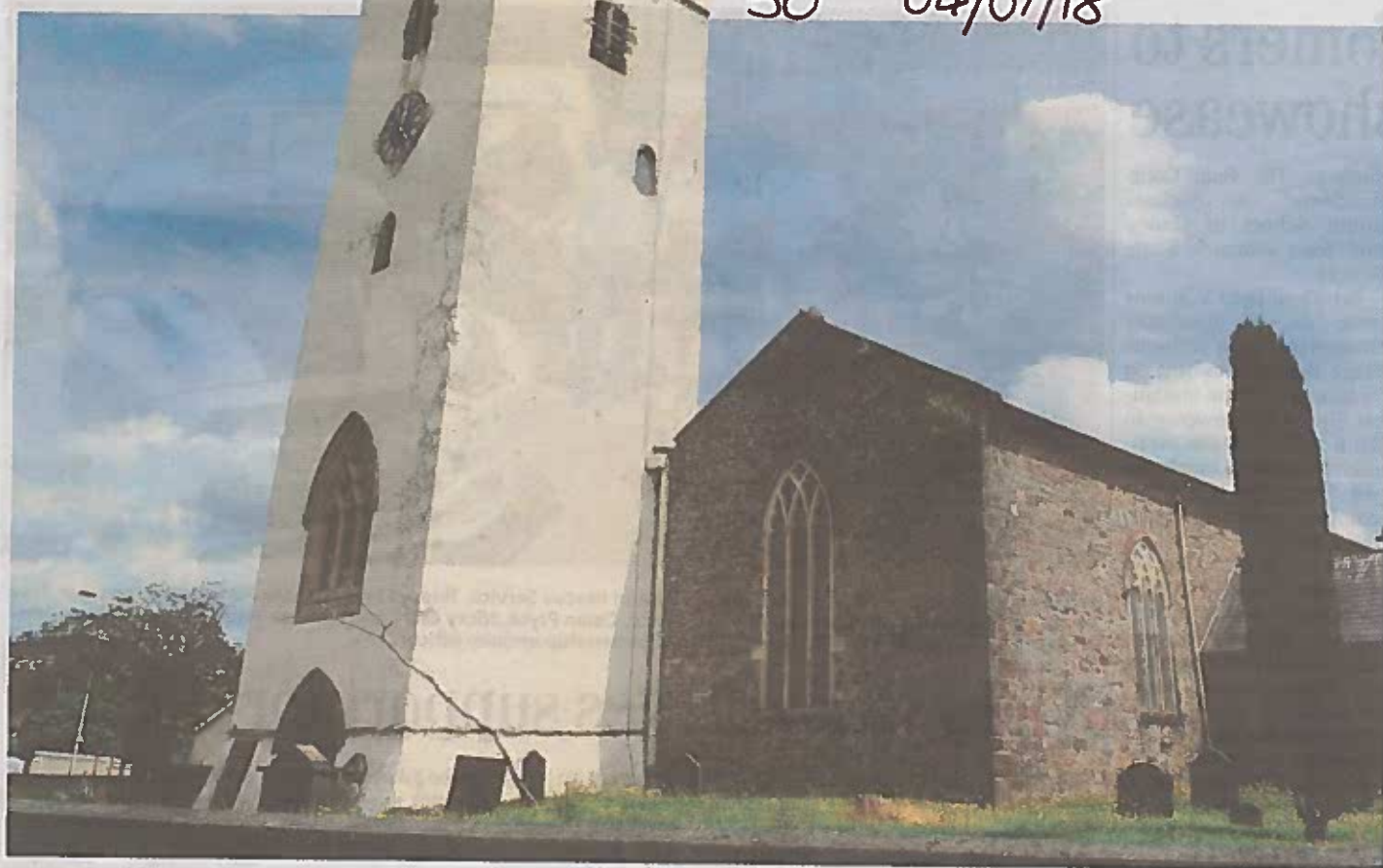


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St Peter's Church, Carmarthen.

Picture: Carolyn Evans

# Future of ancient church once again hangs in balance

THE future of Carmarthen's oldest church is once again hanging in the balance.

Emergency talks have been held with fundraisers at St Peter's Church over the financial struggle facing the church which sits at the top of King Street.

There are no details of how dire the situation is, but efforts will be getting under way to raise money to try to keep the 900-year-old church open.

The Venerable Dorrien Davies, Archdeacon of Carmarthen, said: "St Peter's Church is an important part of Carmarthen's heritage, both historically and primarily as a Christian wit-

ness.

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"The church has always valued the close connections and relationship with the town and would value its help and support as we strive to continue to serve Carmarthen and the wider community."

The call for help comes four years after the church first saw itself in financial difficulties. At the time, news of the church needing £50,000 to keep its doors open along with cash in reserves being depleted saw Carmarthen rally around to support the church.

Digging deep, people

raised almost £7,000 towards the fundraising appeal, with even non-churchgoers speaking of how important the building was to them as a piece of the town's history.

A dedicated fundraising group, the Friends of St Peter's Church, was then set up later that year and is still tirelessly working to this day.

Julie Rees at the Friends' group said events would be organised to continue fundraising for the church.

The next is the town's third Bosworth Day on Sunday, August 11.

This will celebrate Carmarthen's link to the battle of the same name.

Knight Sir Rhys ap Thomas is entombed within the church, and is reputed to have been responsible for the death of Richard III at the battle of Bosworth.

St Peter's was also the site of Bishop Robert Ferrar's trial in 1555, one of the first Welsh martyrs during Mary's bloody campaign against Protestantism.

The organ there was built for Windsor Castle on the orders of George III by George Pike England in 1796, but secured for St Peter's by the architect John Nash, who hails from Carmarthen and was involved designing and enlarging the royal palaces.