

OUR CHURCH HALL AND LAND : FINAL DECISION MADE.

The Parochial Church Council of St.Mary Penwortham, at an extraordinary meeting convened on Sunday 12th February, unanimously agreed to the sale of the Glebe investment land on which the Church Hall and former tennis courts sit.

Our Scout group, 6th Penwortham (St.Mary's), have been granted a new 25 year lease with provision for a further 25 years by the Diocese custodians of the Glebe investment land. This means our Scout group have security of tenure for a substantial period that satisfies all their requirements.

The vicarage is to remain at its present location.

The sale of the Glebe investment land will release funds to the Diocese for further investment with the potential to attain better returns. The surrender of the lease held by the PCC, which had some 30 years remaining, will give the PCC substantial funds to enable investment into the Grade 2* listed building for provision of enhanced facilities for its own purposes and to pay off our current debt of some £45k to the Diocese.

The Asset Transfer of both the former Church Hall on Priory Lane and the listed former Library building on Liverpool Road to Penwortham Town Council from Lancashire County Council and the plans outlined by the Town Council for the use of these two community facilities was taken into account when reaching our decision.

The very significant costs, well in excess of £100k, to do basic structural repairs to the current Church Hall on Cop Lane would have necessitated liquidating all our available assets into this project with no guarantee of remaining on site after the lease terminated in 30 years time and with the continued legal requirement in the lease to demolish all buildings at that date. The ability to generate funds by lettings would also be impacted by the recent acquisition by the Town Council of the two buildings as noted above.

Since our earlier notice to our Church Hall users in February 2016 of our intentions to sell the Glebe investment lands, most have found accommodation elsewhere. Those that remain will be fully informed as to the date of closing of the Church Hall in good time.

This is an important step for the Church Leaders to have taken which will now enable the provision of a modern, state of the art, Mission Centre at the historic, Grade 2* listed location of St. Mary's Parish Church which has been a place of Christian worship since at least 1086.

We are grateful to all those who have made this opportunity possible and now seek to take forward this vision which we first described in 2004.

Chris Nelson,

Vicar St. Mary, Penwortham.

ps from the Churchwardens:

We are particularly grateful for the leadership of our Vicar, Chris Nelson, in taking us through this most difficult period in the spiritual journey of our parish.

Churchwardens of St. Mary, Penwortham; David Thornton, John Kay, Jill Howe.