Llanfair-yng-Nghornwy, St Mary

Description and Statement of Significance

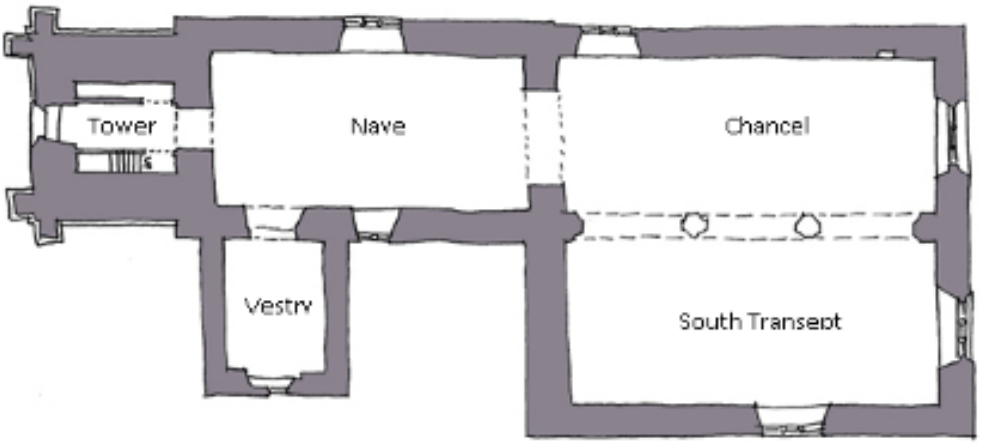
The church is situated in a secluded position to the south-east of Llanfairynghornwy with access by trackway about two kilometres to the west of the A5025. The church is described in the Pevsner Architectural Guide for Gwynedd as - "The most important church of north-west Anglesey, with an unusual floor plan". St Mary is a grade I listed church. The church was listed in the Norwich Taxation of 1254. Visible evidence of early medieval origins can be detected in the nave walls and the 11th or 12th-century chancel arch. Rebuilding and additions in the 15th century, and the south chapel was added in the 16th century. The west tower is 17th century. Early Victorian restorations were carried out in 1847 and 1860. The chancel and south chapel had further work carried out under Harold Hughes in 1931. The list description describes the reason for listing as:

> *"Listed as a fine rural parish church, incorporating significant early medieval fabric, including a 12th-century chancel arch, and with good late medieval additions, including a fine 16th-century arcaded chapel. Of special interest, therefore, both for its early origins and for the quality of its later detail."*

The church's main entrance is now through the two-stage west tower, which has a short pyramidal spire recessed behind a crenellated parapet. The walls are of rubble masonry, heavily mortared, with freestone dressings. Roofs are covered with slate with stone copings and the bases of gable finials. The former porch is now the vestry.

The church utilises liturgical orientation.

Church Significance Plan



Overview Photos

















Detailed Comments

External Inspection

Roofs

Chancel roof consists of Slate roof with clay ridge tiles and coping stones to the east verge with an abutment to the nave gable to the west. The chancel north slope and south slope differ, with smaller slates used to the south. The nave roof has the same configuration as the chancel, with coping stones to the east verge and abutment to the tower to the west. There is a small section of mortared verge to the north of the tower. The south transept has a diminishing course slate roof with stone ridge. Stone copings present to both ends, with decorative ridge section to the west end. A tapered lead gutter between the chancel and south transept is covered in a modern GRP coating or similar. The vestry has a slate roof with clay ridge tiles with ornate stone coping to the south end and semi-hip into the nave roof and abutment to stonework to the north of the vestry. The tower consists of a slated pyramid covered with cement mortar or bituminous coating.

Generally, the chancel north roof slope is in fairly poor condition, with several slipped and broken slates to the north roof slope. Heavy moss growth to the chancel south roof slope, but otherwise, it appears in satisfactory condition. The tapered gutter between the chancel and transept is shallow and has failed in the past and continues to do so. The south transept north and south roof slopes appear to be in good condition. There are some broken slates to the south roof slope to the nave, but on the whole, the roof slope is in satisfactory condition, as is the north slope. The vestry west roof slope is in fairly poor condition, while the east slope appears better. There was no internal access to the tower at the time of the survey. There is water present in the tower narthex, and the ceiling panels are warping, suggesting sustained water ingress. Access to the tower to survey the higher stages to access the extent of water ingress is necessary.

Rainwater Goods and Gullies

No gutters to the north of the church with dripping eaves with minimal overhang. No evidence of gullies suggesting no rainwater goods present historically. A half-round cast iron gutter is served by one cast-iron downpipe to the transept south roof slope. There is a cast iron gutter served by one central down pipe to the south of the nave. There is a section of gutter missing immediately adjacent to the vestry. A hopper and downpipe takes rainwater from the east end of the tapered gutter while it discharges directly onto the nave roof to the west. The gutter is laid in long sections, which may have split historically, resulting in water ingress. No access to the gutter possible during this survey, but the previous inspection noted splits in the covering to the east, and the base was soft, suggesting decay. To the west slope of the vestry, round section gutter discharging into a downpipe which feeds into a gully. The tower has a parapet gutter discharging into cast iron hoppers and downpipes to the north and south elevations. The tower downpipes discharge to surface. There is a threshold drain to the west door.

The condition of the rainwater goods, where present, is generally poor. Serious consideration should be given to providing dripping eaves throughout and lead spitters from the tower. This would



minimise the potential for damage caused by blocked rainwater goods and minimise the impact of vegetation blocking gullies at a low level.

External Walls

There is random rubble masonry with cementitious butter pointing all around the church. There is a cementitious render above the Chancel roof to the east gable of the nave. To the tower, rubble stonework, with buttresses at low level only and crenelations to the parapet, there are small ventilation openings to the north and south elevations of the tower with arched headed bell opening to the west. There is dressed stonework to the west door surround.

The stonework is generally structurally sound, and the pointing is generally in satisfactory condition. However, vegetation is prevalent to most elevations, particularly the tower, suggesting that the masonry is saturated and unable to dry out due to cement pointing and failing rainwater goods. A phased scheme of repointing works is necessary.



Windows and Doors

Generally: All leaded lights glazed in dressed stone surrounds with tracery; no ventilators.

eI - Chancel East: Mid 19th Century pictorial glass and signed Evans of Shrewsbury and dated 1850. Metal security grille over.

sI - 3 light cusped headed window in an arched opening with hood moulding.

sII - 3 light window with cusped heads in a square opening. Plain diamonds with border and lead detail to the base.

sIII - 1no. hole to a plain quarry. Fairly extensive repairs present.



sIV - Single light cusped headed window with acid-etched effect diamonds. No vents.

nI - 3 light arched headed window in square stone surround. Plain diamonds leaded lights with lead detail to the base.

nII - The same configuration as n I. Painted diamonds and coloured patterned borders. Several quarries have been replaced with clear glass.

Tower Porch: Pointed arch timber boarded door with paint finish.

The windows are generally in satisfactory to good condition. There are open joints to the mullions at low level to sII and the cill to nII, while there are several holes to the leaded lancets to sIII. The west door into the tower is generally satisfactory; however, the lockbox is not working.



Churchyard

There is mature planting to the perimeter of the churchyard. Generally, the yard is grassed, with the old burial ground surrounding the church mainly overgrown. The new burial ground to the south is well maintained. The boundaries are a combination of rubble stone and overgrown hedges, with areas of loose stonework and neglect. High retaining wall to north & east supporting more substantial tree growth. Loose joints but generally firm.



The lychgate to the west has a stepped gable with slate copings and a new oak gate. Loose stonework present and open joints at high level. The path from the lychgate to the west door is tarmacadam, while the path through the new burial ground is concrete.

The boundary walls are beginning to deteriorate, and the old churchyard is overgrown in places and needs attention. The paths through the churchyard are generally in good condition, while the lychgate is in satisfactory condition.

Internal Inspection

Tower

Due to the plaster condition within the ground floor porch, no access was possible into the Tower roof space or chambers.



Roof Structure and Ceilings

To the chancel, arch-braced trusses supporting small purlins and secondary rafters with torching to the slates' underside. There are differing ceiling finishes evident internally with evidence of a previous ceiling below the exposed rafters' lines. To the nave, there are arch-braced trusses with timber boarded ceiling above the ornamental bossed purlins. Previous repairs are evident with steel reinforcement present to westernmost north truss. The south transept roof comprises four bays, arch-braced trusses, previously a faceted ceiling that underdrew the now exposed trusses. Steel reinforcement present to north slope only. Boarded ceiling present below rafters. Purlins and ridge beam exposed. The vestry has torching present to the roof between rafters with evidence of historic wood-boring insect attack. There is an unusual ventilation hole to the east wall of the vestry.



Generally, the roofs and ceilings to the nave, vestry and south transept are in satisfactory condition, however, the ceiling to the chancel and the tower are in poor condition due to water ingress. There is also acute water ingress above the easternmost arch's head to the arcade between the chancel and the transept.

Internal Walls

The chancel walls are generally plastered on solid masonry with exposed masonry to the stone three-bay arcade to the south with plaster above the arches. Open arch into the nave. The arcade is constructed from roughly pointed stonework. There is evidence of previous north/south rails and screen fixings to the arcade's central column and corresponding location to the north wall. The presence of a pocket to the east window is unclear. To the nave, painted plaster on solid mass masonry walls with open arch into the chancel. In the transept, there is painted plaster on mass masonry with the open arcade into the chancel to the north. Dado panelling present to east and south-east reredos. Evidence of historic insect attack to panelling to the south wall. Upper purlins and ridge appear later. To vestry, painted plaster on mass masonry walls. Three bay arched exposed masonry arcade separates chancel and south transept.





Generally, internal walls are in good condition, with no immediate repair or remedial works necessary. The exception to this is the tower narthex, where failing plaster prevents access to the tower's upper stages. The tower should be replastered once the source of water ingress is better understood.

Floors

Concrete paving to the majority of the chancel with polished slate grave slabs to the dais. To nave, concrete paving to walkways. Boarded timber to pew plinths in good order (previously renewed). Dais to transept as chancel with parquet floor present to the remainder of the transept. Modern concrete paving throughout vestry.

All floors generally in good condition with no immediate repair works noted.



Fixtures and Fittings

The following present within the church:

Altars: Good 18th century table; Modern Rails; Modern Pulpit with plywood panelling, not in keeping with the church's significance; Plain oak Lectern; Pine Desk; Pine pews present; Stone tub Font with oak cover.

Memorials to chancel north wall. Organ present and said to be in working order

Generally, all fixtures and fittings are in good condition.

Services

Note: Visual non-technical comments only.



Heating & Electrics: uPVC Wiring in uPVC conduit. Tubular heaters at a low level, corroded and unsafe. Switch box high level, lighting low levels. Church currently heated by Calor gas heaters – a very 'wet' heat. Fire Fighting Equipment: Maintained extinguishers. Water by the west door of nave. CO2 by the organ.

No evidence of Lightning Protection.

The electrical distribution board was tripped when inspecting and buzzing. This should be checked by a qualified electrician as soon as possible.



Summary of Costs – St Mary

Category A – Conservation and Maintenance Works for completion within the next five years.

Item	Element	Indicative Cost (£)
01	Allow undertaking of localised repairs to the north roof slope of the chancel and the east roof slope of the vestry.	7,500.00
02	Allow to reconfigure and provide new lead covering to appropriate detail to tapered gutter between the chancel and transept.	10,000.00
03	Allow to provide access to the tower and to make good failed plaster adjacent to the access door.	100.00
04	Option A: Provide dripping eaves to the remainder of vestry, transept and nave roof slopes.	2,500.00
05	Option B: Allow to renew, in places, prepare and redecorate in others existing rainwater goods to south roof slopes of the church.	2,500.00
06	Allow for repointing of the tower and replacement of cementitious render to east elevation.	20,000.00
07	Allow to repoint open joints to window surrounds to el and nll and repair leaded lancets to sll	2,000.00
08	Allow to rake off all loose torching to chancel ceiling to prevent uncontrolled dropping of debris.	1,000.00
09	Allow undertaking localised ceiling repair to transept ceiling once remedial works to tapered gutter over complete.	500.00
10	Allow making existing electrical distribution board safe.	500.00
	TOTAL	**46,600.00**

Category B – Conservation and Maintenance Works for completion within the next fifteen years.

Item	Element	Indicative Cost (£)
01	Allow re-roofing to north roof slope of the chancel and the east roof slope of the vestry.	30,000.00
02	Allow repointing to the remainder of Church.	30,000.00
03	Allow a rolling phase of repairs to the boundary walls.	5,000.00
04	Allow repointing of the lychgate and rebedding of loose slates to cappings.	2,500.00
05	All re-torching of chancel ceiling once external roof repairs completed.	10,000.00
06	Allow to Replaster tower narthex.	2,500.00
	TOTAL	**80,000.00**

Category C –Works to improve access.

Item	Element	Indicative Cost (£)
01	Allow installation of audio loop system	1,500.00
	TOTAL	**1,500.00**

Category D –Works to improve aesthetic presentation.

Item	Element	Indicative Cost (£)
01	Allow to open up tower narthex to create a more welcoming space.	5,000.00
	TOTAL	**5,000.00**

Category E –Possible New Interventions.

Item	Element	Indicative Cost (£)
01	Allow to provide a new heating system.	10,000.00
	TOTAL	**10,000.00**

	GROSS TOTAL	**143,100.00**