

## Llandrindod

SO 059614  
16164

### *Introduction*

Llandrindod Wells is an amalgam of two very different settlements. Early Llandrindod in the form of the old parish church and Llandrindod Hall occupies a spur sandwiched between valleys that drop down towards the Ithon from the high ground to the east. One kilometre to the north-west on lower ground which has been ridged and hollowed by several streams is the Victorian and modern creation of Llandrindod Wells.

This brief report examines Llandrindod's 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 as an indicative guide to the historic settlement. The continuous line defining the historic core offers a visual interpretation of the area within which the settlement 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](http://www.archwilio.org.uk)).



*Llandrindod church, photo 95-C-0607 © CPAT, 2011*

### ***History of development***

The name refers to the 'Church of the Trinity', but the former name of the church and its parish was *Llandow* in 1283 and *Lando* in 1291 meaning 'church of God'. *Llandynddod* appears only in 1535, but the change to the Trinity is one that can be recognised in several other churches in Wales.

The earlier focus occupies a spur overlooking this area. Whether the church represents an early medieval foundation is unclear. The 'llan' prefix might suggest this but there is no corroborative evidence. Its later history, too, is uncharted. The occurrence of platforms opposite the church hints at more than just an isolated church, but the evidence as yet is not compelling.

Llandrindod Hall by the old church was converted into a large hotel in about 1749, but it functioned for less than forty years and was demolished by its proprietor, reportedly because of its unsavoury clientele. It was replaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by a farmstead.

Reportedly the origins of the spa town go back to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Cae-bach Chapel (30000; Grade II listing) in Brookland Road was founded in 1715. Saline and sulphur springs were discovered in the 1730s and these were noted in various publications in the following twenty years. But the emergence of Llandrindod Wells is essentially a 19<sup>th</sup>-century phenomenon and thus falls outside the scope of this report, although in expanding over Llanerch Common, the town enveloped the Llanerch Inn, which has some 17<sup>th</sup>-century features.

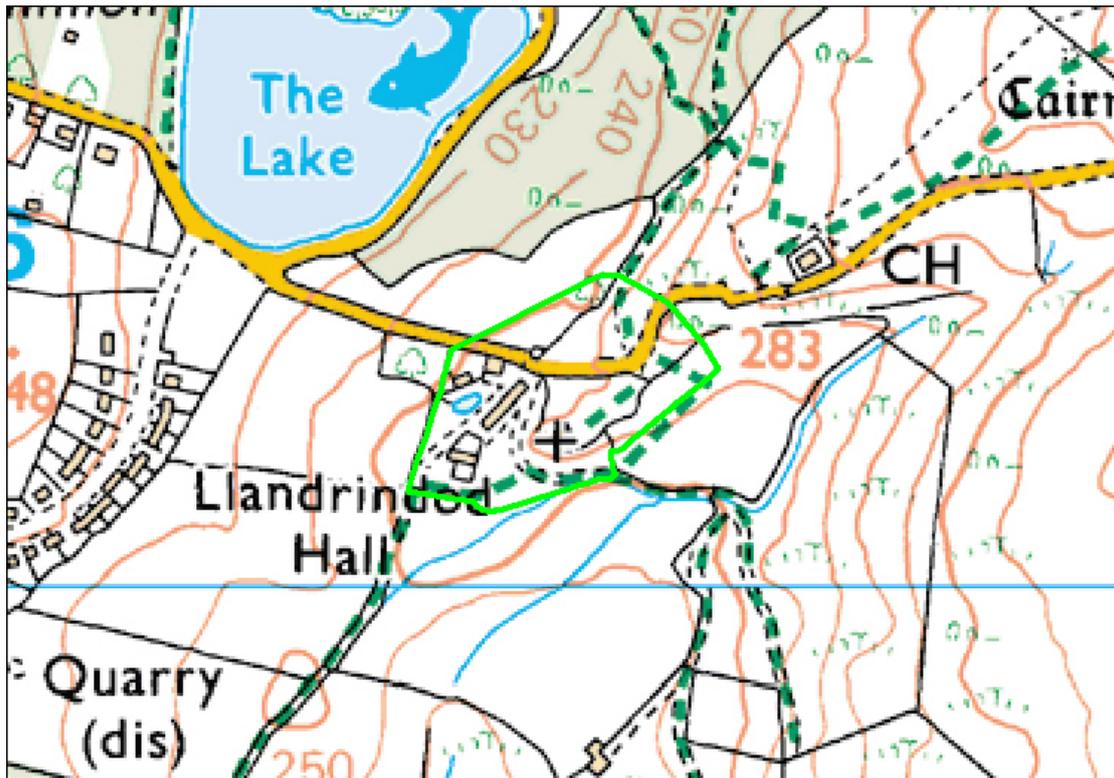
### ***The heritage to 1750***

The old parish church of Holy Trinity (16027) lies more than 1km south-east of the town and was sited on the edge of an extensive tract of common upland. It originally had a single chamber of 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century build with a south porch and small west spire. It was completely rebuilt in 1894, after the archdeacon of Llandrindod had removed the roof in order to 'encourage' townspeople to attend the new church in the town. The old church houses several 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century monuments but its 'sheel-na-gig' (5960) uncovered during building work in 1894 and presumably of medieval origin, is now in the local museum.

The churchyard (16199) is irregular in design, its shape on the west and south dictated by the natural topography. The Tithe map depicts a smaller enclosure around the church, a short distance away from the road and no longer distinguishable at ground level, but may not be an accurate representation. A holy well (81710) lay close to the churchyard, though the story attached to it point to a healing well.

The spur on which the old church sits is naturally irregular with rock outcrops protruding. North of the church on land that was common until the 19<sup>th</sup> century are several flat terraces some of which are certainly artificial constructions that probably supported dwellings (16094); there is at least one authentic platform and perhaps two others, together with enclosure boundaries and a trackway. Further earthworks (16095), the most obvious a low curvilinear bank of unknown function, are apparent just to the south-east of Llandrindod Hall (30020).

Capel Maelog (2055) which was excavated between 1984 and 1987 lay off Cefnlllys Lane less than 1km east of the town centre. Its foundations have now been reconstructed near County Hall.



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