

Trefeglwys

SN 9704 9061
15756

Introduction

Trefeglwys is located on the B4569, a road linking the larger settlements of Caersws and Llanidloes, some 7km north of the latter. The village occupies the bottom of a south-facing slope above a small river, the Afon Trannon, where its narrow valley broadens into a flood plain. The church is virtually the lowest-lying of the buildings in the village. The historic core lies at the southern end of the modern village, more recent development being further north.

This brief report examines Trefeglwys' emergence and development up to 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information and particularly at the origins and nature of the buildings within it.

The accompanying map is offered only as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core provides a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement might have developed, based on our interpretation of the evidence currently to hand. It is not an immutable boundary line, and may need to be modified as new discoveries are made. The map does not show those areas or buildings that are statutorily designated, nor does it pick out those sites or features that are specifically mentioned in the text.

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. Numbers in brackets are primary record numbers used in the HER to provide information that is specific to individual sites and features. These can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

The earliest form of the place-name appears as *Trefeglus* in the period 1143-51 and simply means 'settlement with or containing a church'. Subsequent forms such as *Treff Eglwys* (1291) are no more than minor variants.

Recent research signals a mid-12th century foundation for the church at Trefeglwys. Neither the dedication to St Michael nor the shape of the churchyard would contradict this view. The question has also been raised as to whether there was an earlier cemetery on the site, but there is not a shred of evidence to support such a view.

The settlement's medieval history is not recorded. A manuscript map suggests that as late as 1769 there were very few houses here. Only Church Farm, the Red Lion Hotel (or buildings that proceeded them) and two cottages were depicted in addition to the church. Growth must have occurred soon after for by the middle of the 19th century most of the houses now around the church were in existence.

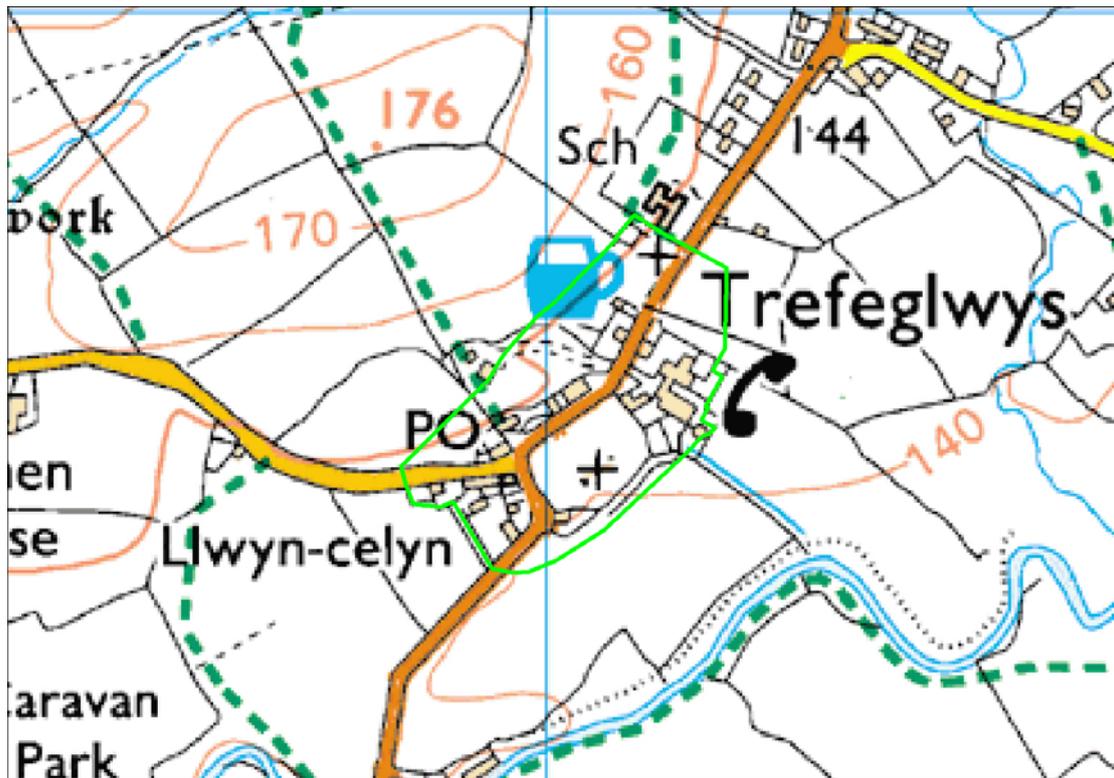
The heritage to 1750

St Michael's Church (7558) was rebuilt in 1864-5. A few of the materials from the earlier church were reused including the timber bell-frame and the bells, one of which is as early as the mid-15th century. Two standing stones (1781), supposedly removed from the churchyard

are now in the farmyard of Church Farm. Whether these have any prehistoric significance cannot be ascertained.

The churchyard (7559) is a large sub-rectangular enclosure much of which lies on the valley floor.

The Red Lion Hotel (21217) is described as a sub-medieval house of half-timbered construction. No date has been attributed to it but it does appear to be depicted on the 1769 estate map of Trefeglwys. In contrast the adjacent dwelling of Belle Vue (59304) on the north side of the churchyard is said to have been erected in the 17th century as a timber-framed house and re-fronted around 1800, yet it is not depicted on the map. Together with Church Farm which is also on the estate map, these constitute almost the entire housing stock in Trefeglwys in the later 18th century.



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2009. All rights reserved. Welsh Assembly Government. Licence number 100017916.