

### **St Dochdwy's Church, Llandough-juxta-Cowbridge**

Recent repairs to the church roof involved the removal of the two bells from the exterior bell turret and their temporary placement inside the church. It had long been thought that the bells dated from the eighteenth century, but on close examination by the experts they were identified as pre-Reformation survivors. Such bells are rare in the diocese and the Llandough bells are the earliest of those to be positively identified.

The initials W and R are cast in relief on the outside of the soundbows and these initials, together with the shape of the canons, have led the experts to identify the bells as the work of William Revel of London, a bellfounder who was active in the middle of the fourteenth century (c.1350-60). It is possible that the bells were cast on site as Revel, like many other medieval bellfounders, was an itinerant practitioner of his craft.

The bells measure 449mm and 545mm in diameter. The identical sets of canons with which they were cast have survived intact, and although the larger bell is somewhat worn on the outside of its lip and

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both bells have become worn where the clappers have been striking, they have survived in remarkably good condition.

After professional refurbishment the bells returned to the church in November 1999 and were rededicated and reconsecrated by the bishop of Llandaff on 22 December. Formerly provided with fittings for swing chiming, the bells have now been rehung in a fixed position. Only the new, specially made clappers now move when the bell ropes are pulled, a method of ringing which will involve less strain upon the bells and their housing.

*Hilary M. Thomas*

Rubbing of  
raised letter  
on Lincoln  
bells  
Aug. 1997



cls 026288

# To all the Residents of Llandough

## YOUR VILLAGE CHURCH NEEDS YOUR HELP

Such is the condition of Llandough Church building that extensive repair and remedial work is urgently required.

Architectural estimates indicate that over £60,000 will need to be spent in the next few years if the building is not to fall into serious disrepair. As the first part of Phase One of this programme, £20,000 has to be found for essential roof renovations and site drainage which must be carried out in the Spring and Summer THIS YEAR.

A grant of £10,000 should be received from CADW, providing that the same sum is raised locally. This appeal is URGENT. If the money cannot be raised very quickly, the possibility of the Church being closed cannot be far away.

There has been a church in our community for eight centuries or more. The present building dates from the 13th and 14th centuries and over the years has been maintained and repaired by the support of benefactors and the commitment of parishioners. The church was extensively restored in the 1860's. Now, this year, it needs major repairs.

If you value this part of your own history, this attractive ancient place of Christian worship, and if you consider that this part of the Vale's heritage is worth conserving for the future, PLEASE WILL YOU HELP BY CONTRIBUTING GENEROUSLY TO THIS APPEAL?

It should be noted that the worshippers (which you are always welcome to join) do not ask other parishioners for financial support to run the church's worship, ministry or mission, nor to pay the day-to-day bills. But this building has been part of this community's life and of its story for many generations, and you are part of its ancient story.

The enclosed booklet describes something of the history of Llandough Church. Please help us to ensure it has a future.

With grateful thanks for reading this and for your response.

*Robert Paterson, Rector*

*Hilary Thomas, Church Warden of Llandough*

March 1995

*Please use the tear-off slip for your response.*

*If you pay any Income Tax, you should be able to covenant a one-off gift; this increases your gift by 33% at absolutely no cost to you.*

GIFT from (NAME) .....  
of (ADDRESS) .....

Amount of gift £ .....

Would you like a receipt? YES / NO

Would you like details of how to covenant your gift? YES / NO

Please make cheques payable to *Parish of Cowbridge (Llandough Church)*.

Please send your gift to *Llandough Church Building Fund,*  
*via The Parish Office, Second Floor, 39 High Street, COWBRIDGE, CF7 7AE,*  
*or via Miss Hilary Thomas, Brookside Farm, Llandough, COWBRIDGE, CF7 7LR.*

# **Hayward Mills Associates**

## **Bell Consultants and Contractors**

**1 Palin Street  
Radford  
Nottingham  
NG7 5AD**

**Tel: 0115 978 8388**

**5th August 1998**

**Mr M R Thomas  
Parish Administrator  
The Parish Office  
North Street  
Cowbridge  
Vale of Glamorgan  
CF71 7DF**

**Dear Mr Thomas,**

### **St Dochdwy's Church, Llandough - Bells.**

In accordance with your request Michael Semken and I made an inspection of the bells and bell turret on Monday August 3rd. We would like to thank you and Mr Crisp for meeting us at the church and for assisting us with our inspection. We report on our findings as follows.

#### **Bells.**

There are two bells which have been taken down for reasons of safety and are now stored at the west end of the church. They were previously hung in the double turret which is built up from the west end gable wall. The bells measure 449 mm and 545 mm in diameter and they have the initials "W" and "R" cast in relief on the outside of the soundbows opposite the original clapper strike points. These initials and the shape of the canons lead us to believe that they were cast by William Revel of London who was thought to have been working between 1350 and 1360.

The bells were cast with identical sets of canons which remain intact and should be retained when the bells are restored.

Both bells have been drilled to allow the fitting of crownstaples of independent pattern due to failure of the cast-in iron crownstaples from which the clappers were previously suspended. These staples were either wider than is normal or else false staples had been fitted during the intervening period. The remains of the iron staple of the larger bell have been drilled out but traces of the iron remain in the

head of the smaller bell. As the presence of iron in the head of a bell can cause it to become cracked through the differing expansion rates of the dissimilar metals, any remaining iron should be carefully drilled out.

The bells are worn where the clappers now strike and they have been quarter turned. They should be eighth turned to present unworn surfaces of the soundbows to the blows of the clappers when they are next restored.

The larger bell has become worn on the outside of its lip, possibly through the bell rubbing on the side of the turret at some time.

### **Bell fittings.**

The bells have fittings for swing chiming which appear to have been provided at various dates.

The bells are suspended from timber headstocks the ends of which have iron gudgeon boxes bolted to their undersides. The gudgeons previously rotated in brass cups retained in iron blocks let into the sides of the bell turrets.

Iron levers are fixed just to the side of the staple centre bolts around which the ropes were previously fixed before passing down through the roof into the church. The levers have at some time become loose on the headstocks and have consequently damaged the timber through digging into it.

The wrought iron clappers are suspended from the independent crownstaples and they are in poor condition, their stems having almost rotted through above the clapper balls.

The ironwork of the fittings is in a rusty condition and the fittings are now in need of complete replacement.

### **Recommendations.**

We recommend that the bells are provided with new fittings and rehung in the turrets which have already been restored. Although pulleys do not appear to have been fitted in the past, fitting them now would lessen the risk of future damage to the ropes or ropeholes. We give below a quotation for this work.

### **Quotation.**

**To provide two new sets of fittings for swing chiming and to rehang the two bells.**

Provide a completely new set of fittings for swing chiming comprising elm headstock, turned steel gudgeons, double row self aligning ball bearings in cast iron housings, stainless steel bearing mounting brackets suitable for fixing them to the side walls of the turret, securing ironwork to attach the bell to its headstock, crownstaple with stainless steel joint pin, ductile iron clapper with resiliently mounted clapper bush, stainless steel lever, chime rope with soft woollen salley and stainless steel wire top end through the exposed area.

The metalwork to be cleaned down and painted with matt black paint. The woodwork to be thoroughly treated with Cuprinol wood preservative solution.

Bellhangers to travel to the church with the necessary tackle and tools and the new bell fittings. Scaffolding to be erected to give safe access to the double turret. The old bell fittings, ironwork and bearing blocks to be removed and disposed of.

The bells to be turned to present unworn surfaces of the soundbows to the blows of the clappers. The new bearing mounting brackets to be fixed to the turret walls, the bells and their fittings to be hoisted and hung. New ropeholes to be drilled through the timber blocks already set in the church roof by others for this purpose, the chime ropes to be fitted, the bell fittings to be adjusted and left in good working order.

Any damaged areas of paintwork to be touched up.

The bells to be test swung before our bellhangers leave site to ensure that the installation is in good working order.

The present-day cost of undertaking the above work would be £2,835.00 plus VAT.

#### **Exclusions.**

No item which we believe to be necessary for the satisfactory restoration of the bells is excluded from our quotation.

#### **Appended Item No.1.**

If bed and breakfast accommodation, a snack lunch and evening meal could be provided locally, free of charge to us, whilst our bellhangers are working at the church during the rehanging of the bells our quotation would be reduced by the sum of £80.00.

#### **Appended Item No.2.**

In addition to the fittings described in the specification given above, provide two pulleys and pulley mounting brackets to direct the chime ropes down the existing hole in the church roof. The additional cost of the providing and fitting these parts would be £160.00 plus VAT.

#### **VAT.**

Under the present guidelines on the imposition of VAT, which came into force on 1st October 1996, the work would be subject to tax at the Standard Rate, currently 17.5%.

#### **Payment Terms.**

Total contract price payable within 30 days of the date of the invoice issued on completion of the project.

**General.**

The new bell fittings would be guaranteed against failure for a period of three years, with the exception of the clappers which would have a guarantee of one year.

We are insured against damage to the church fabric and injury to other parties when they comply with all instructions given by our bellhangers and any restrictions on access which may have to be imposed for safety reasons whilst we are working at the church.

Our quotation may be considered to be fixed price quotation if the work is ordered by the end of October 1998.

We trust that you will find our report helpful and we look forward to hearing from you when our recommendations have been considered. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any further questions that you would like to ask with regard to the bell installation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hayward', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Hayward



# **COWBRIDGE RECTORIAL BENEFICE**

**To:** **BOB + MARJORIE CRISP**

**From:** Ron Norey (Parish Treasurer)

**Date:** 31st July 1998

**Subject:** **Llandough Restricted Account**

## **FUNDS RAISED LOCALLY**

Balance of funds in hand at 1 Jan 1996		£5,416.56
Collected in 1996: Donations etc	£225.10	
Summer Fete	<u>890.89</u>	1,115.99
Collected in 1997: Donation		50.00
Collected in 1998: Summer Fete		<u>695.46</u>
		7,278.01

## **GRANTS**

Llandaff DBF	£1,500.00	
Vale Council	5,000.00	
Rep. Body of Church in Wales	1,500.00	
Historic Churches Preservation Trust	1,850.00	
CADW: Amounts received	£13,093.00	
Amount due ( note 1 )	<u>2,237.00</u>	<u>15,330.00</u>
		<u>25,180.00</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b><u>£32,458.01</u></b>

## **MAIN CONTRACT**

Paid to Contractor	£25,776.57	
Due to Contractor (See note 2)	<u>1,208.49</u>	
	26,985.06	
Paid to Architect	<u>3,481.06</u>	£30,466.12

## **ELECTRICAL CONTRACT**

Paid to Contractor	£2,928.77	
Paid to Architect	<u>690.90</u>	<u>3,619.67</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b><u>£34,085.79</u></b>

**NET DEFICIT (Expenditure less Income)** £1,627.78

Amount written off at 31 Dec 1997 ( i.e effectively, this is an amount paid out of ordinary Benefice Funds because it was not clear it could be covered by any further fund raising)

Balance of deficit at 30th June 1998 £687.21

## **NOTES;**

1. The Architect wrote to CADW on 6th April asking for this to be released: I have written to Architect again in last few days.
2. The final account sum quoted in the Architect's invoice for his fees is £22,966, which together with VAT equals £26,985.06. We have paid £25,776.57 so we still owe a retention plus VAT equal to £1,208.49. We did provide for it in the accounts, but the contractor has not yet claimed it, presumably because the Architect has not certified it. I have written to the Architect concerning this in the last few days.

Please call me if you have any query on the above.

Regards



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