

HISTORY

In 1994, after much fundraising and immense commitment from the congregation and community, a new Organ was purchased for the Cathedral, replacing the original pipe Organ with a digital model. Containing the innovative and renowned Bradford computing system, the 1994 Organ offered a far greater spectrum of soundscape and its speaker system ensured a breadth of audio quality across the Cathedral. The Bradford system remained a benchmark of quality for many years and is still held in great respect.

Over the subsequent years, the Cathedral has enjoyed an excellent and reliable instrument to lead worship and serve community events, with very little ongoing outlay on maintenance or repair.

However over the past few years this reliability has begun to fail, somewhat to be expected as it reached the end of its projected length of life. The innovative technology of the 1990's has become obsolete and when parts began to fail, they could no longer be replaced. Whilst an excellent technician from Glasgow Studio Electronics has managed to repair some faults over the last few years, the final demise came when part of the motherboard failed and finally a speaker and amplifier dramatically burnt out.

Following this, the Vestry asked the Director of Music and Assisting Organist to work with the Provost in sourcing a replacement.

Aware that our funds / fundraising, would not easily cover a new instrument, the focus has been on either a rebuild or ex-demo instrument, either of which would give access to an instrument of equivalent or better specification than the Bradford, with the immense benefit of 21st century technology and 10 year parts and labour warranty.

WHY DO WE NEED AN ORGAN?

Whilst immensely grateful to Oban Music Society for the use of their excellent Steinway for ongoing music that requires a piano accompaniment, and for the period since our Organ failed; in St John's Cathedral, we believe that the Organ is vital to the greater life of the Cathedral in so many aspects of our regular and occasional worship, congregational and community activities.

From the repertoire of music offered by our Director of Music and Assisting Organists at each service, together with its leading of choir and congregation in anthems, hymns and psalms, the Organs' rich sounds are an intrinsic part of the ambience of Cathedral, Diocesan and community worship.

So many have valued the music played at Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms as well as its fundamental part in creating the atmosphere for festivals such as Christmas and Easter. Indeed so much music by composers such as Bach and Buxtehude and many others, was written for specific Sundays throughout the year, picking up on the mood of season or Biblical readings.

Of course, as well as leading service music, our Organ has, over the years, also been widely used in accompanying the Oban Bach Choir and Orchestra, visiting choirs and for Organ Recitals.

The versatility and ability of an Organ to shape the mood of the occasion, to accompany and lead sensitively, with joy-filled grandeur or in gentle lament, is but part of the flexibility of its vast range of tonal qualities. Often cited as the instrument closest to the human voice, it is the only instrument capable of producing the breadth and volume needed to lead a choir and congregation in singing.

REPLACEMENT ORGAN

The process of sourcing a replacement Organ began with research into the particular specification, soundscape, audio quality and, inevitably the cost and availability of instruments from Organ Building Companies. The experience of our Organists in their experience and playing of different instruments was also invaluable in the deliberations.

Of the two final contenders, Makin Organs from ChurchOrgan World met all the criteria set. Their advice was sought and an instrument suggested which will give an improved specification on the Bradford, with a breadth of soundscape and audio quality needed to fulfil the needs of our Cathedral.

The instrument was commissioned by and used at Norwich Cathedral whilst their pipe organ was under repair in 2022/3 and as such, will provide a fitting instrument to take us into the next stage of our Cathedral's worshipping life. Based on the Makin Windermere 3-45, it has additional features which make it a desirably enhanced version.



It is important to mention that these demo/ commissioned instruments are not regularly obtainable and thus we are fortunate to have this impressive and unique option available to us to purchase.

The Vestry have put a deposit on this instrument and the fundraising campaign to raise the full amount begins in earnest.

MAKIN WINDERMERE 3-46



A three manual, 46 stop quality British instrument
The Makin Windermere has a high quality sixteen channel audio system, which, combined with a UL speaker system, delivers the realism of a pipe Organ sound and power. With a speaker per amplifier and a ration of just over 3 stops per speaker, it delivers an exceptionally high quality of range of sound. The Windermere is voiced by Professor Ian Tracey of Liverpool Cathedral who was also involved in the design and specification process to ensure the delivery of the very special sound of a true British Organ.

ChurchOrgan World

The pictures are of the enhanced version we will be purchasing. The full specification is available in the Cathedral.

COST

The cost is **£55,550**

which includes all aspects of installation, speakers, voicing and the removal of the Bradford Organ. The instrument also comes with a 10 year Warranty of parts and labour from ChurchOrgan World.

INSTALLATION

Approximate timeframe could see the Organ installed in the Autumn.

FUNDRAISING

With lots of events planned we hope that we can encourage support from our congregation, those around our community and from many connected through the years to the Cathedral.

YOU CAN HELP WITH FUNDRAISING EVENTS by running or attending....

BY DRINKING COFFEE! All our Coffee Funds after expenses from Sundays/ Wednesdays/ Thursdays and at events will go to the Organ Fund. Please give generously!

You can make a ONE OFF DONATION

By cheque: St John's Cathedral / or cash - in an envelope clearly marked ORGAN FUND

By BACS: RBS, George St, Oban Sort Code: 83-26-04
Acc: 00178722 St John's Cathedral Oban
clearly marked ORGAN FUND

If you are an eligible UK taxpayer, please consider Gift Aiding your donation which enables us to claim 25% extra on your gift. Blue envelopes are available in the Cathedral, please mark these ORGAN FUND.

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ST JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, OBAN ORGAN APPEAL FUND 2025



PLEASE HELP

raise funds to buy a replacement Organ following the irreparable failure of the existing instrument