

St Beuno's Church Llanycil, Gwynedd  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Written Scheme of Investigation

submitted by  
Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

Produced for the Bible Society  
c/o Creu Architecture  
Upper Floor Studio  
Diamond Building  
6 Highgate  
Denbigh  
LL16 3LE



## CONTENTS

### CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST POLICY STATEMENT

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 OBJECTIVES
- 3 METHODS
- 4 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

---

## **The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust**

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) was one of the four archaeological trusts established in Wales in the mid-1970s to provide an archaeological service across the whole of the Principality. It is both a registered charity and a limited company, and its activities are managed by a board of Trustees. It is also an IfA-registered organisation (Institute for Archaeologists). Its mission statement was and remains geared towards working closely with other national, regional and local bodies, to help identify, protect and interpret all aspects of the historic environment.

Over the last thirty years it has developed an unrivalled expertise in the archaeology of east and north-east Wales, created a full record of the archaeological sites and monuments in the region, and built up experience in all the major methodologies that can be used to elucidate the past. At the same time its remit and resource base have been modified to take account of the broader changes in the organisation and delivery of archaeological services in the United Kingdom as a whole. Based in Welshpool, CPAT has developed close links with a number of local institutions and has extensive knowledge of local history and archaeology.

In the last twenty years CPAT has built up an experienced Field Services section which focuses on funded projects and on contract archaeology. Much of this sort of work is still undertaken in its core area of east and north-east Wales, but increasingly it has been contracted to do work in north-west and south Wales and in the west Midlands. During this period its collective expertise has grown, and its core staff have been in place for a number of years. Where necessary the core staff are supplemented by additional temporary staff for specific projects. CPAT prides itself on the economic and efficient delivery of archaeological services for a range of developments from road construction and pipeline works to housing developments and windfarm schemes.

CPAT has developed considerable experience in undertaking all aspects of archaeological investigation, including detailed building recording, excavation, topographical survey, and documentary research, and the staff have developed a considerable wealth and range of expertise.

Further information regarding the Trust, including summary reports of some of the more significant recent projects can be found on its website at [www.cpat.org.uk](http://www.cpat.org.uk)



## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) have been invited by Creu Architecture, on behalf of the Bible Society, to prepare a specification for undertaking a watching brief during the reduction of floor levels within the St Beuno's Church, Llanycil, near Bala, in Gwynedd (SH 9147 3485). The church falls in the diocese of St Asaph and is located within Snowdonia National Park.
- 1.2 Listed building consent was granted on 4 February 2014 for internal alterations to convert the church into a heritage centre, but with the following condition:
  2. Prior to any work commencing (including any ground disturbing works or site clearance) pursuant to this permission the applicant/developer shall submit to and receive written approval from the Local Planning Authority for an archaeological specification for a programme of works which must meet all relevant archaeological standards. The development shall subsequently be carried out in strict accordance with the approved programme of works unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.3 Unfortunately, work within the church commenced without in contravention of the condition, with the removal of the suspended timber floor and the partial removal of a solid floor in front of the north door of the nave. Work ceased upon the discovery of a grave slab inscribed with a date of 1675.
- 1.4 A site meeting was held on 11 March 2014 between Nigel Jones of CPAT, John Roberts, Archaeologist for Snowdonia National Park Authority, and Stanley Owen, of Peter T Griffiths to agree an approach for managing the archaeological resource within the building and this Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared thereafter.
- 1.5 The church is dedicated to St Beuno (PRN 7040) and the present structure dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, replacing an earlier, medieval church. The church consists of a continuous nave and chancel with a west bell-cote, north porch and south vestry. It is thought likely that the medieval church followed the same plan as the current church and the foundations of the nave and chancel are probably medieval, while Roman bricks are visible in the lower masonry course where the porch meets the north wall.
- 1.6 The rectangular cemetery is bounded by a dry-stone wall, with an entrance via a renovated 19<sup>th</sup>-century lych-gate in the north-west corner. The churchyard was enlarged in 1897 and again in 1944. There are a number of semicircular stones in the boundary wall close to the entrance, thought to be the steps of a former cross and dial.

## 2 Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives are:
  - to record any archaeological features and artefacts identified during the archaeological watching brief to ensure their preservation by record;
  - to retrieve any disarticulated bone which may be disturbed during the works and ensure that this is stored in an appropriate place for reburial at the earliest opportunity;
  - to identify and record any evidence for earlier activity on the site.
  - to identify and record any fully articulated human remains which may be encountered.
  - to keep SNPA informed of any significant discoveries.



- to prepare a report outlining the results of the watching brief.

### 3 Methods

- 3.1 The watching brief will be conducted in accordance with this specification and will be carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008). A Ministry of Justice licence has been applied for to allow the archaeological excavation of any human remains and site works will not recommence until the licence has been received.
- 3.2 The watching brief will be undertaken to include: the archaeological supervision of all relevant groundworks within the church and specifically during the reduction of levels at the western end by up to 370mm, together with appropriate archaeological excavation and recording of any significant features, deposits or burials which may be revealed.
- 3.3 The area surrounding the grave slab in the nave will be carefully cleaned and recorded under archaeological conditions to provide a detailed record and assess the nature and significance of surviving archaeology. The grave slab will be lifted carefully and stored in an appropriate location pending a decision on its final resting place. The area beneath the slab has the appearance of a deliberate structure and this will be investigated through controlled archaeological excavation. Should in situ skeletal remains be encountered they will be recorded in accordance with best practice, as outlined in the English Heritage and Church of England's *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (2005). The preferred option would be for any remains to be left in situ and covered with a protective membrane prior to laying the new floor. Should this not be practicable then the remains will need to be excavated carefully, lifted and stored pending reburial.
- 3.4 Depending on the nature of the material surrounding the grave slab this will either be removed carefully under archaeological conditions, or under close archaeological supervision.
- 3.5 The opportunity will be taken to investigate three sondages in the areas beneath the suspended floor, two within the chancel and one towards the south-west corner of the nave with the intention of determining the presence or absence of any floors or other structural remains belonging to the original church. Should such features be encountered the decision regarding any further investigation will be subject to discussions between SNPA Archaeologist and the client.
- 3.6 All archaeological deposits and/or features noted during the watching brief will be recorded and, where appropriate, excavated by hand and recorded by drawn section/plan and/or photography. All photography will be in digital format to a minimum of 8 mega pixels, saved in RAW format and subsequently converted to TIFF and JPG. The location of all features will be recorded as overlays, based on existing architects plans.
- 3.7 The on-site contractors are required to allow sufficient opportunity for appropriate archaeological excavation and recording to be undertaken. Every effort will be made to minimise any disruption to the overall scheme of works.
- 3.8 Where articulated human remains are encountered works must halt while the situation is assessed. The preferred option will be for articulated remains to be retained in situ and discussions will be conducted with the client, contractors and SNPA to that end. Should this not prove practicable, remains will be lifted carefully and retained in accordance with the joint English Heritage and Church of England's *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human*

*remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (2005). All human remains will be reburied within the churchyard at the earliest opportunity.

- 3.9 Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared in accordance with appropriate IfA guidance for submission in digital, PDF format. A PDF will be submitted to SNPA for review and comment prior to completion of the final report. This will contain, as necessary, conventional sections on: Site location, Historic Background, Watching Brief, Conclusions and References, together with any appropriate appendices on archives and finds.
- 3.10 Copies of the final report will be provided to the client in PDF format. Three archive hard copies will be provided to SNPA, two to the regional HER and one copy to RCAHMW. All relevant digital material, including images, plans and the report, will be provided on a DVD to SNPA, HER, RCAHMW.
- 3.11 The site archive will be prepared to specifications in English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) system for deposition with the regional Historic Environment Record.

#### **4 Resources and Programming**

- 4.1 The watching brief will be undertaken by an experienced field archaeologist and overall supervision will be by Mr N Jones, a senior member of CPAT's staff who is also a member of the Institute for Archaeologists. The watching brief will be conducted according to the *IfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008).
- 4.2 The duration of the watching brief will be entirely determined by the contractor's programme of work.
- 4.3 All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist who conducted the fieldwork. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client within one month of the completion of on-site works. See 3.10 for dissemination of report and archive.
- 4.4 The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services, such as radiocarbon dating and finds conservation. Any detailed excavation, post-excavation and publication would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.
- 4.5 The project will be monitored by the Archaeologist for Snowdonia National Park Authority, who will be kept informed of progress and any significant discoveries. Monitoring visits will be made as appropriate.
- 4.6 Requirements relating to Health and Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 4.7 CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance.

N.W. Jones  
14 March 2014