St John’s Hyde Park organ restoration secures



Class lesson at St John's, Hyde Park

The project aims to restore the Grade II* listed Victorian organ and celebrate this valuable piece of heritage through musical projects and community events. The organ will be taken away to the workshop in January and will be reinstalled in June, ready for a full launch and celebratory events in the autumn.

The project will carry out essential repairs and conservation work, restoring both the sound and the visual appearance of the organ. Two apprentices will be employed throughout the work. An education programme is also planned for local schools, as well as exhibitions, lectures, conferences and publications prepared by experts but with significant contributions from volunteers. Following the restoration a series of recitals will follow, including an opening recital by an internationally recognised organist playing a newly commissioned concerto for organs, a children’s musical, community concerts, and a conceptual art event featuring a soloist from the Royal Ballet.

St John's is a focal point for the local community, used by many community groups and supporting many young musicians. The organ is an 1865 William Hill cathedral-sized instrument that is an important part of Britain’s musical inheritance, but has been in decline for many years and requires an immediate overhaul. This restoration in its 150th year presents a wonderful opportunity to save this Victorian instrument and celebrate the history, music and culture of West London.

Jean Paul Floru, a Westminster councillor, said: “I’m delighted that HLF has given this grant. St John's is a very important community hub in Westminster and the organ is a centrepiece of the musical and cultural heritage of the area. I look forward to seeing the newly restored organ and the community projects that are held as a result of the work.”

Sue Bowers, Head of HLF, London, said: “We are delighted to be involved in this truly community based project to save this historic church organ. The restoration and preservation of the instrument and its history will ensure that the rich musical traditions of St John’s will continue to flourish for years to come.”

Notes to editors

Heritage Lottery Fund grants for organs in London
Here are just a few of the historic organs across London which have secured Heritage Lottery Fund investment:

- Historic Walker Organ, Sacred Heart Church, Wimbledon - £237,000 in 2010
- Royal Festival Hall’s organ, Southbank Centre - £950,000 in 2010
- Henry Willis Organ, The Union Chapel in Islington - £470,000 in 2012
- Organ at St George’s Church Southall - £297,000 in 2010
- 18th century organ, St John’s Church, Notting Hill - £373,500 in 2012

About St John’s, Hyde Park
St John’s is a Church of England church in W2 situated between Paddington station and Marble Arch. It is a family church with an excellent reputation for music, with a choir drawn from the best of London’s conservatoires, and a centre of the community in the Hyde Park Estate. It is perhaps most famous for its annual Horseman’s Sunday, to which the horses of London come each year for a blessing. Vist the St John's, Hyde Park website for more information.

Further information

St John’s Hyde Park: Brutus Green on tel: 020 7262 1732 or email: parishadmin@stjohns-hydepark.com.