

# Building to Serve

Equipping St Mary's Chipping Norton to serve our whole community for generations to come.



*At St Mary's we have an exciting vision to serve our community in an ambitious and creative way, at a time of increasing need for many.*

For nearly eight hundred years, thanks to the sacrificial giving and support of both worshipping and wider communities down the generations, St Mary's Church has existed as a building to serve the town of Chipping Norton, both as a place of worship and as a focus for the benevolent activities of the church family. Over those centuries, the building and its furniture have been intermittently adapted and developed to meet the changing needs of the community that it serves.

Throughout the decades, the people of the church have also actively stepped out into the community to address the physical and material need around them. The establishment of various charitable bodies and almshouses are legacies of these.

The social transformation in the 18th and 19th centuries came when God moved churches to invest in building schools and hospitals. Generations later, many of our children continue to reap the benefit of their efforts.

**Today we have a rare opportunity and the extraordinary privilege of being able to invest tangibly, not only in people's lives in the here and now, but in the growth of God's kingdom for the next hundred years.** We're continuing in the tradition forged by generous benefactors of the past, to dig deep and rise to the challenge of meeting the new needs of the community as they present themselves in our own generation and in the generations to come.

OUR VISION FOR

# The Branch



*A building with purpose. A hub in the heart of the town where we will serve the wider community, coming alongside individuals and families to help them work to remove barriers, unlock potential and provide connection that will allow this community to thrive.*

Hidden in Chipping Norton is the most deprived neighbourhood in West Oxfordshire where families are unable to thrive and reach their potential, youth have few opportunities and access to services is very limited.

These troubles mask hidden treasure. By following the example of Jesus we want to help unlock the potential of each individual in our community. Working with other agencies we will listen, encourage, connect, offer hope and build brighter futures.

Our vision is to transform this beautiful old building and give it a new purpose serving the whole community so that families, friends and neighbourhoods are free to flourish.

Amongst a whole host of other things, The Branch will provide a debt centre, life skills courses, advocacy support, job support, toddler groups, drop-in surgeries, mental health & bereavement support, youth activities, a community kitchen, after-school clubs, and lunch clubs for the elderly and isolated.

OUR VISION FOR

# The Church

*Enhancing our historic church building, responding to the evolving needs of our growing congregation and enabling it to serve better as both a place of worship and as a valuable resource for the town for future generations.*

The church requires dramatic improvements to address poor heating, uneven flooring and limited engagement in church services due to inflexible seating.

Our desire is to create a more versatile and inclusive worship space – removing the uncomfortable church pews, and opening up the church for more flexible arrangements for services and functions, such as concerts and café style courses.

There is also a need to install under-floor heating (so worshippers will no longer be

cold during the winter months!), improve hazardous flooring and improve access through the porch with the installation of a glass door.

We also wish to create a catering facility to improve refreshments during services and enable the provision of meals for events that the church is used for.

Finally, there is a real need for extending and improving the parking arrangements to enable better traffic flow on a Sunday morning.





**Get in touch:**

Georgina Orchard • Campaign Director  
[georgina.orchard@stmaryscnorton.com](mailto:georgina.orchard@stmaryscnorton.com)

James Kennedy • Vicar, St Mary's Church  
[james.kennedy@stmaryscnorton.com](mailto:james.kennedy@stmaryscnorton.com)

*“Sharing the life-changing love of  
Jesus, serving our whole community.”*

