

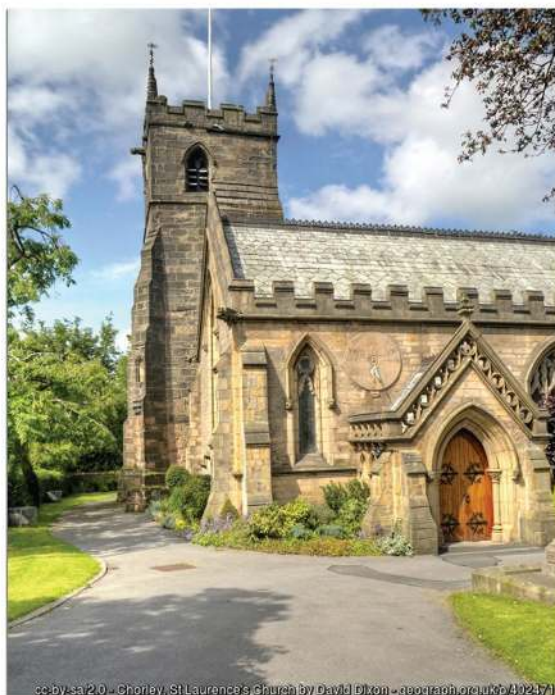
## **Church and the community: a new perspective in sharing**

### *Aims & Objectives*

To promote and develop the use of the Church and its facilities as a community asset

To form partnerships with local affinity groups encouraging them to use the Church for meetings and events in return for their support in maintaining the fabric of the Church

To restore the secular role of the Church as a dynamic centre for a vibrant local community encouraging today's 'new' Chorley to relate to its past roots



Should Myles Standish, military commander to the Pilgrim Fathers and possibly Chorley's most famous son, return to the town today, Saint Laurence Church would probably be the only building he would recognise: this because the Church has been a presence in the town since medieval times and has witnessed its growth from a small rural hamlet to the thriving market town it is today. As such it is deserving of our care and it also has much to offer.

The proposed formation of the Friends of Saint Laurence is an attempt to explore possibilities which Church and community can offer support to each other in ways which benefit both the social and communal life of the town



# The Next Step

Hopefully readers of this leaflet will be intrigued enough to want to discover more about Friends of Saint Laurence and explore the possibilities offered by such a proposal.

This is an exciting new experiment in sharing, bonding together Church and a community which already has its roots deep in the area's history.

Further information can be obtained from Michael Welsh  
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(01257 276992)

or a member of the steering committee who be glad to meet you and discuss their plans in person

The Church has many facilities which they are able to offer to a wide range of secular activities and which do not conflict with its primary purpose as a place of worship. Some of these are already in use, others wait to be developed. Space for a variety of such activities; concerts, choral evenings, plays, talks and meeting rooms would all provide a link with community groups, make better use of Church buildings and validate its claim to be a community asset.

A current survey of the fabric of the Church seems likely to reveal that it will require funding that is beyond the means of the current congregation and would need to look to the wider community for assistance when a full scale building appeal is launched. The Friends, therefore are being established to take responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Church buildings and enable those who are not Church members to play an important part in the preservation of their heritage. With an emphasis on church buildings rather than the Church we are asking the people of Chorley to become involved in the conservation of one of their most precious assets.

The purpose of the Friends would be to act as a bridge between Church and community contributing to the appeal by attracting support from outside the immediate Church family thus relieving the congregation of part of the burden of building maintenance.

The Friends would also be expected to play an active role in encouraging local affinity groups to use the Church for meetings and events and to make full use of social media to publicise activities and events and act as a clearing house for exchange of information on a wide range of cultural activities. The setting up of The Friends of Saint Laurence is still in its early stages as they look to attract Foundation Members who will in turn attract other supporters as well as more Foundation Members. The connection between Saint Laurence and the local community has deep roots in the history of the area. This proposal is a way of giving us a new perspective on how best to move forward into an exciting and successful future.



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