

LANDSCAPE REPORT

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HPAR4011



ST PETERS CHURCH,
LAMPETER,
CARADIGION

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1. Location

St Peters Church (or Eglwys San Pedr) is the oldest operational church in Lampeter, in the Welsh County of Ceredigion. It is located on Bryn Yr Eglwys, and has a Graveyard and Crypt attached (this is common practice for Village/ small town churches.) It is relatively central to the town and has two fields neighbouring it, one of which is open to the public. The Graveyard is considered sizable.



Aerial photograph of the church [Coflein]

2. History

2.1 Earlier Site usages

The site is known to have had 3 St Peter's churches built on the site, one in C1200, 1838 and finally in 1870, which is the only one out the three still standing on the site.

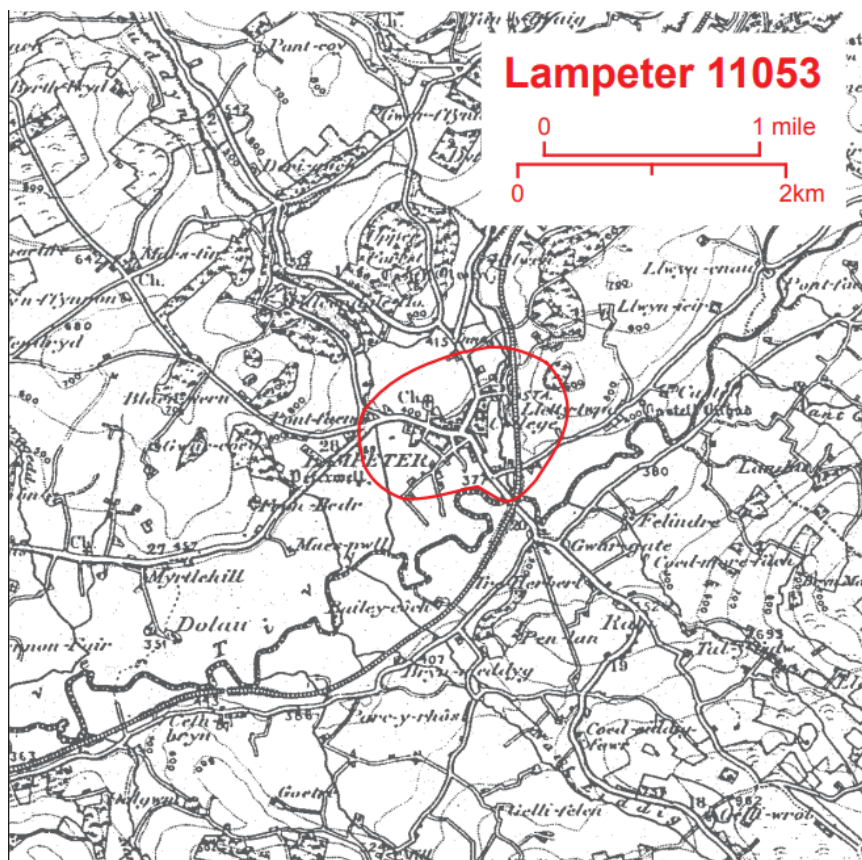
The earliest known record of church existing at that location was in 1291 AD, and it was a part of the Sub-Aeron Deanery although not much more is known about this church during this time period with no known date of construction. This was (like the others) dedicated to St Peter and is what the town is partly named after. "Llanbedr Pont Steffan" meaning "Peter's church Stephen's bridge." However writing by Giraldus Cambrensis in 1188 AD refer to the town as just "*Pons Stephani*" [Giraldus Cambresis] (Stephen's Bridge) suggesting that the church was not built at this time. Giving us a vague 103-year time frame between 1188 and 1291 that the original church could have been constructed.

The town name stemming for the church suggests that the building held great cultural significance to the town. Possibly the reason why it was rebuilt twice. The earliest church is known to have had a font from around the 13th century which had a Square bowl but it is no longer with church and location (if it still exists) is unknown.

A possible earlier history to the site can be seen with the slight raised ground the church sits on allows for speculation of an even earlier, Bronze or Iron age site sitting underneath the Church. [Heneb]

The second St Peter's church was constructed on the site in 1838. It was constructed by W. Wittington of Neath between the years of 1836 and 1838. Supposedly, elements of the original c.1200 church apparently remained in its second iteration such as the medieval rood-screen however no such features remain today. [Heneb]

It can be seen on the 1843 Tithe map and unlike the current site the graveyard appears to be circular in shape.



1843 Tithe Map [Catalogue of British Town Maps.]

However, the Second St Peter's was not popular and in 1861 the church was described as 'a public eyesore that demands total demolition' [Edmunds] and this came to be shortly after when it was demolished due to its poor construction [Coflein] to make way for the current St Peters.

There is currently no known parts for the earlier churches left on the site, one possible exception to this is one of the Church Bells with an inscription of “E. E., 1721”, E.E. likely standing for Evan Evans, a Bellfounder from Chepstow, whether this was a Bell from the original church or came from elsewhere is unknown. [Heneb]

On the site now stands the third iteration of the church after it was finished in 1870.

3. Construction of St Peters

3.1 Construction

Construction of the church started in 1867 and was finished in 1870 taking three years, this is a very average timeframe for church construction during this era.

[Teififaithtrail.wales.]

The time period ties in with the Victorian church reforms where over 4,000 churches were built during the 19th century, with the idea to ‘restore’ the church and combat declining church attendance rates.



Exterior of St Peter's Church, Photo by Coflein

3.2 Architect

The currently church was designed by Robert Jewell Withers who as an architect originally from Shepton Mallet, Somerset, but for most of his professional career he operated out of London, he focused mostly on ecclesiastical structures but also worked on a small number of estate homes. He designed a small number of churches are across Wales, including St David's Church in Henfynyw and St Dogfael in Meline. [Harris, E]

3.3 Gothic Style

St Peter's Church is well known for being the best examples of High Victorian Gothic or "Gothic Revival" architecture in the county. [Coflein] with attempts to copy older Medieval Gothic styles. [Riba.org.]

4. Features

4.1 Windows

As many churches do, St Peters contains a number of stained glass Windows, dating from its constructing to the mid-1950s. Most notably is the West Window depicting "Christ calling Peter and Andrew" which dates from 1938, constructed by a well-known Irish Stained glass artist Wilhelmina Geddes in an attempt to mirror the earlier style of Harry Clarke (1889-1931), also an Irish Stained-glass artist. [Stainedglasswales]

The oldest of the stained-glass dates for 1870 when the church was constructed and is a collection of five windows which sits at the far end above the alter depicting the crucifixion of Christ, and is the work of Daniel Bell, a stained glass artist from Dorset.

The windows on the exterior are covered by a now yellowed plastic in order to protect the glass from potential vandals, this is common to find on church, however.



Christ Calling Peter and Andrew
[stainedglasswales]photo by Martin Crampin



Window Depicting the crucifixion
[stainedglasswales] photo by Martin Crampin

4.2 Graveyard

Earliest usage of the graveyard is unknown however it does appear on the 1843 Tithe map, however it appears smaller than it is currently.

The lower part of the Graveyard was used as a burial ground for residents of “Lampeter Union workhouse” of which the Graves are unmarked. [Coflien] the Graveyard also contains commonwealth Graves, and a small number of Graves from the First and second world war.

The graveyard is one of the few places where the remanets of the earlier churches on the site can be seen though the Graves predating the churches 1870 construction.



Figure 1 Photograph of the Graveyard from Coflein



Information board about the graveyard

Listing

The building Grade II listed on the 11th March 1992 most noticeable due to its “High Victorian Gothic” style and is regarded t be one of the best examples of Victorian Gothic Reveal Architecture within the country. [Cadw]

The full Listing Report can be found Via Cadw at:

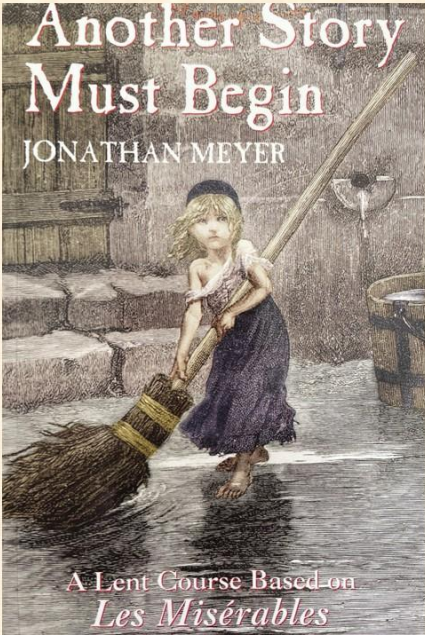
<https://cadwpublic->

[api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=&id=10430](https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=&id=10430)

5. Current Usages

St Peters church is currently used as an Anglican parish church, in which a service is held every Sunday at 11 pm, and is open from 10-12 each Saturday for visitors, on the most part outside of these hours the church remains locked. [Facebook, St peters Church Lampeter]

However, it is in someways also used as a community centre hosting events with most information and events advertisements being available though the St peter's church Lampeter's Facebook page.



**Another Story
Must Begin**
JONATHAN MEYER

*A Lent Course Based on
Les Misérables*

**Looking for something
meaningful this Lent?**

Join us for a relaxed and welcoming Lent Course where we'll watch a short section of Les Misérables each week and explore its themes together.

Through open conversation, we'll reflect on what the Bible has to say and spend some gentle time in prayer.

There's no pressure to speak or pray — simply come along, listen, and take part in whatever way feels comfortable for you.

Everyone is warmly welcome.

Take a little time out this Lent to pause, reflect, and journey together.

**Wednesdays 10.15 Lampeter Church Hall
Beginning on 25th February**

An Advatiemtn for a community event, advited on Facebook @St Peters Church Lampeter

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Appendages

