

# St Dogmaels



## Action Plan

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Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
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# REVISED ST.DOGMAELS ACTION PLAN

*Prepared By*

**THE ST.DOGMAELS COMMUNITY**

*In Conjunction With*



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*THE COMMUNITY OF ST DOGMAELS MET ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2006 AT A COMMUNITY WORKSHOP TO REVIEW THE ACTION PLAN AND CELEBRATE PAST ACHIEVEMENTS. A NUMBER OF NEW PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE ACTION PLAN, ACHIEVEMENTS LISTED AND THE PROGRESS OF EXISTING PROJECTS NOTED. FOLLOWING CONSULTATION AND A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN OCTOBER 2007 THE REVISED ACTION PLAN WAS AGREED .*

## INTRODUCTION & WAY FORWARD

The intention of this Action Plan is to describe issues and ideas identified by residents which implemented over the next few years would improve the quality of life in the community by enhancing the appearance of the area, improving the economy, including tourism and agriculture, and strengthening and diversifying its attractions for all residents and visitors.



By preparing this community led Action Plan, which stresses the benefits that can be achieved through an integrated approach, it is hoped that public and private sector support and funding can be attracted to implement the various initiatives described in the Plan.

The various contributors to the Action Plan realise that progress can best be achieved through discussion and partnership as many of the proposals involve different land or property ownerships, separate interests and different sources of funding. Although some of the proposals are relatively small scale, they are likely to be of substantial benefit to significant groups within the resident population. In other instances the changes suggested are of a larger scale and may have major impact on a wider range of interests.

It is hoped that the projects described in this report will be achieved as quickly as practical with the various partners working in unison to design, fund and implement schemes. The Draft Action Plan invites potential partners to realise its various proposals.

A significant amount of funding has been allocated to the area under the EU Objective 1 scheme and it is hoped that this money can be utilised to finance a number of the projects identified. It is proposed that the community makes a bid for a Community Officer under the Objective 1 (Priority 3) funding, to work in the area to help implement the Action Plan proposals.

This plan was reviewed and updated by the St Dogmaels Community in October 2006.



## **BACKGROUND TO THE 2002 ACTION PLAN & REVIEW 2006**

In November 2002, St.Dogmaels Community Council invited PLANED (Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise and Development) to work with them to establish a Community Forum of local people, voluntary groups and associations to compile a Community Action Plan. The invitation stressed involvement by all ages and representatives of the various aspects of the community.

A series of *Community Visioning Exercises* were held in St. Dogmaels between November and December 2002 to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and skills within the community. This was followed by *Action Planning Workshops* with the aim of producing this Action Plan for circulation to the community.

In 2004 a community forum Cymdeithas Llandudoch was formed open to all members of the community to take forward the Action Plan and help to implement the projects identified. By 2006 considerable progress had been made by the community. Therefore it was decided in the summer of 2006 that a workshop would be arranged, for the Community of St Dogmaels to update and add new opportunities to the 2003 Action Plan. This would contribute to the long term sustainability of the community, look at ways projects could be implemented that would help them to become more self sufficient, healthy and energy conscious. The workshop would also strengthen community understanding and enthusiasm for sustainable living.

Invitations were sent to all households in the community, and posters were distributed to encourage a wide participation at the events.

### **REVIEWING ST DOGMAELS 2003 ACTION PLAN**

**The following lists the activities that have been achieved by the St Dogmaels community since the last Action Plan:**

- **The Sports Association – has been created to develop and promote the football field**
- **Alexandra Gardens – A design for the enhancement of the gardens has been created.**
- **Community buildings -**
  - **The Church Hall – improvements have been carried out to the building.**
  - **The Memorial Hall – work carried out to further enhance the building.**
- **Community Newsletter – a community newsletter has been set up**
- **Twinning Committee re-established**
- **A professional bilingual History leaflet – has been produced by the history group and describes local history.**
- **A Village Map has been created**
- **A Cambria Archaeology Historic Audit has been carried out**

- **A ‘Walking St Dogmaels Footpaths’ leaflet has been produced**
- **Pantomime – The Drama group has produced a pantomime most years.**
- **An Events Committee - has been formed and organises among other activities the festival week each year.**
- **Llwybrau Llandudoch – St Dogmaels Footpath Association has worked to make footpaths accessible eg replacing gates and stiles.**
- **Approximately 45 people participated in Japanese Knotweed eradication campaign.**
- **The Environment Group assisted in planting several hundred trees.**
- **Medieval Day – happens successfully each year and continues to be developed.**
- **Callun Arts - represents and promotes local artists and crafts people**
- **Drama Workshops – a series of drama workshops were run prior to the 2006 Medieval Day for young people**
- **A Local Business Directory – has been produced**
- **Wildlife Walks – a programme of walks through the year is available around St Dogmaels - led by members of the community**
- **Tourist Footpaths & Trails – extend these to include “heritage/nature/ghost” trails and identify walks with time/length descriptions.**

## **ST DOGMAELS COMMUNITY**

St Dogmaels (Llandudoch in Welsh) is a large village on the southern side of the River Teifi about one mile downstream from Cardigan. It comes under St. Dogmaels Community Council and the community area extends along the shore of the Teifi estuary to the sea and includes the hamlets of Cippyn and Poppit Sands.

The physical form of St Dogmaels village could be likened to an amphitheatre with the river as its stage and the houses as its audience perched on a semi-circle of hillsides rising steeply from the riverbank. It is a spectacular setting and the river is seen as an important part of its heritage.

Near the village centre stand the ruins of a Norman abbey and, adjoining these, are a mill pond teeming with ducks, a working watermill and the parish church. Beyond the abbey, undeveloped glebeland provides a rural heart to the village. The High Street sweeps uphill in a continuous curve and includes a number of elegant dwelling houses.

The long history of the village has revolved around the abbey, agriculture, fishing and sea faring. Today, the economy is mixed with tourism being the principal “industry”. Attractions for holidaymakers include Poppit Sands, a broad safe bathing beach about two miles from the village, and the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path which starts at Poppit Sands and runs for 180 miles to Amroth on the southern coast. The boundary of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park is about one mile from the village.

The village has three public houses with a fourth at Poppit Sands, and all serve meals. In addition there are a restaurant, a tea-room, a fish and chip shop with dining area and, at Poppit Sands, a beach café. Two significant businesses are a

builders' merchant and a garage. The latter is a large and successful garage. A village shop (mini-market), several builders, numerous farms, the water mill (flour milling) and miscellaneous small firms make up the business community.

There is a Baptist chapel and an Independent chapel in the village. There is another Baptist chapel at Cippyn. The Church in Wales parish church contains a fine Ogham stone, inscribed in both Latin and the ancient Irish Ogham script, which, in the nineteenth century, was instrumental in enabling various academics to decipher Ogham.

The village primary school is currently being enlarged as part of a programme of rationalisation i.e. closing outlying smaller schools.

## THE REVISED ACTION PLAN

### 1. COMMUNITY



#### Commentary

The community has identified a number of sites and community buildings that would benefit from an enhancement/upgrading programme. It is proposed that Alexandra Gardens should be developed into a pleasant amenity area which would include the existing football field and incorporate other possible sporting areas.

Enhancement of the High Street is already being planned and includes a proposal to underground cables and the Community Council is working with the relevant authorities to this end. Improvement works on pavements under the "Safe routes to schools" initiative are currently being undertaken. Sites for CCTV are also being investigated.

The Twinning Committee is working to re-establish, rebuild and re-launch the Twinning Link with Tredarzek in Brittany, by involving a wider range of people in the work of encouraging the "exchange of cultural, tourism, social and economic affairs" and "to develop mutual understanding, respect and friendship" between the two communities. (the Foot and Mouth outbreak halted the last visit). There is potential to share good ideas e.g. a school painted in bright colours seen on an earlier trip. Welsh and Breton share 800 words; there is also a St.Dogmaels Church in Brittany.

Improved communication has been identified as a priority. The community has a website which has a dedicated person to keep it up to date. The community newsletter is another way for information to be communicated between villagers, as well as to visitors.

#### Proposals

#### Ongoing:

- **The Memorial Hall** – Although a lot of work has been carried out further work is still needed to enhance the hall.
- **Web Site** – continue to support and update the website. *The address is: www.stdogmaels.com*
- **Youth Activities** – seek to involve the Youth Club in the website and newsletter.
- **Surf Life Saving Club** – to maintain its success, younger members of the community need to be encouraged to join and learn new skills, and become prospective lifeguards for the beach during the summer season. *Nb letter*

#### To be Undertaken:

- **Y Pinog** - it is proposed to develop this area for use as a base for the Rowing Club taking due regard of the fact that this is an important feeding area for birds.
- **CCTV** - investigation of CCTV and other methods of security are being undertaken by the Community Council.
- **St. Dogmaels Learning Community** – investigate the possibility of locally delivered training in traditional and practical skills to complement many of the activities identified in the Action Plan.

#### New Proposals (2006)

- **Alexander Gardens** – following the designs for Alexander Gardens enhance the village green, improve the footways and signage to Mermaid, and create better access to Blessing Stone and landing stage.
- **Support the Sports Association in developing the Football Field**
- **Twinning** – Support the Twinning Committee to re-establish the link with Brittany.
- **Welcome packs for Newcomers** - a “Welcome Information Pack” for new residents and visitors to the area has been suggested.
- **Community Newsletter** – continue to support the newsletter and encourage linking it to the website.
- **Support the Drama Group**

## 2. HERITAGE & CULTURE

### Commentary

Following the 2003 Action Plan the community have researched and written a Heritage Leaflet. The community wish to further their work and research. The village website should contain a regularly updated account of the group’s work. The aim is to undertake a range of activities, including developing a permanent exhibition space and an exhibition for use by local organisations. Material for exhibitions will be collected and kept as a resource that can be displayed in village events - eg. local Eisteddfod, Carnival, Regatta.



The Hanes Llandocho (History of St Dogmaels) initiative was launched in the autumn of 2000 to create a Visitor Centre (the Coach House Project) for the Norman Abbey, the village and the surrounding countryside. A feasibility

study, commissioned by the Community Council and Menter Preseli, made outline proposals for the Centre.

With the encouragement of CADW (guardian of the Abbey), St Dogmaels Community Council, Menter Preseli, and Pembrokeshire County Council, Hanes Llandocho became a trust, gaining charitable status as a company limited by guarantee. The objectives of Hanes Llandocho, set out in its constitution, are to “maintain, repair, restore, preserve and improve for the public benefit the village of Llandudoch and its surrounds”. The Trust are now able to start the building phase of the Coach House project.

A high light in the St Dogmaels calendar is the long established Eisteddfod. This annual week long event continues to go from strength to strength, attracting stars from the world of music to perform. To ensure the festivals continued success the community wish to strengthen support and explore the possibilities to widen the scope of activities including such things as Art and History as this sort of event can stimulate a great deal of interest in local culture.

The community has identified the importance of heritage walks and trails within St. Dogmaels, and propose to work with neighbouring communities, such as Moylegrove and Glanrhyd, so that the network of footpaths opened and maintained by Llwybrau Llandudoch can become part of a wider network of footpaths. There is a need to link up with Carn Ingli walks and provide an inland path from Moylegrove to Nevern and Newport.

## **Proposals**

### **Ongoing:**

- **Pursue completion of the Coach House project** - this already has the backing of the village through public meetings and consultation processes.
- **Develop permanent exhibition space** - in the Coach House (Visitor Centre) development and in another public place
- **Exhibitions** - develop a bank of Welsh and English presentations/exhibitions that are suitable for use in other organisations' meetings (e.g. Merched y Wawr, Wives Club, Youth Club), also for use by the village school. A rolling exhibition programme would ensure that villagers and visitors will always have access to local historical information. Utilise existing empty shop windows, pubs, churches, chapels, halls, in the programme of exhibitions.
- **Audio & Video memorabilia** - audio and video equipment could be used to collect the memories of people who have lived in the village all their lives, involving the Youth Club members who have their own video camera but assistance would be required in production of the film. Seek to involve primary school in project.
- **Historical Photographs** - a bank of digitised historical photographs of the area could be created with interpretive material, otherwise all the valuable memories and interpretation that goes with them will be lost.
- **Local Eisteddfod** – *strengthen the support for the village Eisteddfod* so that it develops as a respected event and a festival of arts and culture.
- **Annual Pantomime** – Continue to support production of the pantomimes and encourage more young people to become involved

### To be Undertaken:

- **Holy Well** – possible topic for History group research in future.

### New Proposals (2006)

- **Support the re-establishment of the Heritage Group** - to be called 'Cofio Llandudoch'
- **Research information on the Pergrin Mermaid and St Dogfaels.** The information can be displayed on panels or in a leaflet so that it is available for tourists and local people.

## 3. ENVIRONMENT

### Commentary

It was generally felt that improvements in the village appearance would help the tourism industry in the village. Much has been done recently to enhance it, but more is required. It was agreed that further investigation is needed to explore opportunities to enhance the river as an amenity and attraction, whilst respecting its high environmental value. A study should be commissioned for this purpose. The TEEMI Estuary Management Plan and the current Teifi Estuary Objective 1 proposals should be taken into account.

### Proposals

#### Ongoing:

- **Identify missing footpath links** (existing rights of way which are blocked or impassable) and liaise with landowners/local authorities/National Parks to investigate the possibility and timescale of opening them.
- **Walks around St Dogmaels** - maps should be available on panels around the village with route maps and booklets, widely accessible in local shops, pubs and holiday cottages.
- **The Pembrokeshire Coast Path should begin at St Dogmaels car park** - visitors would then be attracted to start their walk along the coast from Cardigan and St Dogmaels. Co-operate with the organisations and authorities that are seeking to create footpath links along the river between Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.
- **Improving footpath access along the river** - subject to the findings of a feasibility study and discussions with relevant authorities. The previous pathway from Cardigan has long since fallen into disrepair and is inaccessible.
- **Investigate the development of the Glanteifion to Poppit Sands route** – this would involve obtaining rights/permissions to enable visitors to gain walking access to Poppit and the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path. This would enable easier access on foot to the marshes and sand dunes (an existing SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest). The purpose of the project is to provide a community amenity and bring tourists into the village. Due regard would have to be given to wildlife and flora.



- **A Cardigan to Poppit Sands route** - would be a major tourist attraction giving visitors access to sites of important historical and scientific significance. It would enable local ornithologists to give guided tours to visitors. This is now part of Pembrokeshire County Council's Countryside Strategy.

#### To be undertaken:

- **Village & Business Property Enhancement Scheme** – encourage local residents and businesses to take a pride in the external appearance of their property. Encourage them to use hanging baskets and planters to brighten the village. The *Village in Bloom* competition could be re-instated with the whole village encouraged to take a collective pride in the village appearance.
- **Lighting** - lighting design and type – to avoid pollution - should be included within any enhancement scheme plans.
- **Interpretation Notice Boards** – around the village and river areas - providing key information on the history and wildlife in the area and how to access it (similar to those in use at Cilgerran). They could be situated at key points in the village and along the new walkways by the river.
- **Signage** – signs need to be erected to the river and on the river. This would indicate to visitors the places of interest and the attractions available in the village e.g. village walks, amenities and special features such as the Mill, the Abbey, and the walking routes. (There are lessons to be learnt from the good signage and development of the river frontage at Cilgerran). The purposes of clearer signage are improved use of village amenities and greater attractions for visitors. Signage should also be displayed on the river frontages to indicate maximum speed of craft (4 knots) and restricted access for certain classes of craft (jet boats and water skiers). This would promote the tranquillity of the river for users (local people and visitors) and wildlife.
- **The River** - the river has been in a state of decline for a number of years. The community would like to see the sea accessible to local fishermen and all river users at most states of the tide. Dredging may be necessary, but there needs to be further information from the TEEMI study before any proposals can be put forward. Care would have to be taken to ensure no environmental damage.
- **Making the river more accessible for boating** - create a pontoon jetty at Netpool and extend the slipway at the Glanteifion. These would improve access to the river, be a tourist attraction and also a business/employment opportunity.
- **River education** - encourage local fishermen to give demonstrations to local people, children and visitors. Cymdeithas Cadw'r Sán/local fishermen could be approached to assist with this project - Seine fishermen have provided demonstrations in the past. They could be encouraged to do so again with a contribution to their license fee. Demonstration of all types of river skills could be organised for schools, visitors and locals - seine, coracles, lifeboat, canoeing, fly fishing and so on, to provide education and act as a tourist



attraction. Costs involved would be minimal - local people could be encouraged to share their skills.

- **Cleaning & Tidying** - form a village river patrol who will take responsibility for overseeing the area, organisation of volunteer teams, providing the group with lifting gear, ropes, boats etc and supervision of the activity. Work could be undertaken by voluntary groups, in liaison with Afon Teifi environment group. The purpose of this proposal is to enhance the visual amenity of the St Dogmael's river frontage.



#### **New Proposals (2006)**

- **Develop facilities for recycling green materials and cardboard** – encourage composting and ask for Pembrokeshire County Council to provide compost bins.
- **Seek Clarification as to whether St Dogmaels Community can use the Pen y Parc site for recycling.**

## **4. TOURISM, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT**

### **Commentary**

The community believes that encouraging visitors into the village is very important e.g. through better signage, leaflets, updated website etc. Information boards (maps), trails, the local newsletter would all help around the village. It is recognised that better signage to, and in, St Dogmaels is absolutely essential.

Attractions for visitors need to be developed and advertised. More use should be made of the river and the opportunities it provides. It is relatively neglected at present and requires some co-ordinated thinking by all interested parties. Suggestions include boats for hire at Netpool jetty and boating on the river - accessible from either St. Dogmaels or Cardigan. Hanes Llandudoch are exploring maritime history projects that could involve the river and would provide added tourist attractions.

Organising themed activities such as a Mediaeval Day are of prime importance to the community and the formation of an Events Committee would help to turn ideas into action. Other activities suggested are: children's workshops, local produce, ghost walks and trails and Shakespearean productions.

### **Proposals**

#### **Ongoing:**

- **Medieval Day** – continue to support and develop the Medieval Day
- **Brown signs** - submit an application for signs to the village, and internal ones, once in the village.
- **Tourist Attractions** - promote the development of the range of tourist activities in the community, especially when the weather is inclement - for example the Coach House Visitor Centre project.

### **To be undertaken:**

- **Revive the Regatta** - incorporating coracle demonstrations, fish dish tasting, seine fishing demonstrations, boat-building and so on would help employment/local economy.
- **St Dogmaels Carnival** – local people want to continue the carnival, but need more support.
- **Local Produce** – there is interest in promoting local craft and produce and investigating the feasibility of a local craft/produce market with links to local events such as Medieval Day. Webley Car Park could be used as a possible venue. A lot of commitment must be shown, but it is certainly not impossible. Local producers would be approached as well as well-known “names”.
- **“You are here” interpretation boards** (like Cilgerran model) - possibly undercover in main car park. Include maps and walks. Indications on where more information is available in the village on different sites. A possible second site is at Poppit Sands car park.
- **Tourist Footpaths & Trails** – extend these to include “heritage/nature/ghost” trails and identify walks with time/length descriptions.
- **Developing river opportunities** - the community values the river socially, recreationally, environmentally and economically. Stimulating sailing and boating in the area and providing a wide range of recreational uses of the river is seen of great economic importance. The river should be an enormous tourist attraction. The St. Dogmaels community identify this as the single most important development they would wish to see. It would make the development of a boat hire facility possible and improve boating access between Cardigan and St. Dogmaels. There is a possibility that if grants materialise, “sustainable” fishing could provide an attraction for tourists and provide employment. This could stimulate the need for maritime services. Access to water/fuel at this point could also serve the local fishing and boating fleet. There is no water or fuel accessible between Aberystwyth and Fishguard. This would encourage visiting boats to moor, and visit the village for meals and entertainment. The organisations and authorities involved are working together for a constructive outcome.
- **Local B&B and Guest House accommodation** – would need to respond to resulting demand.

### **New Proposals (2006)**

- **Investigate organising themed weeks to attract visitors to the locality**
- **Development of the Llandudoch River** – create more facilities for leisure users on the river including boat hire, an easily accessible fuel point for boats, extended mooring area, organising a river festival and exploring the heritage and history of the river as well as enhanced access for all to the river and river bank. The project would also include potential for accommodation and food providers as tourism opportunities increased as well as offering business initiatives such as hire of bicycles to visitors. This would improve the sustainability of the local economy.

## **5. TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS**

### **Commentary**

Local people agree that a traffic-calming scheme is essential to ensure the safety of locals and visitors, and would also improve the environment generally. This type of

system could be installed in Pilot Street and High Street, with structures designed to reduce traffic speed throughout the village - especially on the road in from Cardigan where it enters the village, and also on the hill out of the village from Glanteifion to Poppit Sands. Parking on the roadside in narrow streets is dangerous and causes traffic to swing out into oncoming vehicles. Alternative parking sites need to be established and yellow lines extended at high risk zones.

## **Proposals**

### **To be undertaken:**

- **Investigate traffic calming scheme**
- **Research the possibility of having a ward Community bus**
- **Identify off-road parking sites**
- **Pavements** – a complete pavement from St.Dogmaels to Cardigan is needed.
- **Cycle routes** – *investigate potential for cycle routes.*
- **Request police enforcement** - *regarding speeding traffic.*