

## Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch

**SJ 0810 6350**  
**105982**

### *Introduction*

Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch lies on the western slopes of the Vale of Clwyd, a little above the confluence of the Clywedog and its parent river, the Clwyd. A shallow valley bearing a small stream that runs off the hillside to the west edges the churchyard on the south, and practically all of the older part of the village lies on the northern side of this valley. Originally positioned beside the A525 linking Ruthin with Denbigh, the village has now been by-passed. Denbigh itself is located 4km to the north-west.

This brief report examines the emergence and development of Llanrhaeadr up to the year 1750. For the more recent history of the settlement, it might be necessary to look at other sources of information and in particular 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 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 will require modification 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. The HER can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website ([www.archwilio.org.uk](http://www.archwilio.org.uk)).

### *History of development*

Unusually for Denbighshire the place-name does not reflect the saint to whom the church was dedicated, but is translated into English as the ‘church near the rushing stream in Cinmeirch’, a reference to the medieval commote in which Llanrhaeadr lay. The name appears as *Lanrayadyr* in 1254 in a direct reference to the church and as *Llanreyadur in Kymmerth* in 1455 which was almost certainly to the settlement. The saint’s name was acknowledged only rarely in medieval and post-Reformation documents, as in 1566 when we read of *ll. dayfnoc*.

The church dedication favours an early medieval origin for Llanrhaeadr, but whether this might apply to a neighbouring settlement as well as the church cannot be determined. Likewise its subsequent history also remains a mystery.

When Edward Lhuyd compiled his *Parochial Queries* at the very end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there were no more than four houses by the church. A century and a half later the Tithe survey shows a small nucleated settlement centred on the T-junction formed by the main thoroughfare running from north-west to south-east and a lane running down from the hills on the north side of the churchyard. A few other buildings lay scattered along these lanes beyond the confines of the settlement.

### *The heritage to 1750*

St Dyfnog’s church (100601) is a double-naved building with a small tower at the western end. Its windows are varied but mainly in the Perpendicular style. The tower or at least some parts of it have been claimed as 13<sup>th</sup>-century, though not convincingly. The church contains late medieval roofs, a superb 16<sup>th</sup>-century stained glass Jesse window, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century font, a

large chest with a pillar poor box attached to it, and a range of 18<sup>th</sup> century monuments including a fine Baroque tomb for a deceased owner of Llanrhaeadr Hall. The church was restored in 1879-80 and again in 1986-9.

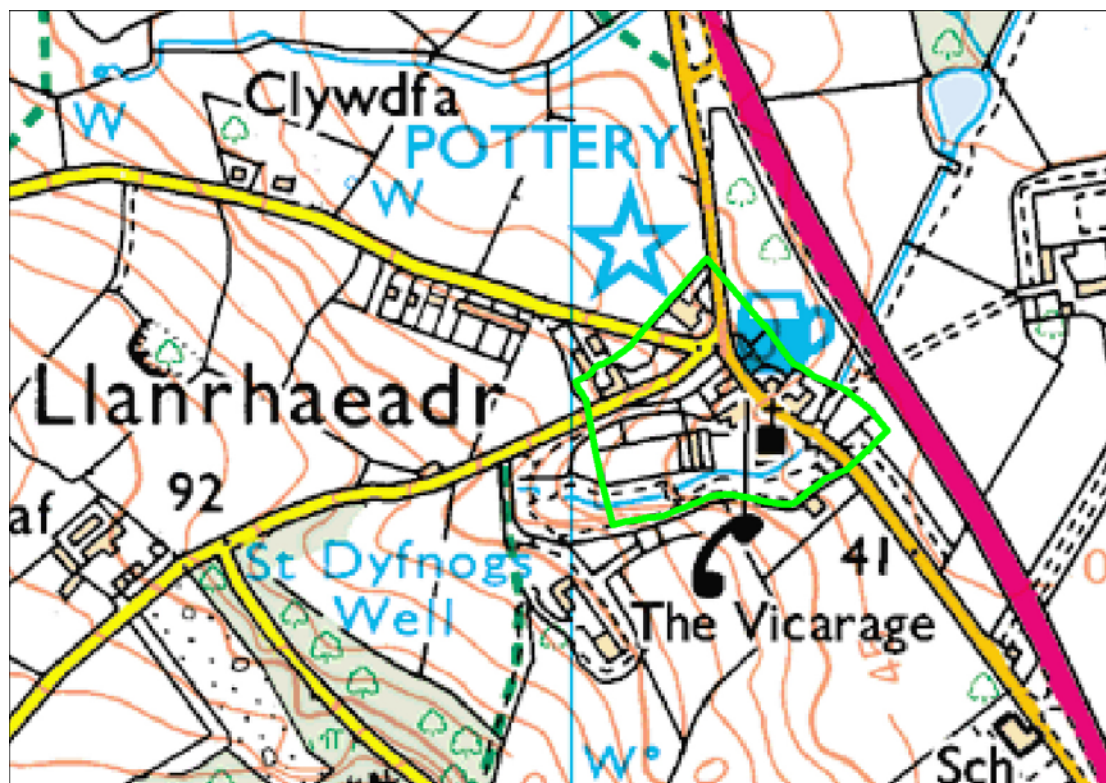
The churchyard (19786) is largely rectilinear and has been extended, but there is no evidence of an earlier curvilinear form, other than on an estate map of 1771 which displays a distinctively curved churchyard projecting into the road on the east; no ground traces of this portion survive.

Dyfnnog's Well/Fynnon Dyfnog (100603) lies 200m west of the church (and thus a little beyond the limits of the settlement), rising as a spring and dropping into a rectangular bath tank. Edward Lhuyd drew attention to its healing properties and Pennant in 1773 recorded that the 'the fountain is enclosed in an angular wall decorated with small human figures, and before it is the well for the use of the pious bathers'. An extremely thorough report on the well was prepared by Tristan Gray Hulse a few years ago.

The almshouses (105911), an H-shaped block beside the churchyard were erected in 1729 and repaired in 1820. The smithy opposite the Church (now used by a potter) and the adjacent smith's house are attributed to the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup>-century in date (19787).

Llanrhaeadr Hall (105910), some 350m to the east of the church, has at its core an E-shaped stone house, going back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but remodelled in the 1770s. It now functions as a hotel. Its gardens have the non-statutory Grade II listing in the Cadw/ICOMOS register, and run up almost to the eastern edge of the settlement. The manuscript map of 1771 implies that there have been some subsequent alterations to the layout of the grounds around the Hall, although it is possible that the map represents a landscaping proposal rather than a completed design.

Remnants of medieval open fields are fossilised in the strip fields to the north of the village.



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