



ESGOBAETH LLANELWY  
**DATGLOI EIN**  
**POTENTIAL**

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**UNLOCKING OUR**  
**POTENTIAL**  
DIOCESE OF ST ASAPH

**Penedeyrn**  
**Mission Area Review**  
**June 2020**





## The Diocese of St Asaph

### What do we believe?

We believe and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, namely:

- that God is active and personal, a Father who cares for his creation, and for every human being as his beloved child;
- that God is as he has revealed himself to be in the historical person of Jesus Christ, and
- that through the life, death and resurrection of this one person, God has proclaimed his love for the world, and opened a way, accessible through our response of faith, by which his love and life may be poured into our lives.
- that God is at work in the world today as Spirit, inspiring faith, justice and truth.
- We believe that God has called all who respond to him to be his people, and to work together to act as ambassadors for his work of healing in the world.

**This is Good News, because it encourages each one of us to realise that God loves us, that he has gone out of his way to meet us in the person of his Son, in whom he accepts us as we are. He asks us to draw on his strength to live life to the full, and to bring healing to the world.**

### This inspires us to:

- call people to become disciples of Jesus Christ
- welcome people from whatever background and age in its worship and activities
- care about the things that really matter in people's lives
- respond to people's spiritual needs at times of great importance and change in their lives
- works with and for people in communities and organisations across the diocese
- actively get involved in local needs and opportunities and the wellbeing of people
- Open and share our buildings for wider community use



## Penedeyrn Mission Area

### Working together to make Christ known in our communities

Detailed information about Penedeyrn Mission Area can be found on the diocesan website by clicking on the following link:

<https://churchnearme.co.uk/resources/penedeyrn.html>

This dashboard brings together data from many different sources:

- Census 2011, from the [Office of National Statistics](#). Next collection due 2021, LSOA data expected 2023.
- Small-Area Population Estimates 2018, from the [Office of National Statistics](#). Next update due November 2020 with mid-2019 estimates.
- Deprivation statistics, WIMD 2019, from [StatsWales](#). Next update likely in 2022.
- [Church in Wales](#) annual return data, 2018. Annual updates.

Further information about these data can be found on the respective websites.

Some key insights that are worthy of further exploration in developing Mission Area Strategy include:

- Knowledge and use of the Welsh language is significantly higher than the average in both the diocese of St Asaph and the Church in Wales
- A higher proportion of people have access to a car or van than the diocesan average
- The proportion of single person households is slightly higher than the diocesan average. These single person households are mainly elderly.
- The proportion of children in the Mission Area is below the diocesan average



## Churches (complete a summary per Church in the Mission Area)

### 1. Christ Church, Bala



#### Condition

The last inspection was carried out in 2016. Minor repairs were suggested, including minor roof, guttering and pointing repairs, and monitoring of existing dampness to identify if works carried out had resolved matters.

In overall good condition with a very well-designed reordered interior which provides flexible accommodation, welfare facilities, and disabled access.

#### Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church.

#### Strengths

High quality recent re-ordering which provided flexible floor space and community and welfare facilities, as well as disabled access, all in a very beautifully designed space. In 'normal' times the building is open every day. Excellent range of worship and activities including Caffi Crist (café church), Clwb Beuno, Mini Moli, Sing Thing and Messy Church. Committed congregation that run regular events that engage the community and support fundraising efforts, including a regular lunch club for the elderly. Bala



is a popular holiday and tourist destination. Strong sense of Welsh culture, heritage and language is evident.

## Weaknesses

The building is not very easy for visitors to find, being off the High Street and parking can be a challenge for events and meetings. The nearby Presbyterian Coleg y Bala runs a Welsh-language evangelical-style service which tends to draw in some youth and younger families from the wider catchment. The recent closure of Ysgol Beuno Sant and unsuccessful proposals to create a 3-18 Church in Wales school as part of educational reorganisation caused divisions in the local community, but these have now resolved.

## Finance

Eglwys Crist has drawn on reserves to pay its Share for many years and these have now run out. The Church is currently unable to pay its Share, and, prior to lockdown, the congregation were engaged in a community mapping exercise led by Tracey White to investigate new ways of ensuring a sustainable future. The financial crisis faced by the church is a serious one.

## Sunday Attendance

2009	45	2014	50	2019	39 (+13)
2010	45	2015	53		
2011	40	2016	45		
2012	60	2017	40		
2013	50	2018	41		

## Recommendation

Continuation of the Community Mapping Exercise to ensure a sustainable future for Eglwys Crist.

## 2. St Mary Magdalene, Cerrigydrudion



### Condition

A listed building of early foundation, remodelled and extended in the C17th and C19th. The last inspection was completed in 2015. The report prepared at the time advised a number of items required attention including various roof/slate repairs, investigations into damp ingress at the bell cote, repairs to copings, repointing works, external redecoration, and that a new boiler and boiler flue would be required in the near future. A number of these items have been attended to and the building is in generally good order.

### Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church.

### Strengths

In the heart of the village, prominently located. In normal times open daily, with a warm welcome and interesting interpretative materials. Disabled access has been provided and modern lighting installed. The MA runs a successful café Church here, but due to the need for welfare facilities and flexible space, this takes place in the adjoining community room building (not a Church-owned building) at a fee of £15. There is also a strong Chapel community here, with whom the church has established a new family outreach, Cerrig Camu. An ecumenical community project here could be very successful.

### Weaknesses

The interior is rather dark, largely as a result of the Victorian refurbishment and associated dark timberwork, and is not flexible to permit a range of activities.



## Finance

The Church pays its Share regularly and has no historic debt. It has funds invested at Rathbones and uses the interest on these to help balance the books. The church congregation has been generous in supporting its neighbours over the years.

## Sunday Attendance

2009	10	2014	9	2019	10
2010	10	2015	9		
2011	13	2016	9		
2012	13	2017	10		
2013	13	2018	10		

## Recommendation

If the community and Church congregations were supportive, the interior could be remodelled to become a lighter, more flexible space that evokes the medieval period of its history rather than the Victorian. A simple kitchenette in a cupboard to the rear and disabled WC in the vestry would add to the facilities available to the community in the village (the Community School has facilities available for community activity but this is limited to outside of school hours). The location at the heart of village gives the church the potential to be a precious community asset and visitor centre. It is also conveniently located close to the A5 which carries significant tourist and holiday traffic.

Investigate the appetite and potential for developing an ecumenical community project with the Chapel community in the village. It is believed that there is the talent and the enthusiasm in the local community to develop an exciting and innovative scheme.

### 3. St John Evangelist, Cynwyd



#### Condition

Victorian building, not listed. Last inspection was carried out in 2018. Works required included – treatment of rot to panelling, repair to the hole in the roof and replacement of missing and broken slates, reset/repair of copings, overhaul/renewal of rainwater goods, areas of repointing, treatment of areas of woodworm, repairs to the non-stained-glass windows, internal redecoration, repairs to loose floor tiles, removal of disused heater units, removal of derelict privy building, access improvement works incl disabled access ramp installation. Some repairs have been carried out since, in particular to the West wall.

#### Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church.

#### Strengths

Prominently positioned on the main road in the heart of the village, adjoining the community primary school. Large churchyard. Next to recently refurbished church-owned Hall which has car park facilities, kitchen, WC, etc. Hall is well used and is used daily by Cylch Meithrin. A successful Messy Church operates in partnership with the Chapel community in the adjoining



Church Hall. The MA has developed the smaller part of the hall as a Godly Play room and offers an after-school Godly Play club.

## Weaknesses

In relatively poor condition. Very large for the scale of the current worshipping community. The existence of the Hall next door limits the potential to find other, complementary uses for the Church building to generate income and/or engage with the wider community. In the winter the current congregation relocates services and other Church activities to the adjoining Church Hall building. The congregation is faithful but now very small and it is becoming increasingly difficult to find people who are willing to take on the roles of church officers.

## Finance

The church has paid its Share faithfully over many years and has no historic debt. However, there are no reserves to draw on and the worry of paying the Share is weighing increasingly heavily on the congregation.

## Sunday Attendance

2009	13	2014	10	2019	7
2010	14	2015	11		
2011	13	2016	9		
2012	14	2017	8		
2013	11	2018	8		

## Recommendation

Consider the relocation of the Church services and activities to the Church Hall next door all year-round – attendance is higher during the winter months when services are held in the hall and people appreciate the warmth and the hospitality after the services. Close the Church building and hand it back to the RB to find a constructive new use for it.

## 4. St Derfel, Llandderfel



### Condition

A Grade 1 listed building with origins dating back to the C6th. The last inspection was carried out in 2019. The electrical installation was identified as unsatisfactory and required various upgrade works including installation of RCD protection to prevent fire. Various other items required attention including – repairs to guttering, minor repointing, inspect and treat for live woodworm, removal of asbestos from vestry, minor flashing repairs, external redecoration, joinery repairs to porch, and minor internal redecoration. Reordering of the West end to form a more flexible area, and the replacement of the heating boiler were suggested.

### Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church – grazed by sheep. Peaceful and tranquil setting.

### Strengths

An ancient place of pilgrimage in an attractive setting, with many historic associations and items of interest in the building and in the churchyard. On the edge of a residential community with easy access. There is a strong Christian community in the village who support a well-attended Messy Church and weekly children's club in the Community Centre, where the MA also run a musical outreach 'Jam ar y Sul'.

### Weaknesses

Not normally open during the week. The Community Centre in the village (rebuilt around 2000) is the focus of a lot of community activity and volunteer time and provides a modern, flexible and warm space for groups, including a Messy Church and children's club, to meet in. This is very difficult to 'compete' with.





## Condition

Large Grade 2 listed building, on an ancient Llan site, largely rebuilt in the C19th. The building contains a Scheduled Ancient Monument – the Blaen-y-Cwm stone. The last Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in 2019, and the various recommendations included – repairs to the tower and parapet gutter where there was extensive damp ingress and some rot forming at high level, repairs to the West wall (incl some pointing, improved rainwater discharge, window repairs), ongoing roof repairs (there are regular loose slates due to nail fatigue) and monitoring of woodworm.

## Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church.

## Strengths

In the heart of the village. Open every day during normal times. Has a flexible area to the West end which appears well used. Some interesting interpretative materials and liturgical season displays. Signposted from the village car park for visitors. Has had a long ministry to children and young people through Clwb Trillo.

## Weaknesses

No WC. Damp internally at the West end.

## Finance





## Condition

A Grade 2\*-listed ancient church idyllically situated by the riverside. The last inspection was carried out in 2018. A number of items were identified as requiring attention and the Friends of the Church are currently progressing the most urgent of these. The required works included – repairs to the rainwater goods and gullies, and repairs to the West gable.

## Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Community Council.

## Strengths

Beautiful situation. Open daily in 'normal' times. The grounds are cared for and owned by the local Council. There are good interpretative materials and a welcome for visitors. There are active supporters of the Church in the local community. Good presence on the Explore Churches website.

## Weaknesses

Various works required – and ongoing/in hand.

## Finance

N/A

## Sunday Attendance

N/A

## Recommendation

Continue as a Pilgrim Church, in partnership with the local community/Friends group, with a series of special services each year.

### 7. St Catherine's, Maerdy



## Condition

An unlisted Victorian Church, formerly a Chapel of Ease serving the local Country Estate. In overall good order with a number of minor repairs identified including installation of cowl to disused chimney, some repointing works, cleaning guttering, repairing loose slates, repairs to copings, repair to broken vestry window, external redecoration, repairs to bier house, installation of improved heating, longer term repointing works to the bell-cote.

## Churchyard

Owned and maintained by the Church.

## Strengths

Attractive situation, with parking available in the adjoining lay-by. On a tourist route.

## Weaknesses

Dated electric heating. The congregation is small, and travel from other villages to Maerdy, rather than being local to the Church. There are no welfare facilities.

## Finance

The Church has paid its Share regularly and has no historic debt. It has Funds held with the RB in Cardiff that are for the use of the Mission Area.

## Sunday Attendance

2009	11	2014	5	2019	4
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2010	9	2015	3
2011	9	2016	3
2012	8	2017	4
2013	6	2018	4

## Recommendation

Closure and return to the RB for sale.

## Fresh Expressions

The Mission Area has developed a number of creative Fresh Expressions of church over recent years in addition to the regular worshipping



congregations. Penedeyrn has a rich variety of worship including the following:

**Caffi Crist** (Christ Church, Bala) and **Caffi Mair** (Parish Room, Cerrigydrudion): A monthly 'café style' informal service, attracting a number of people who are not regular churchgoers.

**Jam ar y Sul** in Neuadd Bro Derek, Llandderfel: a monthly musical outreach offering an opportunity to 'jam' hymn tunes together.

**Messy Churches** in Llandderfel, Bala and Cynwyd. Llandderfel and Cynwyd are ecumenical projects.

**Cerrig Camu** in Cerrigydrudion: a monthly family outreach, run ecumenically with Ysgol Sul Capel Jerusalem.

**Mini Moli** (Christ Church, Bala) Puppet praise for pre-school children.

**Children's Clubs:** 3 Godly Play afterschool clubs - Clwb Beuno (Christ Church, Bala), Clwb Trillo (Llandrillo) and Clwyd Iwan (Ysgol Isaf, Cynwyd).

It is estimated that there is active outreach to around 120 people (including children) who are not currently engaged in traditional church through these Fresh Expressions.

## Online Worship

Penedeyrn has responded to the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown by producing online worship, including weekly video services and short puppet stories for children. Up to 150 people a week are accessing this via YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and the Mission Area website, and although people may not stay for the full service and it is not known who they all are, this is clearly higher than usual church attendance. Paper worship resources are posted to those who are not online, which is likewise reaching more than the regular churchgoers. In addition Penedeyrn has an informal live service on Zoom with around 35 regular worshippers. It is clear that despite churches being closed the Mission Area is currently reaching considerably more people than usual.

## Church Halls (as with the Churches, list each Church Hall in turn)

1. Cynwyd



## Condition

Converted former Victorian Schoolroom building recently comprehensively refurbished with flexible accommodation providing several inter-connected former classrooms, disabled WC and kitchen facilities, as well as a car park.

The building is in good condition.

## Ownership and other observations

Ownership details have been requested of the Diocesan Registrar. Part of the building is used on weekdays by a local nursery, who pay a monthly 'rent' fee, alongside community use of the smaller hall/meeting room, kitchen and WCs.

The Church congregation meets in the Hall over the winter months for weekly services as it is warmer and better heated, with better facilities, than the Church building itself.

## Strengths

Recently refurbished with attractive, warm, welcoming and flexible interior with excellent facilities, including car parking. Situated next to the Church and the Community Primary School, prominently positioned on the main road through the valley. Regular bookings including a Children's Nursery who use the old classrooms and grounds. The MA has developed the smaller part of the hall as a Godly Play room and offers an after-school Godly Play club. Messy Church is offered ecumenically with the local chapel.

## Weaknesses

The building is rather 'grey' externally, and redecoration of the pebbledash in a more uplifting colour would present the building more positively.

## Recommendations



Retain and continue to utilise for Church Services, Messy Church, Godly Play, Nursery, and community activities.

## Other Church assets

### 1. Cottages at Maerdy

A former detached cottage, now divided into two units, adjoining the Church building at Maerdy. Not to suitable standard and requiring extensive and costly refurbishment and repair works to bring them to a lettable standard (in terms of condition/quality and energy efficiency). A report has previously been prepared in relation to these and the advice was that it was not cost effective to repair/remodel for reletting and that they should be sold. They are attractively positioned in large grounds that slope down to the stream/river below, with a large iron-sheet-clad workshop building adjoining which is understood to be let by the Church to the local undertaker. The property as a whole would be considered to be a good prospect for sale for renovation for local or second-home occupation and sale should be considered in a single lot, with vacant possession.

Enquiries have been made of the Diocesan Registrar in relation to the title of the property and any associated restrictions on sale and a report on title is awaited.



## Other financial assets

Funds held by the RB in Cardiff:

Pentrefoelas Churchyard Maintenance Fund	£3,700
Pentrefoelas Parish Church	£19,009.33



List other funds available, including for, for example, legacies and funds from sales of Church buildings held in trust by the RB.