concert manager who explained that their expected booking at The Venue (Walton) for their summer concert had been double-booked. SMSG was pleased to offer the Church. MFA served refreshments provided by MKC to a large audience. The weather outside was delightful and many ate their nibbles in the splendid Church gardens.

A local student **Emma Davies** is planning to go to New York at the invitation of Karl Jenkins and to sing in a concert. She wished to split the proceeds between herself (to pay for the trip) and the Organ Restoration Fund. However, the team decided that all the proceeds would be for Emma. Her family provided a Strawberry Tea to the audience. This has given us an idea for the future - perhaps as an alternative to Cream Teas.

The **New English Singers** are an established choir at the Church of Christ The Cornerstone and they visited us for the first time. Their programme included Andrew Gray playing oboe. Unfortunately the weather was cold which was uncomfortable for the audience that did come! The audience was one of the smallest at a choral event and may have been due to a Rugby World Cup match England v Wales and the same concert programme had been performed at Hanslope Church only two weeks before. The volunteer Leader of this event was unable to attend but managed to find someone from the Parish Family to take over. He had very little experience in how we present concerts but was given access to the Guide documents and did a grand job.

Strand 3: Heritage Weekend Willis Pipe Organ Festival 2015

This had to be changed to an Open Day to inspect progress of the work on Saturday 12 September, which was a great success with the added excitement of sound coming from the 2 ranks of pipes which by that time were back in the Great and Choir. This enabled those who attended the Open Day to actually play the organ. There was a talk about the history of the organ (based on the organ archive) in the church hall, which was given twice during the day, as well as the History exhibition in the church <http://www.musicforallsmg.org/heritage-open-days-2015/>

Unfortunately, due to bereavement, the performers for the planned Stony Stratford Story Stroll on Sunday 13 September had to cancel at the last moment. However, we had proved the value of Eventbrite in that the event was fully booked online, and we hope to run it within the year.

Strand 5: Outreach

Six events took place this quarter, described below to give a flavour of our varied outreach activity:

Tuesday, 7th July. SMSG School invited the residents of Fegans Court, The Mill and other 'friends of the school who are free in the daytime' to lunch, followed by a music concert (a repeat of the previous evening's Annual Music Concert for parents and families.) 31 came and enjoyed a roast chicken and apple crumble lunch in the hall with the children and chatted over coffee until the concert started. The school Choir, Handbell Team and Orchestra played along with solos, duets, trios and larger ensembles. The children all enjoyed playing for a very appreciative audience.

Tuesday, 7th July. SMSG Church Handbell Ringers visited Flowers House (a care home for those with varying stages of dementia) in Bletchley to play for the residents. We played tunes that we thought most people would know and did manage to get many people singing or humming along. It is always difficult to engage with the whole audience in dementia homes, but the familiarity of the music often unlocks a positive response. All the staff were very grateful that we had come and that we required no fee.

Friday, 31st July. At last year's Autumn Concert an engaged couple in the audience heard the final piece of the programme, 'All you need is Love' and said to each other that they would like that at their wedding! And so SMSG Church Band gathered to play them out at the end of their marriage service in SMSG Church.

Sunday, 2nd August. The inaugural Magdalen Mediaeval Fair in Stony Stratford. St Mary's Tower is being repaired and renovated and a mediaeval fair was organised by Phillip Snell of MK Council to celebrate the completion. Unfortunately, the work was not finished, but the fair went ahead anyway, but on the field in Magdalen Close, rather than by the tower. SMSG Church Handbell Ringers were invited to play twice during the afternoon and rang our best mediaeval ditties! We have already been booked for next year.

Wednesday, 12th August. SMSG Band Concert at Fegans Court. We were invited by the Residents' Committee to give an early evening concert. We had a great time and we were very pleased to share our music with so many who cannot get out to concerts, by bringing the concert to them. They very kindly gave us £75 for the organ fund, although we had not required a fee.

Sunday, 6th September. SMSG Church Band played all afternoon as background music for Calverton Fete. We had a great many people stop to listen specifically to us and were complimented on the choice of music - songs from WW2 era. The Band was listed as 'priceless' in the takings for the afternoon as all the stall holders think we help visitors to part with their money!

Events - data

Events results	Jul - Sep 2015	Total in HLF project
Events raising £ for organ fund	8	43
Other events under Music for all @ SMSG	2	30
Total Music for all @ SMSG events	10	73
Performers involved	157	1537
(of which were school age - since October 2014)	13	214
Audience attendance	582	5192
(of which were school age)	42	342
Helper attendance at events	58	267
Total people engaged	1082	7361
Footfall (info for Stony businesses): monthly ave	260	
New email mailing list addresses	4	90
Total net funds raised for non-heritage work	1,120	£23,679
Net funds raised for other groups £	910	£2888
Volunteers recruited in addition to pre-existing 40	9	71
Social media: @SMSG_Organ: Twitter followers/Tweets sent to date		1,954 following, 256 tweets, 395 followers

The quarter in pictures



July Volunteers' tea party

Anna gives a thank you speech to all the volunteers who help with Music for all at SMSG.



August Bank Holiday cream teas

Voice Versa in concert after the Cream Teas



September Open Day

Young visitors asking Steve the organ builder about the organ