

*****PRESS RELEASE*** - FOR PUBLICATION**
FROM 1.00PM ON SATURDAY 27th FEBRUARY
2016.

HEALTHY CHURCH BUILDS FOR THE 21ST
CENTURY.

St Mary's Church in Penwortham has announced an exciting project to provide new facilities in the form of a pod of additional rooms in the north-west corner of the church on its current site in Church Avenue, Penwortham.

It is planned that the project would be financed by the surrender of the lease of the land in Cop Lane where the current church hall stands, and would also involve the demolition of that temporary structure and the sale of the land to generate the necessary funds for this exciting new development. The church is working closely with groups using the current building who will be affected by its closure to keep them informed of the latest news regarding the development. Reverend Chris Nelson, the Vicar of St Mary's said: "We are delighted that we have finally reached a stage where we can make this important announcement. We have been wrestling for the last two years with various options open to us and I would like to thank the Blackburn Diocese for their enlightened support in helping us to reach this stage."

Chris commented: "At this vitally important time for the Church of England in Lancashire, and as we begin our ten year journey to **Vision 2026****, it is heartening to know this project will release funding not only for the church here in Penwortham, but also for the ministry of the church in Lancashire as a whole."

The closure of the existing church hall will involve the relocation of a number of groups running regular local services to the community of Penwortham from the current Cop Lane site, but Chris has a message of reassurance and optimism. Chris added: "We are very aware of the difficulties that our tenants will have to work through during the period of closure and redevelopment. We have already initiated a dialogue with them and will assist them in any way we can. Indeed, we met with them on February 27 and updated them on the latest position. "We hope that many will be able to relocate and share with us the exciting new facilities, including the potential offered by the additional space in our recently re-ordered church building."

**** 'Vision 2026 – Healthy Churches Transforming Communities' is the new vision strategy for the Church of England in Lancashire. The Vision will be the focus for everything the diocese does for the next decade. Vision 2026**

commits the Church of England in Lancashire to making disciples, being witnesses and growing leaders; helping all church communities in Lancashire to be as healthy as possible, so they can work collectively to share the good news of the Christian Faith far and wide. You can find out more about Vision 2026 by visiting www.lancashire.anglican.org and exploring the Vision-related content under the Home menu.