DERBY, ST. LUKE

July 26th 1993

Inspection requested by Rev. David Mellor, Vicar.

TOWER
The eight bells are rung from a ringing room about 35' above ground level, the entrance to which is via a spiral staircase in the south east corner of the tower. There is an intermediate clock room 7' 8" high with the clock mechanism along the north wall in a housing of 5' depth. Access to the clock room is via a fixed staircase in the north east corner of the ringing room. Access to the bells from the clock room is via a central trap door and fixed stairs. The bells are housed in a two tier frame and are comfortably well below louvre level.
There is some cracking of the tower walls on the eastern side below the ringing room. This should have been remarked upon by the architect in quinquennial reports. The present report is not concerned with the structure of the tower which is rightly the responsibility of the architect.
The large louvres and openings in the tower have been wire netted to prevent birds getting in. Unfortunately some small areas of this netting at the higher level in the tower have come away and pigeons, in large numbers, have now gained access to the bell chamber. In a very short time they have created an appalling mess which is both dangerous and unhealthy for anyone who enters the bell chamber.
Maintenance of the bells in a two tier frame is never easy as one has to clamber over bells and bellframe up to a height of 20' above floor level to attend to bells in the upper frame. When the bells and frame are heavily coated with soft or dry pigeon guano, the potential for slipping and falling is greatly increased. When the bells are rung, dried pigeon guano dust fills the atmosphere - even at ringing room level. This can be damaging to health.
It is essential that urgent steps be taken to exclude pigeons from the tower. It is not a matter which can be put off. It must be done as soon as possible. It is pointless to try to keep the place clean whilst pigeons are getting in.

BELLS
This is the heaviest peal of eight bells in Derbyshire and ranks No. 14 in the world list of heavy peals of eight bells. The bells themselves are all in good condition (apart from being coated in pigeon guano). None have been quarter turned. None are cracked.
The details of the bells are as follows:

No.	diameter	weight	date	founder
1.	32 3/8"	7-2-24	1878	J. Taylor
2.	33 1/2"	7-0-21	1875	J. Taylor
3.	35 1/4"	8-2-2	1875	J. Taylor
4.	38 1/2"	10-1-19	1875	J. Taylor
5.	42 3/8"	13-0-16	1875	J. Taylor
6.	43 1/2"	15-1-16	1949	J. Taylor
7.	49 3/8"	20-1-21	1875	J. Taylor
8.	56 1/2"	30-3-2	1876	J. Taylor

The inscriptions are as follows:

1. J : TAYLOR & Co. FOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1878

2,3,4,5 and 7. J : TAYLOR & Co. BELLFOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1875

6. J : TAYLOR & Co. BELLFOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH 1875
RECAST 1949

8. J : TAYLOR & Co. BELLFOUNDERS LOUGHBOROUGH LEICESTERSHIRE 1876

FRANCES ALICE MOSS GAVE US
1875-6
FREDERICK JAMES LYALL M:A.
1st VICAR OF THE CHURCH
D : G

and on the other side of the bell:

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS

N.B. Some data in the Smith report of June 4th 1993 is not correct.

BELLFRAME
This is a two tier all metal bell frame. Bells 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are housed in the lower bell frame, which is "H" type. The upper frame is a low-sided "A" frame and carries bells 1, 2 and 4. The steel grillage carrying the bell frame is of good design in that it is tied into all four walls of the tower and evenly distributes the sideways forces when the bells are rung. The structural condition of the frame is quite sound. Some parts have recently been painted. However, completion of this task has been abandoned due to the ingress of pigeons.

HEADSTOCKS
All are cast iron and in satisfactory condition. All bell bolts show signs of corrosion.

MAIN WHEELS
These are satisfactory. They should be treated with wood preservative.

STAYS
All are Hastings type. Some of the bolts are loose. A bolt is missing on each of bells Nos. 3 and 4.

GROUND PULLEYS
All pulleys, apart from No. 5, are showing wear in their bearings. As a result the side of the pulley rubs against the pulley box and acts like a disc brake and makes for difficulty in ringing the bell. All pulleys need overhauling. There is a floor pulley on No. 5 bell; this likewise needs overhauling.

MAIN BEARINGS
All are fully enclosed ball bearings. The stayside gudgeon on No. 5 looks suspicious; it may be loose. Also the bearing housing on the stay side of No. 2 shows some movement when the bell is rung; the gudgeon may be loose. Modern thinking advises that ball bearings should not be greased. Those at St. Luke's have been regularly over greased and the seals have failed. In the light of this and the fact that most of them date from 1923 and that some of the bells are reported to be heavy going, it is recommended that the bells be lifted and the bearings be examined. It is expected that some new replacement bearings will be needed.

CLAPPERS

All are of the independent type. All need greasing. No. 3 is loose and should be tightened. Whilst there is some wear in the clapper pins and bearings it is not excessive. Overhaul of the clappers would be nice, but it is not a top priority task.

SUMMARY

The bell installation is basically in sound condition. There is some modest deterioration due to wear and tear. There is a need to catch up on some minor items of maintenance. However, casting a vast cloud over the whole scene is the matter of the pigeons which must be dealt with first before anything else can start.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Very Urgent - to be done within two months

1. Take action to exclude pigeons from the tower. It is recommended that the upper openings be permanently boarded over with plain boards or bricked up. Wire netting, whilst satisfactory, tends to break loose after a time. All the existing netting presently in position should be checked.

2. Clean out all the pigeon guano.

3. Grease all clappers; tighten No. 3 clapper.

Desirable - to be done as soon as funds allow

4. Overhaul all pulleys (except No. 5).

5. Lift bells and inspect all bearings; check gudgeons, particularly No. 5 and No. 2.

6. Clean down frame and finish painting it. Steel parts corrode more quickly than cast iron parts, so paint all sides of the support grillage.

Optional

7. Overhaul clappers.

N.B. As all this work is care and maintenance it should not require a faculty.

Comments on the Eayre & Smith report of June 4th 1993

The above Eayre and Smith report on the present situation at St. Luke's is consistent with my findings and recommendations.
The Eayre and Smith report also refers to three schemes for remodelling the installation:

1. Add two trebles to present ring to create a light six for training purposes.
2. Use No. 7 bell as tenor and replace three others.
3. Obtain a lighter peal of redundant bells (ex St. Martin's).

St. Luke's peal of eight bells is special because it is the heaviest peal of bells in the Diocese. To dispose of this feature would not be popular among bellringers either in the county or nationwide. There

may be other difficulties, for example, what do the P.C.C. think of the changes and would the D.A.C. go along with the idea? By far the most attractive idea is to add two lighter bells to make a peal of ten bells and give a musical light six for training purposes. The cost for all three alternative schemes is `20,000 so there is no economic argument for not making this the favourite option. I feel there would be general support among bellringers for such a scheme. A faculty would be required for any of these schemes.

G.A.HALLS.

Adviser on bells to the DAC.

Advice given in good faith no liability accepted.10,Fairbourne Drive,