

Work to rescue church begins

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WORK has started to save a medieval church from ruin in the heart of Carmarthenshire's Dinefwr Park.

Llandyfeisant Church is tucked away in Castle Woods within Dinefwr Park in Llandeilo, but has not seen services held there since 1961.

Dating back to pre-Christian times, the church at the beauty spot was last used as a visitor centre in the 1980s by the Welsh Wildlife Trust for the nearby nature reserve.

Initial talks were held in 2011 by the trust to see if the church could be brought back into use, but ultimately nothing happened.

Now following calls by campaigners, the Church in Wales, which owns the building, is undertaking initial work to water and windproof the church.

This will be followed by further discussions over how the church can be brought back into use, possibly opening as a visitor centre again.

Beth Davies, who lives in Llandeilo, launched a Facebook group aimed at taking action last summer. Speaking about the work now taking place, she said: "The initial stage of the works is being organised by the Church in Wales.

"The work is being undertaken by a company based in Carmarthen who are qualified and experienced in working on listed buildings following a full structural report having been carried out.

"Once the initial stage of the work has been completed, making the church both wind and water tight, we can then look towards the next stage of organising a working party where we can look at possible options and uses for the church to incorporate it back into the community in some way."

She added: "Along with looking at ways to apply for the funding which will be required for the full renovation.

"It's a long term project but it is going extremely well to date."

When the idea to save the church was raised last summer Mrs Davies said: "It's an enchanting medieval church that we don't want to see lost to overgrowth or falling down.

"I want to bring organisations together to discuss a way forward and see what can be done."

Talks were then held between interested parties such as the Church in Wales, Welsh Wildlife Trust and National Trust which runs Dinefwr Park.

Ownership by the Church in Wales up until 2009 was on a long-term lease basis to The Welsh Wildlife Trust.

That lease expired nine years ago and since then the church has been kept on by The Welsh Wildlife Trust.

This is on a rolling basis until its future can be determined.

The Facebook group can be found by searching for Friends of Llandyfeisant Church Dinefwr Park Llandeilo.

The Church in Wales has been asked to comment about the work being done at the church.



Llandyfeisant Church in Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo.