

The Mynydd Pencarreg Enclosures

Project Design



Rectangular Enclosures, Victoria Park Farm, SN57274291, Toby Driver, 15 December 2008. RCAHMW. NPRN 416578.

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(The place and context are factual, but some of the players are fictional)

Organisation: Mynydd Pencarreg Group

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Originator: Mark Newbold, Volunteer Project Manager

Approved: Jane Evans, Volunteer Project Executive

Executive Summary

The Mynydd Pencarreg Group is undertaking a wide-ranging study of the heritage values of its community, with Mynydd Pencarreg at its heart. Initially it will concentrate on the implementation of the 1845 General Enclosure Act, that entailed about a quarter of the parish, previously common or waste land. However the Enclosure award and map have not been studied and analysed, with particular regard to their impact on the place and its people. In broad conformity with the MoRPHE procedures this Project Design aims to provide the basis for a funding application for that purpose.

The Study Area

The community of Llanybydder is some four miles south-west of Lampeter, as shown in Fig. 1, in the broad glaciated valley of the River Teifi. Llanybydder is the only town, with Pencarreg, Cwmann, Ffaldybrenin, Esgairdawe, Rhydcymerau and Llidiad-Nenog marking its periphery. Mynydd Pencarreg, also strongly glaciated, dominates the centre, its summit at some 415 metres OD, now topped by a relay transmitter station.

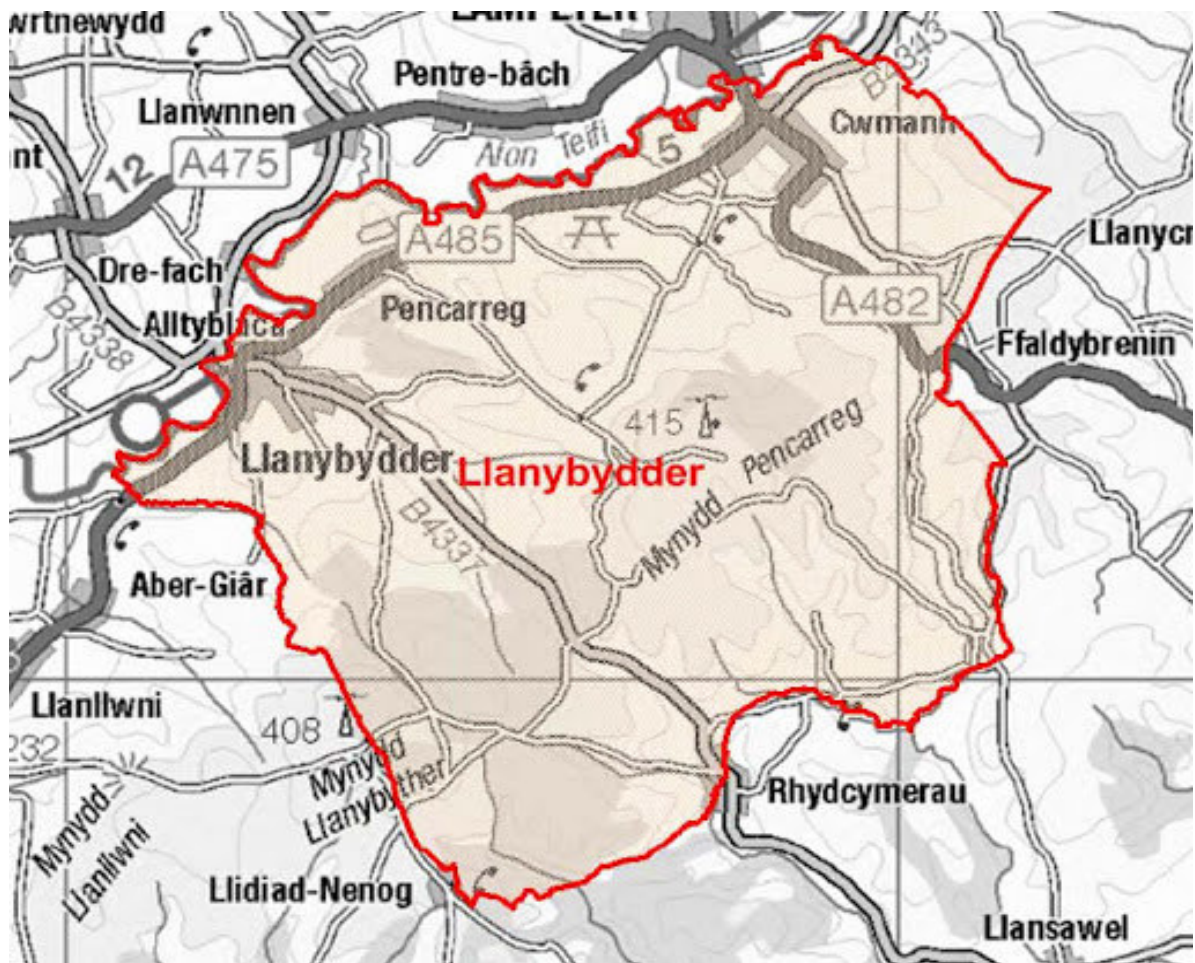


Fig. 1. Llanybydder Community Map, Carmarthenshire County Council, 2019

Pencarreg's medieval church is on a rocky knoll and overlooks Llyn Pencarreg, a glacial kettlehole within the Pencarreg moraine - a SSSI and the site of a Roman mace discovery (RCAHMW, 2014), presumably associated with the Roman road along the valley. Some 20 Bronze Age round barrows and five Iron Age defended enclosures have been recorded on the Mynydd itself (Archwilio, Welsh Archaeological Trusts (WAT), 2020).

One-time woollen mills on fast-running watercourses (WAT, 2020), the flannel works and a specialist manufactory of water mills at Llanybydder, all testify to the traditional importance of sheep farming locally. D.J. Williams' classic, *The Old Farmhouse* (2001) is a vivid memoir of rural life thereabouts.

Historically therefore the Mynydd is no stranger to enclosures, defensive and agricultural, but about a quarter of the ecclesiastical parish of Pencarreg

(excluding Llanybydder) was still common land in the early nineteenth century. It is what then prompted its enclosures, where and how they were carried out and how they affected the life and work of local people on which this study will concentrate.

The Enclosures

In his article *The Later Parliamentary Enclosures of South Wales*, John Chapman (1991) states that, "Enclosure was primarily concerned with the creation of new patterns of landownership, either by redistributing existing holdings in open fields or by creating private holdings from the former communal waste". And, "whereas most common land of high potential agricultural value in England had been already been enclosed there still remained substantial areas, particularly in South Wales, of more limited value that were still unenclosed".

He also notes (1992) that, though sanctioned by Parliament under the 1845 General Enclosure (strictly speaking, Inclosure) Act it was essentially a local process, specifically designed with Wales in view. Carmarthenshire was one of the five counties involved, in which the largest award by area and numbers of allottees was Pencarreg; and the second largest in Wales.

In practice the purpose of enclosure of commons was to make the land more profitable agriculturally and thus was allotted or awarded to those who owned land in the parish in return for their giving up their common rights. How this worked out at Pencarreg should emerge from this study but, in doing so, it will also be necessary to take into account the Tithe Award that was agreed for Pencarreg a few years earlier on 9 December 1841 and would have undoubtedly contributed to the enclosure process in that it recorded boundaries, ownerships and land-use for each parcel. But how did the surveyors deal with the common land? As Kain and Prince remark, "... commons and unfarmed land were difficult to assess and, because of low titheable value, often did not merit careful measurement" (2000).

In many cases the result of enclosures was that the rich became richer and the poor, poorer; Indeed Kain *et al* (2004) take a darker view when they see the purpose of enclosure maps as, "like many other genres of cadastral maps, [they]

were instruments of land organisation and control which both reflected and consolidated the power of those who commissioned them”.

At Pencarreg the Enclosure award and map covered 2,695 acres, comprised 92 allottees, 28 buyers and was certified for accuracy on 21 June 1855. In his analysis Chapman (1991 and 1992) observes that there were four allotments that exceeded 200 acres, but that the mean size of in this instance was overwhelmingly small and many were within the range of small buyers. One lot at Pencarreg went for a mere 1s. 10½d. but he emphasises that these small, cheap allotments were not necessarily bought by purchasers from the lower social ranks: an 'esquire' paid 15s 7½ d for 25 perches. Was Pencarreg therefore unusual in this respect?

But there is a further conundrum because one of the four larger allotments, at 211 acres, was for The Queen. Since the enclosure process entailed landowners giving up their common rights it is strange that, pending an examination of the original documents, so far there seems to be no mention of the Crown in the tithe apportionment a few years earlier. Although it had interests in enclosures elsewhere in Wales, (Chapman, 1991) this particular connection therefore calls for further investigation; for example was tenure held by a proxy? Meanwhile the Ordnance Survey (Carmarthenshire 6 inch, Sheet VIII SW, 2nd edition, 1907) shows the distinctly-named Victoria Park Farm as being near the Mynydd summit - as depicted on the title page. Another curiosity is the not far-distant and equalled distinctly-named King's Park, recorded as being on medieval Crown land as the result of the enclosures. (WAT, PRN 12276).

In summary it is reasonable to assume that the enclosures would have had some major consequences for Pencarreg. This study will test that assumption.

Aim and Objectives

This Project Design aims to provide the basis for a successful application by the Mynydd Pencarreg Group, (MPG) to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) (see 'Business Case' below) to enable a wide-ranging study of the purposes, implementation and subsequent development of the enclosures of common land in the parish of Pencarreg. In doing so the study will blend evidential, historical, demographic and communal values and therefore add significantly to the

understanding of the latterday development of Pencarreg and its contextual setting of the Mynydd; the place and its people – in sum, its local distinctiveness.

The discovery phase of the project will therefore involve the recording, study and analysis of the following topics:

- The Act. What were its provisions then and subsequently – including its transfer in part to Welsh Government? What were the roles of commissioners, surveyors and 'trustees' and how effective were they?
- Tithe Apportionment. How did it inform and influence the process and outcome of the enclosure?
- Initiation. Who and what prompted and oversaw this enclosure? Who were the beneficiaries and losers? Was the outcome worth the effort, expense and disruption to the status quo? What were the costs of the process and who bore them? What was the reason for smaller buyers predominating? What was the effect on land market values?
- Land use, access and boundaries. What were the uplands used for prior to enclosure? Did ownership patterns alter as a result of enclosure; and subsequently? How did land usage alter then and subsequently? The role of the then Forestry Commission and service providers, including waste disposal and tele-communications, will be relevant. Were highways and walkways recorded in the Tithe apportionment altered as a result of enclosure? Have there been subsequent changes? Have government grant or access schemes had an influence?
- Settlements, dwellings and other structures. What can be learned about the medieval and post-medieval, built heritage on the Mynydd and its out-riders?
- Crown connections. What are the origins and circumstances of the Crown holding land in Pencarreg, then and subsequently? If not held directly by the Crown, by whom and for what purposes?
- Occupations and commerce. Given that agriculture was the predominant occupation, did enclosure affect the way in which the Mynydd and its setting was and is managed now in terms of outputs and people's occupations?

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Fig 2. Sketch conveyance plan Tanlan & Plasnewydd Allotment; private papers

Business Case

The project has been instigated to mark the founding of the MPG (registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation has been applied for). Its members corporately have specialised in heritage project start-ups in the charitable sector, including research, community engagement, learning and interpretation, as well as fund-raising from all sectors of the economy.

The principal stakeholders are Pencarreg Parish Council, Llanybydder Community Council, Carmarthenshire Archive Service and the principal funders. Advisers will include Dyfed Archaeological Trust (with scope for community archaeology) and Eric Holland, a solicitor specialising in the law of common land. The County Archivist, the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and a private benefactor have stated their support for the project and RCAHMW has indicated interest in sharing relevant expertise and data.

The application for grant-aid will emphasise compliance with the following NLHF priorities:

- A (mandatory) wider range of people will be involved in heritage.
- Heritage will be identified and better explained.
- People will have developed skills; and
- People will have learned about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions. (NLHF).

Discovery Phase Method Statement

The procedures to be employed will be informed by the precepts of Milltir Sgwar (Huckin, Austin, Jones & Evans, 2019), the approach developed by Common Ground (Clifford & King, 1993) and the *Mapping Denbighshire: Enclosure Project* (Owen, 2016). The project will also have regard to guidance in Cadw's *Managing Lists of Historic Assets of Special Local Interest in Wales* (Cadw, 2017).

Enrolled copies of the Enclosure map and the Award, are held both at the Public Record Office (MAF1/4), as well as at Carmarthenshire Archives at Reference DP/AE2, but the former are inaccessible because of today's pandemic and the latter are currently undergoing emergency conservation. Until these are

available their contents are largely conjectural. The whereabouts of the Tithe Apportionment locally is being ascertained and although the National Library of Wales' on-line resource is available (National Library of Wales, *Welsh Tithe Maps*) it is of limited value in this instance. For ease of access digitising all the main documents of both would be highly desirable.

With those provisos the following actions will be undertaken now:

- Submit this project design to the MPG committee for approval in principle.
- Convene an informal community consultative exercise.
- Resubmit this project design and job profile (see below) for final approval by the MPG.
- Submit and progress the funding application and match-funding.

Thereafter – and assuming a successful outcome to the grant applications and the availability of the archived documentation, the project's discovery phase will comprise:

- Formal approval for project start-up.
- Complying with the grant-makers' conditions, including permission to start and procurement contract procedures.
- Initiating a project risk log to identify, evaluate and propose countermeasures for all risks.
- Recruiting a Community Research and Engagement Officer (CREO) on a two-year contract.
- Training volunteer researchers, specialising either in field-work or desk-based research, including sources.
- Launching the project to promote local support for the project, including schools; an informal advisory forum under an independent convenor will be desirable.
- Implementing an accessible interpretation strategy, including a dedicated website and social media.
- Combining desk-based research and field survey, assembling (preferably) in digital form all available, relevant material pertaining to the historical, natural and community development of Mynydd Pencarreg and its outliers.
- Establishing a time-line for the over-arching narrative until modern times.

- Reporting formally to the principal stakeholders.
- Considering whether statutory designations warrant revision or augmentation.
- In partnership with one or more stakeholders publishing and archiving the completed project in the public domain.
- Identifying any ancillary projects to support the MPG's charitable objects.

The outcome should therefore be a critical, evidence-based narrative, including an assessment of the impact of the Enclosure at Pencarreg and whether it succeeded in its stated purpose of improvement.

Sources

There is a thumbnail note on Pencarreg by Lewis, S (1844) in his '*A Topographical Dictionary of Wales*', and the Cwmann Young Farmers' Club's parish history (1976), However, except for the Tithe and Enclosure documentation and the other sources cited here no other relevant material has come to light so far. Other potential sources must therefore include the National Library of Wales, RCAHMW (Coflein, including aerial photography), University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Cof Cymru (Cadw), Natural Resources Wales, particularly former Forestry Commission records, the HER (Archwilio), LandMap, Wildlife Trust South & West Wales, Carmarthenshire Museum, census records, church records, the 'Lloyd George Survey', agricultural valuations, family papers and deeds, as well as photographs and memories.

Project Team Structure & Communications

The Project Team will comprise Mark Newbold the Project Manager, reporting to Jane Evans, Volunteer Project Executive for MPG. Both will be home-based, communicating as required by email and phone, but they will meet weekly for a progress update session and report formally to the Management Committee. Community information days will be held at intervals.

The CREO will be employed on a two-year, part-time contract and will report to Mark Newbold in the first instance. The job profile will follow at an annex and in the funding application; recruitment procedures will comply with Sell2Wales and the MPG's standard conditions of employment.

Project Reviews

The MPG Committee has agreed in principle that an application for funding the project should be submitted on the basis of this Design, thereby conforming with MoRPHE Review Point 1 (Lee, 2016).

Assuming a successful application a formal review will be undertaken by the MPG and principal stakeholders at a date to be determined, but unlikely to be later than 21 April 2021, to decide whether to proceed with the discovery phase. This will be designated Review Point 2.

Compliance & Ownership

The project will comply with all relevant legislation and MPG policies, including those for health & safety, employment, bilingual communications, procurement, volunteering, equal opportunities & diversity, risk management and working with children & vulnerable adults.

Intellectual-property rights for photography and written text, digital and hard copy will be vested in the MPG, subject to accessibility free of charge for the purposes of research and personal information through the Carmarthenshire Archive Service.

The MPG has applied for the requisite insurance cover, including public indemnity in the sum of £2,000,000.

Budget

The proposed budget for the discovery phase is as follows:

Staff costs	£48,000
Attributable overheads,	£12,000
Ancillary professional fees, including digitisation	£7,000
Contingency at 12%	£8,000
Total	£75,000

Volunteer time (NLHF rates)	£35,000
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Proposed grant application	£65,000
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The balance will be raised through an appeal to the private benefactor, local organisations and individual donors.

Annex

Job Profile: Community Research and Engagement Officer – to follow.



'Kelvin-Helmholz Clouds, Mynydd Pencarreg, near Cwmann, on a cold morning'. Irfon Williams, 23 September 2013.

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