

Archaeology On Your Doorstep



Newly created PRN 127952 – Pump House in Betws

Prepared by Dyfed
Archaeological Trust

For Cadw



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Archaeology On Your Doorstep

By

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ARCHAEOLOGY ON YOUR DOORSTEP

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ARCHAEOLOGY ON YOUR DOORSTEP

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ARCHAEOLOGY ON YOUR DOORSTEP

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the Covid-19 pandemic, and the necessity to stay at home, lots of people began discovering the archaeology and history that they had on their own doorstep. This project was created to allow members of local communities to tell us about their local archaeology and history and to update the Historic Environment Record with new information.

A total of 101 potential sites were identified by volunteers. Of these, 39 new records were created and added to the HER, 62 records received updated and enhanced descriptions, and 49 sites had updated condition records.

CRYNODEB GWEITHREDOL

Yn ystod pandemig Covid-19, a'r angen i aros gartref, dechreuodd llawer o bobl ddarganfod yr archeoleg a'r hanes roedd ganddynt ar eu stepen drws eu hunain. Crëwyd y prosiect hwn i ganiatáu i'r aelodau cymunedau lleol i ddweud wrthym am eu harcheoleg a'u hanes lleol ac i ddiweddarau'r Cofnod Amgylchedd Hanesyddol gyda gwybodaeth newydd.

Nodwyd cyfanswm o 101 o safleoedd posibl gan wirfoddolwyr. O'r rhain, crëwyd 39 o gofnodion newydd a'u hychwanegu at y CAH, mae gan 62 o gofnodion wedi'u cael disgrifiadau diweddarau ac gwell, ac roedd gan 49 o safleoedd gofnodion cyflwr wedi'u diweddarau.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Commission

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this project was to engage a wide range of individuals and groups by encouraging them to research their own history and archaeology within their local communities. Individuals and groups have a wide range of knowledge, particularly regarding their immediate community; it was planned to use this knowledge to update existing HER records, create any appropriate new records and to add material to the HER such as photographs and bibliographic material.
- 1.1.2 Dyfed Archaeological Trust applied to Cadw for grant-aid for this project. This application was successful; the project ran between September 2021 and March 2022.

1.2 Abbreviations

- 1.2.1 Sites recorded on the regional Historic Environment Record (HER) are identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Sites recorded on the National Monument Record (NMR) held by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) are identified by their National Primary Record Number (NPRN). Scheduled Monument (SM). Altitude is expressed to Ordnance Datum (OD). References to cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in brackets throughout the text, with full details listed in the sources section at the rear of the report.

1.3 Illustrations

- 1.3.1 Printed map extracts and images are not necessarily produced to their original scale.

1.4 Timeline

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

Period	Approximate date	
Palaeolithic –	c.450,000 – 10,000 BC	Prehistoric
Mesolithic –	c. 10,000 – 4400 BC	
Neolithic –	c.4400 – 2300 BC	
Bronze Age –	c.2300 – 700 BC	
Iron Age –	c.700 BC – AD 43	
Roman (Romano-British) Period –	AD 43 – c. AD 410	Historic
Post-Roman / Early Medieval Period –	c. AD 410 – AD 1086	
Medieval Period –	1086 – 1536	
Post-Medieval Period ¹ –	1536 – 1750	
Industrial Period –	1750 – 1899	
Modern –	20 th century onwards	

Table 1: Archaeological and Historical Timeline for Wales.

¹ 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

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 During the Covid-19 pandemic, and the necessity to stay at home, lots of people began discovering the archaeology and history that they had on their own doorstep. Dyfed Archaeological Trust manages the Historic Environment Record (HER) for all of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire, which currently consists of over 74,000 site records. Because of this, it is almost impossible for us to keep track of all changes that may potentially affect these sites, or for us to be aware of all sites, particularly if these are now destroyed.

This project was created to allow members of local communities to tell us about their local archaeology and history and to update the Historic Environment Record with new information. Who better to tell us about the local archaeological and historical sites than the people who live and work locally?

- 2.1.2 A first draft of instructions was written and then beta tested by staff and a single volunteer. Feedback was received and alterations to the instructions were made where appropriate.

A pro forma return form was created in order to gather all the essential information that would be needed in order to either add to an existing HER record or create a new one. A copy of this can be found in the Appendix.

- 2.1.3 Each volunteer that had expressed initial interest in the project was sent an introductory email which contained the instructions for the project and the return form (in order to return their results). Volunteers were then asked to visit and record sites in their local communities, or any areas that interested them.
- 2.1.4 Emails were sent periodically throughout the project to check on the volunteers to see how they were doing, and if any support was needed.
- 2.1.5 Once results were received, they were collated into an Excel table to view and compare the results with ease. Firstly, the responses were checked for any sites that were already existing on the HER, these records were then checked and compared with the information provided by the volunteer and then updated if appropriate, whether that be a more informed description or condition. Secondly, any potential new sites were verified. This was done by searching through several resources in order to establish whether the site would be suitable to add to the HER, such as checking historic maps. If appropriate, new records were then made for these sites, with as much information as possible. Bibliographic references and photographs were also added to the records when appropriate.

3 RESULTS

- 3.1.1 A total of 101 potential sites were identified by volunteers. Of these, 39 new records were created and added to the HER, 62 records received updated and enhanced descriptions, and 49 sites had updated condition records. The majority of the 101 records identified also had photographs attached to them when it was appropriate. Each of these records also had bibliographic references added to them.
- 3.1.2 A range of different sites were identified which are detailed in the table below. The most common type of site that was reported was 'Building'.

Site Type	Quantity	Site Type	Quantity
Arcade	1	Mansion	1
Bandstand	1	Memorial Gates	1
Bank	2	Mill	2
Bridge	4	Outbuilding	1
Building	18	Pigeon House	1
Café	1	Police Station	1
Church/Chapel	11	Post Office	1
Cinema	2	Pound	1
Coal Pit	1	Promontory Fort	1
Cottage	3	Public House/Inn	7
Drift Mine	1	Pump House	1
Enclosure*	1	Railway Station	1
Farm/Farmstead	3	School	4
Folly	1	Shop	6
Gasworks	1	Smithy	1
Hall	3	Standing Stone	3
Hotel	1	Stone Circle	1
House	9	Warehouse	1
Icehouse	1	Well	1

Table 2: Site types of Identified Sites

(* denotes Site Type uncertainty)

3.1.3 The periods reported ranged from Bronze Age (Example - PRN 1702 Standing Stone) to Modern (Example - PRN 128179 Cinema), but the most common period reported was Post Medieval (A total of 76 sites).

3.1.4 49 Records had their condition records updated. The majority of the updated records were originally of 'Unknown' condition but have now been updated to their actual condition whether that be 'Intact', 'Damaged' or 'Destroyed'.



Figure 1: PRN 37351 Manchester House – An existing record that was updated. (Photo courtesy of G. K. Johnson)



Figure 2: PRN 21759 Bont Blaen Bridge – Reported as there was some damage done to the bridge by a passing lorry. (Shown here as exposed limestone on the righthand side of the bridge – Photo courtesy of R. Kemp)

4 EVALUATION

4.1 Positives

- 4.1.1 One great advantage of this project was that it was conducted remotely, which created several positives. Firstly, it enabled a wide pool of volunteers to take part; the project was able to reach volunteers that may not have been able to engage with other types of volunteer projects. Secondly, it meant that a wide area was covered; volunteers could contribute information from the comfort of their own homes and supply information regarding their local sites, or sites that they were visiting. It was established during creation of this project, that members of the public are an invaluable resource, therefore having a volunteer pool ready and willing to research and monitor their local areas can only be beneficial. Finally, it was felt that this project utilised time very effectively. Volunteers only contacted staff when they needed support or to hand in results. This meant that other work could be managed whilst still running the project.
- 4.1.2 The project provided a way for information to be added to the HER in a way that it may not usually. For examples many personal conversations regarding sites have now been added to their descriptions, which may have otherwise been missed but

have nonetheless added valuable information to the HER. Similarly, other resources which may not usually be utilized have been added, for example one volunteer provided architectural plans of some sites in their local area which were rescued from the rubbish bin. These are important references that may not have been readily available otherwise.

- 4.1.3 This project identified several new sites and also helped to enhance and update the records of existing ones as well. This was particularly apparent with regards to Condition records held on the HER, several records had Condition 'Not Known'. As a result of this project over 45 records have had their condition records updated, and this was particularly important because many of our existing condition records were out of date (with the site either being destroyed or damaged) or the condition record was entirely not known.
- 4.1.4 The majority of records identified in this project now have photographs attached to them. This is a valuable resource as a picture can sometimes tell more than a written description. The only incidence where a photograph may not have been added to the HER was if the building or site in question was now a private, or on private land, or was now destroyed.
- 4.1.5 This project leant itself to easy contact, volunteers engaged with the project, or other members of the public, could easily snap a photograph of a site and send it to us directly then and there. Some volunteers even tweeted us information. Although the pro forma was not used, the volunteers were now comfortable enough to understand what information was needed and supplied that in a simple tweet. The project not only helped to update the HER but has also inspired members of the public to learn more about the history and archeology of their local communities for their own enjoyment. Similarly, the project has also encouraged volunteers to share their previously conducted research with a wider audience. Their research is now recorded within the HER for the future.
- 4.1.6 Another positive is that the instructions and form that were written for this project can be kept and used for future projects or volunteers. The Trust receives many enquiries throughout the year regarding volunteering, this project may be a way to get volunteers involved with the work of the Trust when other volunteering opportunities are unavailable. It is hoped that these instructions and form will be added to the DAT website in order for future reference and use.

4.2 Negatives

- 4.2.1 There were several issues that were encountered during this project. Firstly, like previous remote volunteering projects; because the project description and instructions were remotely sent to participants through email, some volunteers did not reply straight away or at all, (it may have gone in their junk folder, or just missed altogether). Despite being prompted with progress emails some volunteers still didn't reply at all. Although initial interest seemed promising, the actual uptake of volunteers was less than anticipated. Perhaps a more blended approach would help in the future, for example visiting groups of volunteers to explain the project and then tasking individuals to then carry out visits of sites.
- 4.2.2 Due to the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic and the uncertainty of meeting in groups the project was unable to be shown to local volunteer groups and history groups.

This meant missing a possibly useful demographic and an untapped source of knowledge.

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Overall the project has been a success with over 100 records identified. The project has resulted in the creation of 39 new records, over 60 records now have updated and enhanced descriptions, and 49 sites have updated condition records. The majority of the total records now also have photographs attached, and enhanced bibliographies.

This project has also inspired and encourage members of the public to learn more about their local archaeology and history as well as allowing them to contribute to their local Historic Environment Record.

We will continue to utilise the pro forma which was created in order to allow future volunteers and members of the public to supply information to the HER.

6 SOURCES

6.1 Publications

6.2 Database

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Historic Environment Record

6.3 Online Resources

Archwilio – <https://www.archwilio.org.uk/arch/index.html>

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Website – <https://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/wp/>

Cadw Listed Buildings & Scheduled Monuments - <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/cof-cymru/search-cadw-records>

Coflein - <https://coflein.gov.uk/en/>

Google Earth - https://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/

Grid Reference Finder - <https://gridreferencefinder.com/>

House Prices IO Lab: 1m DSM dataset - <https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map>

LiDAR Composite Dataset: Natural Resources Wales - <https://lle.gov.wales/catalogue/item/LidarCompositeDataset/?lang=en>

Old Maps - <https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/>

What3Words - <https://what3words.com/directors.exhaling.safe>

Welsh Tithe Maps - <https://places.library.wales/>

Appendix

A copy of the form that was sent to volunteers.

Archaeology on your Doorstep Information	
Your name	
Your email	

Name of site (if known)	
PRN of site (if known)	
Location of site (NGR or similar)	
What type of site is it? (i.e. church, standing stone etc.)	
What date is it (i.e. modern, Bronze Age etc.)	
Description of site (Include as much detail as you can, including condition)	
Any supporting documents/references?	
Have you attached pictures? If so, please list names of the images here.	
Any other information?	

