

# London Diocesan Advisory Committee

## St Peter, De Beauvoir Town (05.14)

### Note of a meeting at the church on 15 December 2022

**Present:** The Revd Fr Simon Cuff                      Vicar  
                  John Norman                                      DAC

1. The meeting was requested by Fr Cuff to address two issues:
  - a. A request for a confirmatory Faculty for renovation work executed in 2018 during the incumbency of his predecessor.
  - b. His concern over the present condition of the organ.
2. The church is by William Lockner 1841 and occupies a prominent position within the streetscape. It is of Early Gothic Revival design and brick construction. The Romanesque chancel and south-east organ chamber were added in 1884 by H.R.Gough. It has a reasonable acoustic for singing, spoiled by excessive floor carpet.
3. The original organ probably stood in the west gallery but was replaced by the present J.W.Walker instrument in 1884. It has a pleasant tonality well-matched to the church as it would have been without the carpet. The instrument had space for more pipes than originally installed. The missing pipes were added by the Caribbean-trained David Burke in 1974 but are not to the same standard as the original. There have been no other known alterations and the instrument has a historic listing of Grade II.
4. The organ was extensively restored by Edward Dove (trading as 'Organ Design') in 2018. In general, the work on the action and wind system was of a good standard, there were no alterations and there appears to be no reason why a confirmatory faculty cannot be granted for this work.
5. Complaints have been received from musicians about the condition of the organ. There appear to be two problems. Firstly that the touch varies from note to note (noticeable especially by pianists) This is because the much-used Swell to Great coupler is poorly adjusted. It ought to be adjusted so that, as the key is depressed, the Great organ pallet valves open slightly before those of the Swell organ. This lightens the touch as the two sets of pallets are opened one at a time, not together. Currently some notes are adjusted so that both pallets open together, so the touch varies from note to note. This fault can be corrected by careful adjustment of the coupler action and is not a major piece of work.
6. The 140-year-old soundboards have split as a consequence of low winter humidity in a well heated and well used building. The splits have led to unstable tuning and some very stiff stop-knobs on the console. Although the organ is fitted with a humidifier and work was done on the soundboards in 2018, this appears not to have been successful. It will be necessary to remove pipes and upperboards to expose the stop action slides and soundboard surface to determine remedial action.
7. As the organ is now tuned by Harrison & Harrison it would be logical for that firm to report. A second opinion could be obtained from Bishop & Son, with whom the incumbent has some connection. The condition of the humidifier ought to be checked by a representative of the makers.

