

Trefin



Action Plan

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COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

TREFIN ACTION PLAN

Prepared by

TREFIN COMMUNITY

In conjunction with



(PEMBROKESHIRE LOCAL ACTION NETWORK FOR
ENTERPRISE AND DEVELOPMENT)

Contents	Page
Background to the Action Plan	2
The Action Plan Area	2
History	3
Action Plan Proposals	4
A. Community Facilities	4
B. Community Activities	6
C. Communications	8
D. Environment (including rights of way)	9
E. Heritage	11
F. Housing	13
G. Employment & Business (including tourism)	13
H. Transport, Roads and Traffic	14
I. Energy, Waste Disposal and Recycling	16
Implementation / Activity Groups	17

This Action Plan was agreed at the public meeting held on 13th July 2005, following the circulation of the Draft Action Plan to households in the Trefin community.

BACKGROUND TO THE ACTION PLAN

Earlier this year representatives of Trefin Community and of PLANED discussed proposals to prepare an Action Plan for the village. On 23rd March 2005 Workshop 1 of the Community Visioning Exercise was held and on 13th April Workshop 2. The results have formed the basis for the first draft of the Action Plan.

The intention is to involve all ages and representatives from the various sections of the community in the preparation, adoption and implementation of the Plan.

THE ACTION PLAN AREA

Trefin lies near the north coast of Pembrokeshire on the country road between Llanrhian and Abercastle. It is about six miles east of St Davids and 8 miles west of Fishguard.

"Trefin is a linear village, a typical medieval 'planted' settlement just inland from the north coast with a broad verged and treeless main street flanked by rendered and colour-washed houses, mostly late 19th Century, rising to a rocky triangular green at the eastern end with Capel Trefin just beyond.



It is likely that Trefin was founded, or re-founded, in the late C12 or C13 by one of the entrepreneurial Norman Bishops, hence the Bishop's Palace, the scant remains of which are possibly located at Park Court.

"Aberfelin, which lies about 0.5 miles to the west is a small rocky cove with the ruins of a mill and a row of 19th Century single storey cottages." (Source - The Buildings of Wales - Pembrokeshire).

The whole of the coastal area between Porthgain and Abercastle lies within the area of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The Park Authority is therefore the Planning Authority.

Trefin, which lies within Llanrhian Community Council area, has a population of about 250.

HISTORY

There is evidence of a Stone Age Neolithic cromlech near Longhouse farm which dates from 3,000 BC. The cromlech is known as Carreg Samson as legend claims that this is the burial place of the Celtic Saint Samson who came from Tenby to convert the locals and then sailed on to continue his work in Ireland.

Trefin was also an Episcopal manor and the site of a Bishop's Palace which dates back to 1327. It is believed that the residence was far more extensive and richer than the palaces at St Davids and Lamphey. Bishop Richard Martin lived there in 1482 when Richard III was King of England, it is thought that the Bishop had a fine mansion and a large vault, similar to those under the palace at St Davids, but by 1856 only fragments of walls existed and now there remain only irregular surface markings on a nearby farm site as to its locations.

In the late 1860's a quarry was started at Trwyn Llwyd off the coast of Trefin which was where many of the villagers worked. Other villagers at that time were fishermen, therefore the bay was very important as it was used for fishing and trading boats. The Mill at Aberfelin served the workers and villagers as it was where they could buy their wheat for bread and barley for cattle and pigs.

By the early 1900s there were many shops in Trefin offering facilities and services to the villagers; there were pubs, grocery shops, hardware stores, a cobbler's shop, a newsagents, a bakery, clothes store & tailor shop, a fish and chip shop and a petrol station.

In 1887 the quarry at Trwyn Llwyd closed and throughout the 20th century other neighbouring quarries closed and there were less and less fishermen. Transport had also improved by the 20th century which meant cheap grain started being imported from overseas and milled by much larger mills in the towns. As a result Trefin Mill closed in 1918.

The lack of employment in the village has led to the closure of many of the shops in Trefin and also the village school. The businesses that still remain serve recreational purposes for tourists and the community. Therefore there is a need to implement the proposals outlined in the Action Plan in order to maintain its sense of place as well as the health and wellbeing of the people who live here.

ACTION PLAN PROPOSALS

The production of an Action Plan will give Trefin an agreed programme for community development which if implemented will improve the environment, heritage and infrastructure of the village and the social life of its residents.

A. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Commentary

The village has a post office (allowing some banking activities), an art gallery with a tea room which is open from Easter to October, a tea shop which sells woollen goods and serves light meals during the summer, and the Ship Inn.

The village hall and Trefin Youth Hostel now occupy the former primary school. A small car park serves the building and Calvinistic Methodist Chapel. There is also a Baptist Chapel in the village. Craft fairs, collector fairs and parish council meetings are held in the hall.



To the rear of the village hall are

- A games area surrounded by low walls and netting and marked out for various sports, including tennis, with recessed goal areas. Hockey and basketball used to be played in this area. Flood lighting surrounds the court.
- A children's play area which has a rubber tile floor and some equipment including a spring horse, a wooden climbing frame and slide and rubber tyre swings.
- A smaller and abandoned court (bowling green).
- A small and apparently unused brick pavilion (with storage, toilets and changing facilities).

- Between the courts and play area are sections of gardens with occasional benches.

A footpath runs around the area linking the village centre to a number of houses.

A Doctor's Surgery is held in nearby Chapel House for an hour on Thursday afternoons.

A small neighbourhood shop is located about a mile to the south of Trefin near the junction with the A487.

Proposals

1. Investigate opportunities for improving local shopping provision e.g. opening a village shop (reflecting the presence of a shop near Penparc and the Post Office in Trefin).
2. Increase use of the village hall.
3. Install, possibly in conjunction with the YHA, Internet facilities in the village hall and create a community internet cafe.

Sport & Recreation

Upgrading the existing sports and play facilities is a priority in Trefin. Proposals are as follows:

4. Develop, possibly in conjunction with users of the village hall/YHA, improved facilities for sports in Trefin; including -
 - Revitalise the tennis club and re-erect the basketball hoops to encourage multi-use.
 - Secure the flooring and refurbish the children's play park.
 - Restore or replace the pavilion by the play area and install equipment that would appeal to older children - possibly swings.
 - Increase the use of the pavilion and use it as an indoor facility for children and a youth club, one possibility is to purchase a pool table. Alternatively, should there be no further use for the site building, demolish and extend the grassed area.
5. Identify a site/re-open the former site for a recreation field for football, hockey and rugby and teach, through the proposed youth club, the basic sport skills.



6. Appoint a (voluntary) Caretaker(s) of the sports facilities and involve children/young people in improvements to these facilities.
8. Form a youth club to be based in the village hall.
9. Approach the Ship Inn to see if the owners would be interested in sponsoring schemes to develop sports facilities and to support the Youth Club.

B. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Commentary

Trefin has a strong sense of community and of continuity which generates a sense of belonging. The use of the Welsh language adds to the distinctiveness of the area and there is a good cross section of age groups. The village is a friendly, quiet and safe place to live.

Residents enjoy walking the coast path and other routes in the area, swimming at Aberfelin cove, cycling, horse riding, playing rugby and football, attending Tai Chi classes and participating in the reading group. Included in the local societies are a community lunch club, an Arts and Crafts group and French lessons. Trefin residents are members of Historical Societies at Fishguard and St Davids, they travel to St Davids for swimming, Cylch Ti a Fi and Merched yr Wawr and to the gym at Fishguard or Haverfordwest where there is also a bowling club. The Ship Inn with its pool table and darts team provides a social focus. Some residents belong to Hoelion Wyth. Computer lessons are held at Croesgoch.



Residents form part of the congregations at the churches in Llanrhian and Llanhowell. Ysgol Gân in the Methodist Chapel holds the annual Cymanfa Ganu. The Community Association – GTI (Gwelliant Trefin Improvements) plays an important role in developing the Trefin community.

Over recent years however there has been a decline in the number of locally available services. Examples include the closure of the primary school, Trefin Youth Club and the shop in the village and a

reduction in the frequency of services held at the two chapels. There is some concern that, with fewer young people, the rise in the number of second homes and a general trend in rural areas for smaller outlets to close, the number of local services currently enjoyed will further be reduced. Particular concerns relate to the post office and the shop near Penparc.

It is feared that such trends will weaken the sense of community, an effect which is most likely to be felt by the elderly and infirm.

Use of the Welsh language has declined, together with the associated activities of church and chapel and the aelwyd.

As the nearest youth club is at Llanrhian, about a mile to the west, there is a desire to have a centre in the village for young people on which a programme of events/activities could be based. Improved facilities for rugby and football would also be appreciated together with opportunities for young people to take part in Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes.



Whilst Trefin is regarded as having a low incidence of crime, there have been instances of vandalism and bad language particularly around the play area.

A number of residents are members of environmental/conservation groups, including Friends of the Earth. Some grow organic vegetables and are involved in tree planting. A conservation group clears the stream, from the bridge to the Cwm, improves the path by the phone box and tidies grass verges.

Proposals

Ensure that the GTI meets on a regular basis to support implementation of the Action Plan to focus the energies and skills of residents to maintain and develop the community.

Using existing venues, such as the village hall, or developing new, The GTI and its sub-groups will be responsible for creating opportunities to meet and encourage local people to develop new experiences; for example

- Create an additional mother and toddler group in Trefin.
- Reform the Youth Club and create a programme of youth activities including revival of the "Aelwyd" (the Urdd youth group) and promotion of youth awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Schemes. Request the existing church based Youth Club at Llanrhian to assist.
- Encourage interested locals to start a rugby club and identify a pitch and erect posts.
- Form a Trefin choir, singing group, and/or musical club with small orchestra support, possibly based on Ysgol Gân and the annual Cymanfa Ganu in the Methodist Chapel; revive Cawl a Chên. Form a Welsh folk group and organise Welsh folk and barn dancing.
- Run further education classes in the daytime as well as the evening, such as welsh language classes, meditation, aerobics, yoga and computer classes.
- Start a smoking cessation class/group.
- Organise a tennis club to play in the restored courts.
- Revive a bowling club to make use of the bowling green.
- Establish a gardening club.
- Run special events, in particular revive St Martin's Fair and design it to attract both residents and out of season visitors - a social event that would have some economic benefits.
- Hold more village parties and get-togethers.
- Develop a seaside football event.
- Organise a bingo/quiz/karaoke night at the pub.

C. COMMUNICATIONS

Commentary

There is a local notice board at the bus stop with details of events but few read them. Notices can also be displayed in the post office, gallery and pub. Flyers for events are sometimes distributed around the village and County Echo covers local news. Although Broadband is now available residents feel that there is currently not enough communication in the village about meetings and events and there is no community newsletter to facilitate the process.



Proposals

- The GTI to hold regular open discussion meetings with locals to communicate ideas, possibly in the Ship Inn.
- Prepare a quarterly newsletter similar to the old paper bro - Pentigili - a key proposal that could kick start the Action Plan and encourage people to participate in projects identified in the Action Plan.
- Develop a Trefin web site.

D. ENVIRONMENT, INCLUDING RIGHTS OF WAY

Commentary

Trefin and the adjacent countryside and coast lie within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The village and its setting are regarded as very attractive and unspoiled. The beach at Aberfelin is stony with caves in the surrounding cliffs.

Proximity to the coast and the exposed situation has resulted in a fairly treeless landscape although there are some attractive woods in local valleys. Llangloffan Nature Reserve is also not far from Trefin.

The long distance Pembrokeshire Coast National Trail, which offers spectacular views both inland and across the cliffs, passes through Aberfelin on its route between Porthgain and Abercastle with a link footpath to the village. Whilst the path to the cove is wheelchair accessible as far as the mill and stone bridge, access to the beach is over the rocks. Footpaths and green lanes in the area require occasional maintenance/improvements to encourage their use.



The general form of the main street, the village green and outcrops of rock as well as artefacts such as the well, slate steps and ironwork (for example the street names), give Trefin a unique identity. A Conservation Area, which encompasses the majority of the village, was designated by PCNPA in 1977. Members of the community belong to a Conservation Group, while others belong to the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and Friends of the Earth. A number of residents are members of environmental groups, including Friends of the Earth. Some grow organic

vegetables and are involved in tree planting. The Conservation Group meets every Thursday and clears the stream, improves the path by the phone box and tidies grass verges.

Many people within the community have contributed to enhancing their environment by:

- Tidying the stream area and grass verges
- Protecting the village green and looking after the garden by the seats
- A number of benches have been placed around the village.

Some of the youth in Trefin belong to St Davids youth forum and have been involved in enhancing St Davids.

Although the area is generally clean, concern is expressed on some aspects of the environment. These concerns include water quality, the presence of litter and the use of plastic instead of the traditional wooden window frames and fouling by dogs.

Proposals

1. Discuss with PCNPA a possible programme for improvements to local footpaths:
 - Improve pedestrian access to Aberfelin beach a priority proposal.
2. Strengthen the existing Conservation Group by forming an environment group, or under the existing conservation group, encourage more people to participate to create more green environment in the community and prepare a programme of enhancement works including
 - A village garden
 - Planting appropriate additional trees.
 - Involvement in footpath improvement proposals.
 - Installation of dog fouling bins.
 - Improvement of access to Aberfelin beach – working closely with PCNPA.
 - Moving the post box next to the bus shelter or turning it around and putting it by the roadside.
3. Start a support group to develop the following campaigns:
 - Keep Trefin litter free, particularly because of the various stray animals.

- Deal responsibly with dog waste (a priority scheme). The environment group is to undertake a public notice programme on fouling by dogs, including
 - 'Bag it and bin it'
 - additional litter bins
 - Placing additional 'no dogs' signs in the park.

E. HERITAGE

Commentary

Many villagers have grown up and spent their whole life in the village and as a result have a wealth of shared knowledge about the heritage and culture of the community. This knowledge has been contributed by individuals from the village to successfully publish a guide to the village in 1997. The guide provides information and stories about the buildings of Trefin.

Trefin was once an Episcopal manor and the site of a Bishops Palace. The residence was once far more extensive and richer than the palaces at St Davids and Lamphey with a large vault similar to those under St Davids Palace. The area, believed to be at Parc Court, is now occupied by farm buildings and yards but irregular surface markings may indicate the site.

Llanrhian Church and the chapels in the area are the larger sites or buildings of particular interest in the area. Other buildings of architectural or historic value include the older village cottages and the Ship Inn. Nearby Carreg Samson is a Neolithic burial chamber and it is claimed to be the burial place of the Celtic Saint Samson.



Many of the houses in Trefin are built directly onto rock which lies below the surface of the village, however in the centre of the village the rock protrudes on a visible outcrop on the village green near to the village pump – the rock is known as Carreg Groes. Part of the rock is in the shape of a seat which used to be the setting for the installation of Trefin's 'mock mayor' which took place every 22nd November on St Martin's Day at St Martin's Fair. In addition to being the mayor's seat it is thought that Carreg Groes stands as a symbol of a battle fought in bygone days.

The coast is also an important part of Trefin's heritage as drawings of vessels have been found on the walls of an outdoor toilet in the village left by some of the many sea captains that used to live in the village. The coastal location meant that many villagers were fishermen and quarrymen who used the bay for fishing and extracting slate and lime from the quarries nearby.



The mill at Aberfelin beach is a ruin now but less than 100 years ago it was the main industrial influence in the area for 500 years it was vital to life in Trefin. Villagers brought sacks of wheat to be milled into flour for bread and cartloads of barley to be ground into winter feed for cattle and pigs.

Of a smaller scale but nevertheless of local importance are the village pump, the slate steps and iron railings.

The Welsh language is also very strong in Trefin and the village has links with Papur Bro Welsh "Llien Gwyn", the language is evidence of its heritage and the village's community spirit. Locals feel that the language and community spirit has survived as a result of traditions such as potato farming.

Proposals

Set up a Heritage Group to look at local history and the distinctiveness of the community, possibly hold exhibitions to celebrate this and develop projects e.g.:

- Replace the current BT phone box with a traditional 'red' BT 'phone box - a priority proposal.
- Undertake a controlled dig at the site of the Bishop's Palace.
- Erect interpretation panels explaining the history of different sites within the village e.g. Carreg Groes, The Mill at Aberfelin, Carreg Samson, Bishop's Palace, Trwyn Llwyd Quarry.
- Revive St Martin's Fair and design it to attract both residents and out of season visitors - a social event that would have some economic benefits.
- Develop and promote stronger links with the Welsh language such as the Miri Medi Festival in Croesgoch.

F. HOUSING

Commentary

Trefin it is still a local village and there is a concern that there is a shortage of housing for local young people. House prices have recently increased and local and first time buyers can no longer afford to purchase a property and there is fear that young people will start moving away from the area. Problems are compounded by the lack of council housing and too many holiday homes.

Proposals

Discuss with the housing authority (PCC) and with PCNPA (Planning Authority) ways of providing affordable housing for local people and of restricting the number of holiday homes.

G. EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS (INCLUDING TOURISM)

Commentary

There are few local employment opportunities, especially for well paid jobs. Current employers include the seasonal static caravan site, Cottons the Builders, the local pub and cafes, B & B, farms and Pembrokeshire Care Ltd. A children's book publisher works from the village. Owners of the holiday homes employ cleaners and gardeners.

Other businesses include a post office, an art gallery and tea room, a craft shop & handweaving centre. A small neighbourhood shop is located about a mile to the south of Trefin near the junction with the A487. A Doctor's Surgery is held in nearby Chapel House for an hour on Thursday afternoons. Prescriptions are delivered and given out by volunteers every Thursday between 6-7pm at the Surgery.



Newspapers and milk are delivered and fish (Mondays), butcher (Wednesdays) a grocer, and greengrocer (Thursdays) call, the Tesco van delivers pre-ordered food and free range eggs are available.

The village is served by the travelling library which calls every third Friday of the month and a hairdresser calls.

The Youth Hostel, which is open from Easter to October, attracts a variety of visitors to Trefin - some of whom spend money in the village.

Proposals

With the support of the GTI

- Provide IT training in Trefin to assist local employers and to increase home based employment opportunities.
- Encourage local premises (café, village hall) to install an Internet point for village use and develop an Internet Café.
- Investigate opportunities for improving local shopping provision e.g. opening a village shop (reflecting the presence of a shop near Penparc and the Post Office in Trefin).
- Seek help and advice to encourage more small business start-ups.

H. TRANSPORT, ROADS AND TRAFFIC

Commentary

The 411 bus service from Haverfordwest to Fishguard via St Davids calls at Trefin six times a day from Monday to Saturday although the mid afternoon service runs on Saturdays and during the school holidays only and the late afternoon is on schooldays only.



Buses from Fishguard to St Davids call earlier and later at Trefin, the first being at 7.18 and the last 18.19.

A recent and welcome innovation has been the 404 Strumble Shuttle from Newport/Fishguard to St Davids (one of the group of Greenways coastal bus services). During the summer the service calls at Trefin three times a day 7 days a week and follows a route which hugs the coast. During the winter the service runs on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays twice in each direction.

Whilst the route was planned to improve access by visitors to the coast and countryside by public transport, the service has proved to be beneficial to those living in the area. All services are run as 'hail and ride' and there is a stone bus stop in the village centre.

Apart from the 411 and 404 there is little opportunity for those without easy access to a car to use public transport to travel to destinations other than along the A487.

The volume of traffic passing through Trefin is increasing, some of which is travelling too fast for the nature of the village.



Although there is parking space in the car park that leads to the leisure facilities the number of vehicles trying to park is causing difficulties, especially during the summer period and particularly around the road junctions near the village pump.

For pedestrians there is intermittent street lighting and more recent lamp posts are of a 'conservation' design. Pavements are sporadic through the village and it is felt that the kerbs should be lowered in places for the infirm. It has been identified that little provision has been made for road drainage.

Many of the local country roads are suitable for walking or cycling therefore Trefin is on the National Cycle Route No 4 which generally follows the coastline. The Youth Hostel incorporates cycle storage facilities.

Proposals

The following proposals to be discussed in conjunction with PCC and PCNPA.

- Formulate with other communities on the 411 and Strumble Shuttle routes, proposals for revised timetables which would improve delivery of the services so that the Strumble Shuttle does not run at similar times to the normal bus service.
- Investigate why the last bus service from St Davids calls at Penparc and not Trefin.
- Lower kerbs in Bryn y Derwydd.
- Upgrade the street lighting in a sensitive manner, specifically at the north end of the village.

- Investigate the possibility of improving pedestrian safety through the village.
- Improve drainage of surface water from highways.
- Introduce speed restrictions and other traffic calming measures through the village.

I. ENERGY, WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING

Commentary

The only recycling facility is at the site near to the Ship Inn and it only caters for bottles and tins. Recycling of paper can only be done as part of a trip to St Davids.



Whilst there are public toilets in the village, including disabled, they are closed during the winter months.

Some back garden composting and organic gardening takes place and St Davids School runs an Eco Club.

Proposals

1. Install a community windmill to generate electricity - progress this priority scheme in conjunction with PCNPA and Eco Centre advice.
2. Expand the recycling facilities to include a paper bank (a priority proposal) and, if feasible, plastics.
3. Install a litter bin at the recycling facility site.
4. Identify a site for composting on a community basis.
5. Liaise with PCC to open the public toilets throughout the year as part of efforts to extend the tourist season.
6. Keep Trefin litter free, particularly because of the various stray animals.
7. Undertake a public notice programme on fouling by dogs, including
 - 'Bag it and bin it'
 - additional litter bins
 - Placing additional 'no dogs' signs in the park.
8. Dealing responsibly with dog waste is a priority scheme.

IMPLEMENTATION / ACTIVITY GROUPS

In order that the Action Plan can be progressed effectively it is proposed to form special interest Working Groups within the Community Association - GTI. The Groups would, in consultation with the relevant providers, for example the Rights of Way Authority, concentrate on preparing more detailed action programmes giving priority and focus to those proposals which are capable of early implementation.

The Groups could be centred on

- Community activities
- Community facilities
- Communications
- Environment, energy waste disposal and recycling
- Employment & Business
- Heritage
- Housing
- Transport and traffic

It is important that the Groups would:

- Work within the agreed Action Plan and the Community Association - GTI,
- Work with existing groups and organisations,
- Meet on a regular basis,
- Keep the broader community informed of progress.