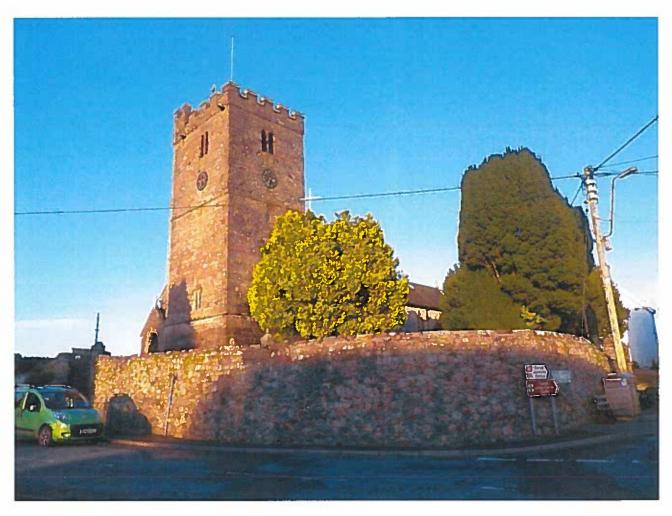
# REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO EXISTING REVETMENT WALL AT ST TYBIE'S CHURCH, LLANDYBIE, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

(NGR: SN 6186 1555)



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust For: Llandybie Church Churchyard Committee





21	

#### DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2013/72 RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 105879

> Chwefror 2014 February 2014

## REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO EXISTING REVETMENT WALL AT ST TYBIE'S CHURCH, LLANDYBIE, CARMARTHENSHIRE

Gan / By

#### Simon Ratty & James Meek

Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys

The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited can accept no responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.



Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF

Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121 Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131 Ffacs: 01558 823133

Ebost: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk Gwefan: www.archaeolegdyfed.org.uk Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133

Email: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk Website: www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

¥	

#### REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO EXISTING REVETMENT WALL AT ST TYBIE'S CHURCH, LLANDYBIE, CARMARTHENSHIRE

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

COI	NTENTS		
	SUM	MARY	1
1	INTR	RODUCTION	2
	1.1	Project Commission	2
	1.2	Scope of the Project	2
	1.3	Report Outline	2
	1.4	Abbreviations	2
	1.5	Illustrations	3
	1.6	Timeline	3
2	THE :	SITE	5
	2.1	Location	5
	2.2	Archaeological and Historical Background	7
3.	WAT	CHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY	13
	3.1	Fieldwork	13
	3.2	Post Fieldwork and Archiving	13
	3.3	Timetabling of Fieldwork	13
4.	RESL	JLTS AND DISCUSSION	14
5.	CON	CLUSIONS	18
6.	SOU	RCES	19
FIG	URES		
Figu	ure 1:	Site Location map based on the OS	4
Figu	ure 2:	Extract from the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1878	11
Figure 4:		Extract from the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1906	12
TAB	BLES		
Tab	le 1:	Archaeological and historical timeline for Wales	3
PHO	DTOGRA		
Pho	to 1:	Area of failing breeze-block revetment wall adjacent to neighbouring property (Vicarage)	5
Pho	to 2:	Dog-leg in revetment wall with lower level terraced area	6
Pho	to 3:	Top of revetment wall with reused architectural fragments	6
Pho	to 4:	East facing view of rubble and made up ground deposit	15
Pho	to 5:	Fragmentary grave stone of probable 19th century date	15
Pho	to 6:	East facing section of excavation area	16

Photo 7:	South facing section of excavation area	16
Photo 8:	Disarticulated human bone revealed with NW corner of excavation area (south facing section)	17
Photo 9:	Disarticulated human bone revealed with NW corner of excavation area (east facing section)	17

### REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS TO EXISTING REVETMENT WALL AT ST TYBIE'S CHURCH, LLANDYBIE, CARMARTHENSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

#### **SUMMARY**

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by My Ken Griffiths, Chairman of Llandybie Church Churchyard Committee, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the replacement and improvement of an existing retaining wall within St Tybie's churchyard, Llandybie.

The revetment wall was located on a former steep east facing slope dropping down to the River Marlas. This slope had been terraced when the boundaries of the churchyard were significantly altered at some point between 1841 and 1878. It is probable this occurred at the same time that major renovation works were carried out at the church in around 1856-7. The revetment wall had been rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced with a breeze block wall. This presumably occurred at a time when an extension was added to the eastern end of the Vicarage. When this extension was built the terrace into the hill slope was enlarged for a small passageway along the northern side of the extension.

During the excavations a c.1m thick dark soil layer was revealed in the exposed section which presumably represents the original ground surface cut into by the terracing.

The archaeological watching brief revealed that the ground level behind the revetment wall had been in-filled with a depth of c.1.4m of material. This included stone rubble, fragmentary grave stones, grave furniture and modern rubbish. The loose nature of the material suggests that it was deposited when the modern breeze block wall was built.

Large quantities of disarticulated human bone were recovered within the northwest corner of the excavation area which lay at the interface between the made up ground and a layer of buried soil. It was not possible to determine if the human remains were contained within a purposely dug pit or whether they were deposited when the revetment was originally built, probably in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

No in-situ human burials or features and deposits of early medieval or medieval date were revealed during the course of the archaeological watching brief although the potential for them to exist within the churchyard remains high. No indications of an earlier boundary line for the churchyard was found during the works and it is possible that the former eastern boundary of the churchyard, predating the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century renovation of the church and alteration of the churchyard boundaries, was located on the hill slope.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 Due to the failing structural integrity of a retaining wall on the eastern side of St Tybie's churchyard, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire proposals were submitted for its replacement and improvement.
- 1.1.2 The area of the retaining wall is located on the eastern side of the churchyard at SN 6186 1555. The wall in this area is located adjacent to a domestic property, and forms a c.2.5m vertical drop. The wall was cracked and structurally unsound. The revetment wall was built of breeze block with some stonework incorporated in the top courses (including reused architectural fragments from the church). The wall dog-legged to the north forming a two levelled terraced area dropping down from the churchyard.
- 1.1.3 Following consultation with the Faculty advisors to the Church in Wales, the requirement for a watching brief placed on the Faculty permission for the works by the archaeological advisor.
- 1.1.4 DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned by Mr Ken Griffiths, Chairman of Llandybie Church Churchyard Committee, to undertake the archaeological watching brief during these replacement and improvement works.

#### 1.2 Scope of the Project

- 1.2.1 The project objectives were outlined in a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared prior to the works commencing. These were:
  - To monitor groundworks in order to identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits;
  - To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed groundworks;
  - To appropriately investigate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundworks; and
  - To produce an archive and report of any results.
- 1.2.2 The overall scope of the project was defined in the WSI as: Archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks associated with the replacement and improvement of a retaining wall at St Tybie's Church, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire. Production of a report and archive.

#### 1.3 Report Outline

1.3.1 This report describes the location of the site along with its archaeological background, and provides a summary and discussion of the results of the watching brief.

#### 1.4 Abbreviations

1.4.1 Sites recorded on the Regional Historic Environment Record<sup>1</sup> (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Written Scheme of Investigation – WSI.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Held and managed by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

#### 1.5 Illustrations

1.5.1 Photographic images are to be found at the back of the report. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale.

#### 1.6 Timeline

1.6.1 The following timeline is used within this report to give date ranges for the various archaeological periods that may be mentioned within the text (Table 1).

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 - 10,000 BC	ÉHI
Mesolithic -	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	Pre
Neolithic -	c.4400 - 2300 BC	his
Bronze Age –	c.2300 - 700 BC	Prehistoric
Iron Age –	c.700 BC - AD 43	n
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 - c. AD 410	1 To 1
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period -	c. AD 410 - AD 1066	III.
Medieval Period -	1066 - 1536	His
Post-Medieval Period <sup>2</sup> –	1536 - 1750	Historic
Industrial Period -	1750 - 1899	C
Modern -	20th century onwards	

**Table 1:** Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The post-medieval and industrial periods are combined as the post-medieval period on the Regional Historic Environment Record as held by Dyfed Archaeological Trust

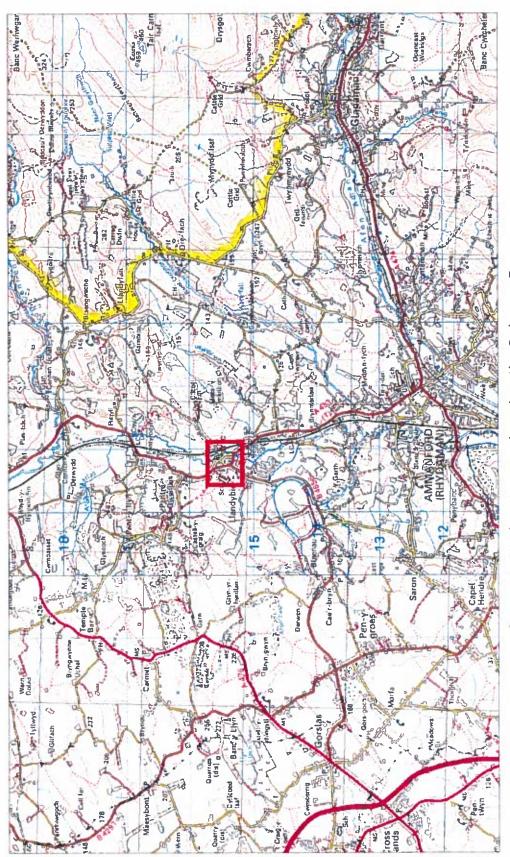


Figure 1: Site location map based on the Ordnance Survey.

Reproduced from the 2003 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale Landranger Map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright Dyfed Archaeological Trust, The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Liandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF. Licence No AL51842A

Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Report No. 2013/72

#### 2. THE SITE

#### 2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 St Tybie's church lies within the village of Llandybie, Carmarthenshire with the area of revetment wall replacement located at NGR SN 6168 1555. To the east of the site flows the River Marlas whilst to the west lies Llandeilo Road and the Red Cow Inn. To the north lies the churchyard and cemetery of the church whilst to the south lies High Street. The area of the revetment wall lies to the north of the Vicarage, originally built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and extended to the east during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- 2.1.2 The retaining wall itself was built in at least two phases. Adjacent to the existing building (Vicarage) on the southeastern side of the churchyard, the revetment wall was some 2.5m in height, dropping vertically from the churchyard (Photo 1). Further to the north the breeze block revetment wall dog-legged and was lower, with a terrace in the ground level mid-way up towards the churchyard level (Photo 2). This steep drop forms a small passageway along the northern side of the modern extension to the eastern end of the Vicarage (Photo 1)
- 2.1.3 At the churchyard level a stone wall formed the boundary of the churchyard except where the revetment wall was present to its full height, where the wall had evidently been rebuilt using a mix of breeze block and architectural fragments (Photo 3).



**Photo 1:** Area of failing breeze-block revetment wall adjacent to neighbouring property



Photo 2: Dog-leg in revetment wall with lower level terraced area



Photo 3: Top of revetment wall with reused architectural fragments

#### 2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 The following historical and archaeological description of St Tybie's Church is taken from Ludlow 1998:

#### **DESCRIPTION**

#### The present church

St Tybie, Llandybie, is a multicell church, of large size. It retains approximately 70% medieval core fabric.

The present church consists of a 2-bayed chancel, a 4-bayed nave, a 2-bayed south chapel, a 3-bayed south aisle, a south porch, a west porch, a 3-storeyed west tower in the angle between the nave and the south aisle, a single-bayed transeptal vestry south of the south chapel east bay, and a transeptal boilerhouse north of the nave west bay. Construction is in limestone and sandstone rubble. Openings are mainly from 1853-7, neo-Geometric, with yellow oolite dressings. Pointing is mainly from 1853-7, with some later repointing; the interior is plastered except in the porches, tower and boilerhouse. Roofs are slated gables; the tower roof was not seen.

The chancel east wall, with its quoins, were partly rebuilt in 1856-7. The 3-light east window is entirely from 1856-7 and has a drip-mould and Geometric tracery. There is a blocked window in the north wall represented by a square area of infill, post-medieval window?, blocked in 1856-7?. The 2-centred chancel arch was partly rebuilt in 1856-7. The chancel has an oak wagon roof from the later 15<sup>th</sup> century, partly restored, with panelling, in 1912. The quarry-tiled floor from 1856-7, over heating ducts from 1912.

The nave is lit by 3 windows in the north wall, each of 2 lights and with dripmoulds and geometric tracery, all from 1853-5. To the west, part of the jamb and sill of a small blocked window are visible externally but too little has survived to date the dressings. The west wall is priced by a cusped, double-lancet window with a central circular light from 1853-5. The west door has a moulded 2-centred surround from 1853-5. The oak wagon-roof is like that in chancel and also late 15<sup>th</sup> century, largely unrestored; The passages are tiled like the chancel floor, with suspended board floors.

The west porch was entirely rebuilt in 1853-5, in similar quoined rubble to that in the rebuilt sections of the chancel. The doorway is contemporary, with a moulded 2-centred surround. The softwood roof is also from 1853-5 and lacks trusses, all common rafters having collars. The floor is limestone flagged, from the later 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The south chapel communicates with the chancel through a 2-bayed arcade of plain, 2-centred arches inserted in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. The arch into the south aisle was partly rebuilt in 1856-7. The east wall was partly rebuilt in 1856-7, as the chancel east wall including the quoins, and pierced by a similar window, but of 2 lights, and the in the west bay south wall is a window, like those in the nave and from 1856-7, with surrounding infill but without a dripmould. The south chapel has a wagon roof like those in the chancel and nave, but extensively restored in 1912. Floored as the nave, without heating ducts, 1856-7.

The south aisle communicates with the chancel/nave through a 4-bayed arcade pieced through the latter's south wall in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century; the 2-centred arches are plain. The south wall features 2 windows like those in the nave, from 1853-5. The south door has a moulded, 2-centred surround similarly from 1853-5, with extensive surrounding infill in coursed and squared Old Red Sandstone. The wagon-roof is like that in the nave, late 15<sup>th</sup> century. Floored as the nave, without heating ducts, 1853-5.

The south porch was entirely rebuilt in 1853-5, as the west porch but with a slight external batter, and with yellow oolite quoins. The doorway is contemporary, with a moulded 2-centred surround. The softwood roof is also from 1853-5 and lacks trusses, all common rafters having collars. The floor is limestone flagged like the west porch, from the later 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The west tower is from the later 16th century, of later Perpendicular character similar to the contemporary tower at Llandeilo Fawr, Carms., and comprises 3 storeys. The facework is in large, coursed and squared Old Red Sandstone and yellow sandstone rubble, repointed in 1968. It has the external batter up to a cavetto-moulded string-course typical of the region. A square spiral stair turret projects from the western half of the north wall, entered through a doorway with a chamfered 2-centred surround, and lit by slit-lights. The ground floor communicates with the nave through a 2-centred arch, mid-16th century, redressed/rebuilt in 1853-5. There is no west door, but the west wall is pierced by an uncusped 2-light window with a chamfered, square surround and cavettomoulded label; the lights have semicircular heads in chamfered limestone from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century but the central mullion was replaced in grey oolite, probably in 1892-3. There is a second cavetto-moulded string course at the top of the second stage, which is lit by a window like that in the ground floor but singlelight. The belfry stage has 2-light openings with uncusped elliptical heads, with sunk spandrels in square surrounds in all 4 faces, in limestone again from the mid-16th century. The parapet has crenellations with a string-course around both merions and embrasures, which both also have coping, and lies on a corbel table, all from the mid-16th century but restored in 1892-3; rainwater chutes moulded as gargoyles issue from the north and west faces.

The vestry is entered from the south chapel through a doorway with a moulded, 2-centred surround from 1856-7 and which led to a contemporary vestry which was (entirely?) rebuilt, to a larger plan and in squared and coursed limestone rubble with oolite ashlar quoins, in 1912. The exterior has an external basal batter up to a roll-moulded oolite string-course, 1912. It is lit by a 2-light window in the east wall, with a square surround imitating the 16<sup>th</sup> century tower openings, from 1912; the south wall window has cusped triple lancets and is either a rebuilt or retained window from 1856-7. The vestry is entered from the churchyard through a doorway in the west wall with a Caernarfon-headed surround that was similarly either rebuilt or retained from 1856-7. A disused fireplace lies in the south-east corner; the chimney has gone. The matchboarded softwood ceiling is from 1912 as is the floor.

A boilerhouse was built against the north wall of the nave west bay, possibly in 1853-5. It is entered through a contemporary segmental-headed doorway, with an inserted 20<sup>th</sup> century concrete lintel, in its east wall, approached down a flight of 7 steps in a revetted stairwell; the exterior of this wall is partly rendered. The single lancet in the north wall is also contemporary, as is the gabled roof. The square boilerhouse has an octagonal, moulded oolite stack, also from ?1853-5, rising through the northern slope of the nave west gable.

A flag-covered external drain runs around the north and east walls. A shallow concrete-lined drain runs along the nave south wall. Floors are suspended over deep voids, and heating flues in the chancel and nave. The boilerhouse floor is below ground level. External burial vaults, memorials and former memorials lie significantly close to the north and south walls.

#### Structural development

It has been stated that the south chapel and aisle represent the original chancel and nave, and that the present chancel and nave were secondarily added as a

north aisle before their usage changed. This appears to be merely an attempt to explain the location of the west tower. However, the very fact that the present chancel is wider than the nave, and the fact that the tower location is paralleled by eg. Prendergast, Pembs., is sufficient to allow reasonable satisfaction that the elements and their usage have remained unchanged.

In the absence of detail, the chancel and nave cannot be closely dated but the arcade into the south aisle and chapel is secondary, the arches having been cut through a solid wall; the chancel and nave may be 14<sup>th</sup> century. The south chapel and aisle are from the later 15<sup>th</sup> century and contemporary with the oak wagon roofs, which form a complete set. The tower is later 16<sup>th</sup> century and similar to the contemporary tower at Llandeilo Fawr, Carmarthenshire. Both porches appear to have been added by at least 1732, when 'ye porches' are mentioned, but have since been entirely rebuilt.

The church was ceiled in c.1700; the ceilings have since been removed. The floors were 'not paved' in 1705, being earthen?

The tower was renovated in 1823, as recorded in a plaque on the tower.

The pre-restoration church was described as 'greatly disfigured during the last century', with windows that were 'pagan monstrosities'. Some restoration work had been undertaken in 1853, and again in 1855, the church was described as 'lately repaired and restored', with 'new windows' and 'proper seats'.

The work may represent the first stages of a campaign of restoration known to have been undertaken on the chancel and chapel, in 1856-7, to the designs of the architect (Sir) George Gilbert Scott. Upon the completion of both stages, a vestry, smaller than at present, had been built. The west and south porches were entirely rebuilt. The east gables were partly rebuilt. The church was refenestrated, refloored and reseated. The ceilings were removed except in the chancel. The internal plaster was stripped, and the church replastered. The tower was not restored. A boilerhouse had been built against the north wall of the nave west bay by 1878, and may be contemporary with the nave restoration of 1853-5; a heating apparatus by John King Ltd was installed before 1912.

The tower was renovated in 1892-3 to the designs of the architect Ewan Christian. Repairs were undertaken on the roofs in 1894. It was intended to add a north aisle in 1903, but the plans were not undertaken.

In 1912 the vestry was demolished and rebuilt to a larger plan but retaining, or re-using, much of the 1850s fabric. The chancel ceiling was removed, and the heating flues, to the designs of the architect W. D. Jenkins of Llandeilo.

A large, ornate railed tomb lay north of the chancel but was removed after 1906, possibly in 1925. The tower was renovated in 1968 as recorded in a plaque.

An iron casting of the Royal Arms of George III, from 1814, are hung in the chancel. The oak pews, and the pulpit, and the iron porch gates are from 1856. The organ was installed in 1914. The chancel fittings and stalls are from 1966.

The font is modern, but the old font lay loose in the porch in 1917.

'One of the bells' was cracked in 1684, and 'bells' were present in 1733. The 3 bells now in the tower are from 1681 but 2 were recast in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The church was Grade II listed in 1998.

2.2.2 The topography of the area is such that the churchyard lies some 2.5m above the ground level to the east. It is evident that the ground level steeply slopes just to the north of the area of the revetment wall and this may indicate that a steep slope was formerly present all around the eastern side of the churchyard dropping down to the River Marlas. It is uncertain when the revetment wall was first built, but it is assumed that this happened when the

Vicarage was built which lies on the southeastern edge of the churchyard. A building is shown in roughly the same location on the 1840 Tithe Map of Llandebie (Figure 2) although it is not described as a vicarage until first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1878 (Figure 3). The boundary wall on the Tithe Map appears top extend well beyond the end of the Vicarage and curves to form a roughly oval churchyard.

- 2.2.3 By the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1878 (Figure 3) the shape of the churchyard has been altered considerably forming a very straight southeastern edge, roughly straightened northeastern edge and then projects to form a much larger graveyard to the northwest. The boundary wall forms a roughly right angled corner at this time. It is presumed that the alteration of the boundaries dates from a similar time to the large scale renovation works undertaken at the church in around 1856-7. The eastern churchyard boundary would have been altered at this time and possibly the Vicarage as shown on the 1878 map was built.
- 2.2.4 The Vicarage and boundary wall is also shown on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1906, with no differences in layout indicated from the earlier map. This layout remains unaltered on modern maps, although the Vicarage has been extended slightly to the east. Modern maps do not indicate the small passageway to the north of the extension to the Vicarage.

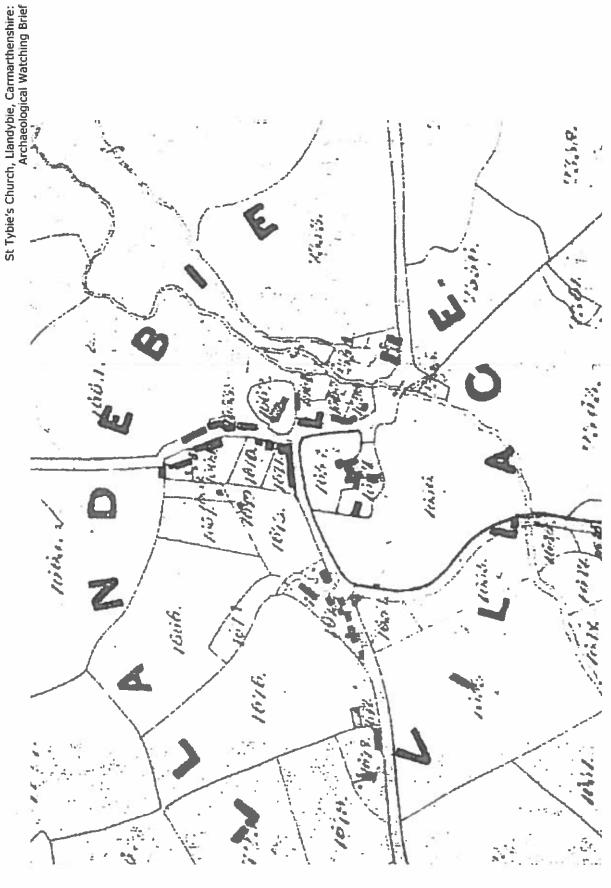


Figure 2: Extract of the 1840 Tithe map of Llandebie

Figure 3: Extract of 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey map of 1878.

12

Report No. 2013/72

St Tybie's Church, Llandybie, Carmarthenshire: Archaeological Watching Brief

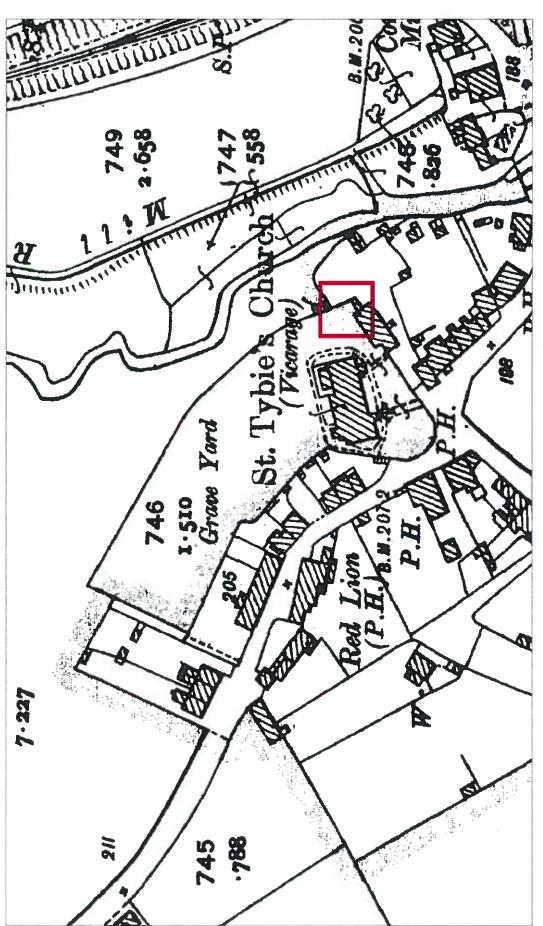


Figure 4: Extract of 1:2500 scale OS map of 1906.

#### 3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

The watching brief methodology can be summarised as follows:

#### 3.1 Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 A 'watching brief' was undertaken during ground level reduction works at the site which had the potential to expose, damage or destroy underlying archaeological remains.
- 3.1.2 All archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks were examined and recorded to an appropriate level.
- 3.1.3 Recording of all archaeological features or deposits conformed to best current professional practice and was carried out in accordance with the Recording Manual<sup>3</sup> used by Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services.

#### 3.2 Post-Fieldwork Reporting and Archiving

- 3.2.1 All data recovered during the fieldwork will be collated into a site archive structured in accordance with the specifications in *Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007), and the procedures recommended by the National Monuments Record, Aberystwyth.
- 3.2.2 The results of the fieldwork have been assessed in local, regional and wider contexts.
- 3.2.3 This report is fully representative of the results of the fieldwork.

#### 3.3 Timetabling of Fieldwork

3.2.7 The watching brief methodology involved monitoring of, excavation works undertaken ahead of the renewal of the retaining wall in the south east corner of the churchyard on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dyfed Archaeological Trust Field Services have adopted the Recording Manual developed by English Heritage Centre for Archaeology. A copy will be available on-site for Inspection if required.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Two site visits were undertaken to monitor excavation works ahead of the renewal of a modern breezeblock retaining wall within the south east corner of St Tybie's churchyard.
- 4.2 The first visit was carried out on the afternoon of Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 to monitor removal of the existing retaining wall. This revealed substantial quantities of rubble, consisting of former building stone (Photo 4) and fragmentary grave stones (Photo 5), associated grave furniture and modern rubbish. This material appeared to be infill behind the breeze block retaining wall.
- 4.3 The second site visit was made following a telephone call from Mr Gary Mainwaring, the site contractor, on the morning of Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013 informing the watching brief archaeologist that he had found bones and on doing so had immediately stopped work.
- 4.4 On arrival at the site it was found that a number of human and animal bones had been uncovered within the infill material. Excavation works were then restarted under the direction of the watching brief archaeologist. As work progressed further disarticulated human bone was recovered from the area. At a depth of c.1.4m a c.1m thick dark brown clay silt was revealed. This seems to be a buried soil layer. This buried soil overlay a mid-red brown clay silt which had a visible thickness of c.0.60m (Photos 6 and 7)
- 4.5 Within the southwest corner of the excavation area a large number of disarticulated human bones were revealed at the interface between the made up ground deposit and underlying buried soil (Photos 8 and 9). It is possible that the human remains were interred within a shallow pit but given the deep nature of the excavation close inspection was not possible. It is possible that the human remains revealed were initially disturbed during the construction of the retaining wall and were reinterred followings its construction. The human remains that were disturbed by the excavation works were carefully collected and handed back to the church for reburial within the churchyard. Those which were not disturbed were left *in situ*.
- 4.6 No further archaeological features or deposits were revealed during the course of the archaeological watching brief.



Photo 4: East facing view of rubble and made up ground deposit.



**Photo 5:** Fragmentary gravestone of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date.



Photo 6: East facing section of excavation area showing darker buried soil layer



**Photo 7:** South facing section of excavation area with darker buried soil layer to left and loose infill material in section



**Photo 8:** Disarticulated human bone revealed within northwestern corner of excavation area (south facing section).



**Photo 9:** Disarticulated human bone revealed within northwestern corner of excavation area (east facing section).

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The archaeological watching brief undertaken during the course of the excavations ahead of the replacement and improvement of the retaining wall indicated that the ground level had been significantly altered in this area. This had presumably occurred when the Vicarage was built and the retaining wall first constructed sometime between 1840 and 1878 (presumably around 1856-7). The modern breeze block wall indicates that the retaining wall had been rebuilt again during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, presumably when the eastern extension to the Vicarage was constructed.
- 5.2 It would appear that the original ground level formed a steep slope down to the River Marlas, but this slope was terraced into at some point during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably when the churchyard boundaries were significantly altered between the 1840 Tithe Map and 1878 Ordnance Survey map. It is probable this occurred in around 1856-7 when large scale renovation works were undertaken at the church. The Vicarage may also have been built at this time or alternatively was already in existence but altered (a building in a roughly similar location is shown on the 1840 Tithe map). Once the revetment wall was constructed infill material was deposited behind the wall to create a level area within the churchyard, removing the former steep slope down to the river. This infill material may have comprised material derived from the alteration of the churchyard boundary in other parts of the churchyard and included stone rubble, broken gravestones/grave furniture and large quantities of disarticulated human bone.
- 5.3 The c.1m thick buried soil horizon identified within the exposed section during the works presumably represents the original ground level where it had been cut into for the terracing. The interface between the infill and this buried soil layer contained the most disarticulated human bone. The soils in this area were more compacted than the looser rubbly fills above and are likely to represent an infill deposit associated with the original construction of the revetment wall in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.4 The looser fills behind the more recent revetment wall also included the same mix of rubble, broken gravestones, grave furniture and other modern debris. It is likely that this material was re-deposited material associated with the original construction of the revetment wall. Fewer fragments of disarticulated human remains were found within this material.
- 5.5 No features or deposits of early medieval or medieval date were revealed during the course of the archaeological watching brief although the potential for them to exist within the churchyard remains high.
- 5.6 It is possible that remains of these dates could have been present in this area on the original ground level as it sloped towards the River Marlas, but which would have been removed when the churchyard boundaries were altered, the Vicarage was built and the ground level terraced.
- 5.7 No indication of an earlier boundary wall around the churchyard was revealed during the works indicating that any earlier boundary in this area did not correspond with the boundary line of today.

#### 6 SOURCES

#### **6.1** Cartographic

Ordnance Survey 1813 Original Surveyors Drawings

Ordnance Survey 1878 1:2500 Carmarthenshire

Ordnance Survey 1906 1:2500 Carmarthenshire

#### 6.2 Unpublished

Ludlow N 1998 CADW Historic Churches Project: Carmarthenshire Churches.

#### ST TYBIE'S CHURCH, LLANDYBIE, CARMARTHENSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2013/72 RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 105879

> Chwefror 2014 February 2014

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by SIMON RATTY

Swydd / Position: ARCHAEOLOGIST

Llofnod / Signature Date 11/02/14

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith This report has been checked and approved by

#### **JAMES MEEK**

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf. on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: HEAD OF FIELD SERVICES

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report



 $\begin{array}{c} \textbf{D} \, \textbf{Y} \, \textbf{F} \, \textbf{E} \, \textbf{D} \\ \textbf{archaeological trust} \end{array}$