

DEVELOPING A VISION FOR ST LAURENCE S

**A statement for
the Parish of St Laurence with St John, Ludlow
from the Team Rector and Church Wardens
following the public meeting
held on 9th October 2008
Ludlow Assembly Rooms**

Discussions begin about the future of St Laurence's

An open meeting for the community of Ludlow was held in the Ludlow Assembly Rooms on Wednesday 8th October on the future of St Laurence s church building. The meeting was the first stage of a process of wide ranging consultation with all who have an interest in St Laurence s.

130 people attended the meeting, organised by the Parochial Church Council, with the Rev d Andrew Mottram, Director of Ecclesiastical Property Solutions as the guest speaker.

The PCC is responsible for the care and maintenance of the building. An Asset Management Plan has identified over seventy items requiring repair or replacement in the next few years. Most significantly, the heating system, lighting system and the Victorian floors in the church are wearing out and will have to be replaced very soon. This situation presents the PCC with a unique opportunity to reconsider how the building is used and how it should be arranged for the future. The PCC is determined that whatever decisions are made, they are the right ones for the 21st Century.

*All the questions are for asking and
all the answers are for seeking*

Those attending the meeting were welcomed by Rector Brian Curnew. He expressed his love for the building: St Laurence's has a very special place in the life of Ludlow as both a place of worship, and as a venue for so many events. We all feel an affinity with it, and when it is time to undertake major repairs and renovations, we need input from all to help shape our plans. All the questions are for asking and all the answers are for seeking. The Rector and the other speakers stressed that the meeting was the beginning of a process of consultation and that apart from the commitment to undertake the repairs, there were at this stage no other proposals for the building. The PCC Treasurer (Don Beattie) and the Clerk of Works (Shaun Ward) set out some of the facts of the situation.

The Rev d Andrew Mottram emphasised the need to establish the facts before making any decisions about the future. Everyone involved should be fully informed about the building, its origins, history and development through the centuries he said. He commended the PCC for developing a forward looking Asset Management Plan which will be incorporated into the Conservation Management Plan, due to be completed in 2009. He reminded the audience that church buildings have been subjected to constant change and development through the ages. Although the exterior perimeter walls of St Laurence's have changed little since their construction, the interior of the building, its fixtures and fittings have been subject to continual change and development. Any re-arrangement of the interior should be in response to its intended function, as a place of worship, and also a significant venue for many other activities in the life of Ludlow and the surrounding area he said. The PCC wants to ensure that St Laurence's is fit for purpose and has the facilities required in the 21st Century. Andrew Mottram showed examples of re-ordered church interiors, all associated with a major repair project.

The meeting was chaired by a Church Warden (Ewart Carson) who took questions from the audience. The meeting concluded with him setting out the next steps for action. These will involve extensive consultation with all stakeholders in Ludlow and its surroundings. He invited those interested in the future of St Laurence's to participate in the consultation process.

Full public consultation will begin in the New Year.

**Letters of interest can be sent:
c/o Team Rector and Wardens, The Parish Office.**

Further information will be available on our website by 17th October.