

PRN 19273

# New lease of life for historic chapel



The former Tabor Chapel in Llansaint could be turned into a home.

A HISTORIC chapel in rural Carmarthenshire has joined the long list of places of worship that could be given a new lease of life.

Plans have been lodged to turn the Tabor Chapel in Llansaint, near Kidwelly, into a home.

It is another in a growing number of historic places of worship that are closed, but on the cusp of fresh starts as non traditional uses.

From a chapel to a dentist practice, church to climbing centre, there are some interesting uses springing up for old places of worship.

Recently plans have also been lodged place to change a chapel of rest into a personal training studio/gymnasium - giving a Gwendraeth Valley

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village a new facility and a jobs boost.

The application in Llansaint follows other plans where chapels and churches have been earmarked for redevelopment as a private home.

Among the recent planning applications are for the former Nazareth Chapel in Llanelli and the high profile St David's Church in Carmarthen which was thought to be in line to be a home until talks turned to a possible climbing centre there.

Looking at the plans for Tabor Chapel in Llansaint, Dyfed Archeological Society has said the site is of historical importance and wants photographs taken

of the church to record its architecture for posterity.

In a letter to the planning department at Carmarthenshire Council the society said: "Tabor Chapel was built in 1877. We consider the chapel to be of historical and architectural interest and recommend that a photographic record should be undertaken by the applicants prior to any works commencing.

It suggested: "Development shall not begin until a photographic survey of the existing building has been carried out."

The plans will now be discussed by the planning committee at Carmarthenshire Council.

Last year the authority's former leader Kevin Madge urged the council to call on the Welsh Gov-

ernment to deliver a new strategy to deal with large empty properties.

In a motion before a meeting of the full council, councillor Kevin Madge set out the need for old chapels, churches and halls to be brought back into use, along with other unused buildings.

He argues the action could see some of the properties transformed into new homes which will help with the housing shortfall.

Mr Madge also criticised Cadw for having branded "too many buildings as listed over the years".

He said: "We are blighted with some of them, people cannot do anything with them.

"Unless we do anything

the problem will double and treble in ten years time."

Councillors backed his motion at the time and Cadw has since said that

where possible new uses for buildings should be considered.