

Interpretation Plan
for the Princes of Gwynedd

for

Cadw

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PLB Consulting Ltd

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Executive Summary for an Interpretation Plan for the Princes of Gwynedd

1.1 Introduction

This is an Interpretation Plan for the story of the Princes of Gwynedd and the places associated with that medieval dynasty.

The study will feed into the development and implementation of a Pan Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan as part of the Cadw-led Heritage Tourism Project for Wales, part funded through the EU Convergence Programme for North and West Wales and the Valleys.

The Princes of Gwynedd story fits into the strand of the Castles and Princes of North Wales (native Princes, Norman and Edwardian Conquest) and the fight for independence. It will link closely with parallel plans that have also been commissioned for **the castles and town walls of Edward I, Norman and Plantagenet settlement**, including **the Princes of Deheubarth, Lords of the Southern March and Owain Glyn dwr**.

The plan takes due account of the recommendations outlined in 'Interpretation Planning: The Historic Environment of Wales, Strategy Document for Cadw' for the Welsh Assembly Document (June 2009) by Atkins, Bremner and Orr.

1.2 The sites

Sites considered as part of this study include:

- Sites of religious foundations from the era of the Princes
- Historic churches linked to the time of the Princes
- Museums/ information points
- Sites of the former Llys (courts) of the Princes
- Castles/ fortified sites associated with the Princes

The appended audit reviews on-site interpretation for many of these locations. Some additional locations were suggested to us in the course of the consultations that it was not possible to audit.

There will be considerable overlap between the interpretation proposed for these sites as part of this study, and that from other studies – particularly the castles and town walls of Edward I, spiritual and inspirational landscapes and Owain Glyn Dwr.

1.3 The audiences

Target audiences for this study (comprised of both existing audiences and those that are currently under-represented) include:

- Family groups on holiday
- Local people and people resident in Wales
- Older couples
- The activity holiday market
- Special interest groups



- Overseas visitors
- Group travel audiences
- Schools and education groups
- Young adults
- C2DEs
- BME groups
- People with disabilities

1.4 Context for interpretation

A consideration of the wider context for this interpretation plan indicates that:

- Interpretation should support sustainable tourism development, including through extending the season and dispersing visitors from key attractions into the wider area
- Interpretation can and must help improve access to the heritage product, hand in hand with improved infrastructure
- Interpretation can support a rationalisation of existing web and print material
- Interpretation can help reinforce Welsh identity, 'sense of place' and culture
- There is a need for increased partnership working to deliver interpretation
- More information and provision of trails, routes, themes and clusters, cultural trails/networks is needed
- There is a wide range of archival and collections material of relevance to the sites and their interpretation
- There is potential for the interpretation to support the delivery of Welsh Cultural Heritage Initiative projects, at sites including Abergwngregyn, Llys Rhosyr, Dinas Emrys and Deganwy
- Interpretation being developed as part of the Rural Conwy Church Trails project can help support the delivery of Princes of Gwynedd interpretation across those sites
- This interpretation initiative can take forward and link to many of the existing and previous schemes on the subject of the Princes of Gwynedd, including trails on Anglesey (the Mon trail), the Gwynedd Council 'Princes of Gwynedd' interpretation package and corresponding website and trails dedicated to the Princes, which refers to Sharon Penman's popular trilogy

1.5 Recommendations

This plan proposes a wide range of recommendations for each site grouped into:

1. Off site, pre-visit interpretation
2. Site based interpretive provision
3. Linking interpretation (that link sites and features together)
4. Adaptive interpretation to encourage repeat visits

Key recommendations are:

- To use a 'storytelling' approach and style to convey the story of the Princes of Gwynedd across the different sites and media approaches



- To cluster sites to form distinctive interpretation packages on the subject of the Princes, so that each cluster will provide a day visit 'taster' of hidden Wales: the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd in that particular area. Ideally each cluster will use a well known visitor attraction as a draw (often an Edwardian castle) to disperse visitors out to the less well know sites of the Princes, such as Welsh castles, archaeological sites and former religious houses. Cluster locations are suggested in Map 3.

The interpretation will be linked to the following interpretive messages and their corresponding themes:

Over-arching message:

The powerful Princes of Gwynedd played an important role in forging a sense of Welsh nationhood and identity

Supporting message 1:

The Princes of Gwynedd were the first Princes to claim rule of all of Wales

Theme: "Princes of all Wales" – especially Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd

Supporting message 2:

Amongst all the groups of Princes in Wales, the Princes of Gwynedd had a long and successful dynasty

Theme: A mighty dynasty – success and longevity, even to today

Supporting message 3:

The heartland of the Princes of Gwynedd was in North West Wales in Anglesey and Snowdonia

Theme: The heartlands of Gwynedd – Anglesey and Snowdonia

Supporting message 4:

The Princes of Gwynedd fought for land and power against other Welsh Princes, the Marcher Lords and the English Crown

Theme: A warlike people – the necessary military capability of the Princes

- Rebellions following the Conquest including Madog and Glyn Dwr

Supporting message 5:

The Princes operated from a network of llys, (courts) that they travelled between throughout the year

Theme: Court and Country – The Welsh and Welsh Wales in the era of the Princes



Key themes and topics for each site:

Site	Themes/ topics
Ewloe Castle	The heartlands of Gwynedd – the four Cantrefs A mighty dynasty – setting the scene prior to Edward's campaigns A warlike people – competition with the Normans and the Marcher Lords, Welsh castles
Basingwerk Abbey	Court and Country – Europeanising influences, religion and religious houses in Wales A warlike people – castles in Wales, purpose of Welsh castles
Valle Crucis Abbey	Court and Country – Europeanising influences, religion and religious houses in Wales
Llys Rhosyr	Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture, how the Llys worked, bards and poetry The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today
Abergwngregyn	Princes of all Wales – Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd A mighty dynasty – Welsh resilience, betrayal and loss Background to medieval Wales and the Welsh The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today
Deganwy Castle	Princes of all Wales and a Mighty Dynasty – introducing the Princes of Gwynedd Welsh castles – siege and besieged, Edward I's campaigns The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today
Conwy	Princes of all Wales – Treaties A Wales divided A mighty dynasty – setting the scene prior to Edward's campaigns in Wales Legacy of the Princes of Gwynedd Court and country - the impact of English towns (including on trade and administration), how the Welsh continued their way of life A warlike people – rebellions following the Conquest
Dinas Emrys	A mighty dynasty: legends and dynastic claims, inheritance in Wales The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today
Cymer Abbey	Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture, religion and religious houses, Europeanising influences, the extent of the Conquest
Castell y Bere	The heartlands of Gwynedd: the mountainous homelands of the Princes; the Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today A warlike people – castle-building styles in Wales
Dolforwyn Castle	A warlike people - competition with the Marcher Lords Events leading up to the Edward I campaigns Edward and Llywelyn – friends or foe? Welsh laws, customs and culture Welsh castle building, purpose of Welsh castles, siege and besieged



Montgomery Castle	A warlike people – competition with the Marcher Lords Princes of all Wales – paying homage The importance of rivers and river crossings
Criccieth Castle	Under the shadow of the castles and walls* Welsh castle building styles Europeanising influences Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and inheritance in Wales
Dolwyddelan Castle	The Welsh Dragon: introducing the Princes of Gwynedd* Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture The heartlands of Gwynedd – unique geography, mountainous homelands
Dolbadarn Castle	Sieges: making siege and besieged A warlike people – Guerrilla warfare Welsh style A mighty dynasty – betrayal and loss Inheritance in Wales – castles and prisons

Overlaps in recommendations and themes and topics occur for many of the sites above where they have been referenced in the interpretation plan for the castles and town walls of Edward I e.g. at Criccieth Castle. This is intentional, as many sites have more than one Cadw theme to communicate. Our approach has been designed to allow for maximum flexibility in terms of the conveying the stories at different sites.

1.6 Action Plan

An action plan has been devised that highlights the different levels of priority for the various interpretation recommendations. We have laid out a series of evaluation measures that could be undertaken to support the action plan and guide future activity.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This is an Interpretation Plan for the story of the Princes of Gwynedd and the places associated with that medieval dynasty. It follows a major review of Cadw's interpretive provision across its portfolio of 127 sites and monuments and an over-arching Strategy completed in 2009.

This study will feed into the development and implementation of a Pan Wales Heritage Interpretation Plan as part of the Cadw-led Heritage Tourism Project for Wales, part funded through the EU Convergence Programme for north and west Wales and the Valleys.

The story of the Princes of Gwynedd is just one thematic strand in an overall narrative for the Welsh heritage product. Wider strands include:

- the origins of Wales, prehistoric Wales, Roman invasion and settlement
- spiritual and inspirational landscapes (from prehistory to the present day)
- the Castles and Princes of medieval Wales including Norman and Edwardian conquest
- Welsh merchants and gentry (16th – 18th centuries), the growth of towns, architecture
- Wales the first industrial nation (from earliest times to the present day)
- Defence of the Realm, from the Napoleonic Wars to the Cold War
- Maritime Wales
- The rise of Wales and Welsh nationhood in the 20th and 21st centuries

The Princes of Gwynedd story fits into the strand of the Castles and Princes of North Wales (native Princes, Norman and Edwardian Conquest) and the fight for independence. It will link closely with parallel plans that have also been commissioned for **the castles and town walls of Edward I, Norman and Plantagenet settlement**, including **the Princes of Deheubarth, Lords of the Southern March** and **Owain Glyn dwr**.

This study closely links with **the story of the castles and town walls of Edward I**, which came about as a direct consequence of the Princes' war with the English Crown.

We are grateful for the expert advice provided by Professor Huw Pryce, Professor of Welsh History, University of Bangor, and to the support of a range of stakeholders consulted during the course of the study (see Appendix C).

1.2 Report aims

This report will provide an interpretation plan for the Princes of Gwynedd that will:

- focus on Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and his grandson Llywelyn ap Gruffudd
- take into account the context of the earlier Gwynedd dynasty and the era of Owain Gwynedd
- take into account the conquest of north Wales by Edward I

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- work within the principles outlined for the Pan-Wales Interpretation Plan, outlined in the Atkins report¹
- identify key elements of the story of the Princes of Gwynedd and the key sites or destinations to bring that story alive
- propose strong interpretive themes and stories
- be firmly grounded in historical fact
- ensure interpretation will acknowledge each site's unique qualities
- propose a number of visitor packages
- focus interpretation on a broad audience base and consider the potential to attract new audiences
- consider interpretation that will encourage participation and involve key audiences
- use learning outcomes to guide a programme of evaluation for the interpretation

1.3 Where to interpret the Princes of Gwynedd?

The question as to where best to interpret the story of the Princes of Gwynedd dominates this study, since in many ways there are no 'obvious' sites that are already established visitor attractions focusing on this topic. The matter is further complicated by the changing boundaries of Gwynedd of the early medieval period compared to what we know as Gwynedd today. Many of the sites closely connected to the Princes have been lost to us or irrevocably altered by processes that happened after the 1283 conquest. Public access is also an issue for some locations.

The majority of sites included for the purposes of this Interpretive Plan have been defined by Cadw – however, other non-Cadw nominated sites and destinations have also been considered that are also of relevance to the story of the Princes of Gwynedd. The appended audits illustrate the sites that we considered as part of this study. In addition there were those we were not able to visit. Map 1 shows the names, relative location and general 'types' of all sites considered as part of this study. They include the sites of religious foundations from the period, museums/ information points, sites of the former Llys (or courts) of the Princes of Gwynedd and other castles/ fortified sites.

Sites included by Cadw are:

- Conwy Castle and walls
- Dolbadarn
- Dolwyddelan
- Criccieth
- Castell y Bere
- Cymer Abbey
- Deganwy
- Llys Rhosyr

Other sites suggested for inclusion in our study by consultees (not audited):

- **Bangor Cathedral**, due to its links with the ancient Kings of Gwynedd (Maelgwn Gwynedd, Gruffudd ap Cynan and Owain Gwynedd who is buried there). There is also a story of how Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was betrayed and sent to his death at Cilmeri by his own men in Bangor Cathedral

¹ *Interpretation Planning for the Historic Environment of Wales – Final Report to Cadw* (June 2009) Atkins, Bremner and Orr



- **Abbey Cwm Hir**, reputed burial place of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd
- **Cilmeri** at which there is a memorial to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd
- **Oriel Ynys Mon**, Anglesey, at which there is an exhibition that references the Princes of Gwynedd
- **Cwm Prysor**, llys for area (moved from Harlech) and former motte and bailey castle site. Uncertainty about what period the site dates from. Community interest in the site
- **Tomen Castell**, precursor to Dolwyddelan, llys and possible birthplace of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth, lies at the bottom of the crag (no public access currently). Could be made accessible and linked with Dolwyddelan offer.

It is important to note that there is significant overlap between many of the above sites and the story of the castles and town walls of Edward I and the Edwardian conquest of North Wales, some more obviously apparent than others.

Map 1 shows the names, relative location and general 'types' of all sites considered as part of this study.

When the sites included in Map 1 were discussed with key stakeholders at a consultation workshop in March 2010 (see Appendix D for more detail), the importance attached to Welsh Llys sites as key locations to interpret the Princes of Gwynedd was emphasised. Consultees also implied that the sites were almost secondary to the importance of telling the story of key characters of the Princes of Gwynedd story: Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. The links with the castles and towns of Edward I as major heritage attractions in North West Wales were seen to provide an opportunity to use these locations to tell the story of the Princes of Gwynedd as part of the castles' own *raison d'être*.

1.4 Ownership

The sites considered as part of this study are in a variety of ownership, for example some belong to the local Parish churches, others are owned by the Local Authority, charitable Trusts or other local Trusts, others are whole villages. Sites in the guardianship of Cadw include: Ewloe Castle, Basingwerk Abbey, Valle Crucis Abbey, Conwy Castle and Town Walls, Dolwyddelan Castle, Dolbadarn, Penmon Priory, Criccieth Castle, Cymer Abbey, Castell y Bere, Dolforwyn Castle and Montgomery Castle.

1.5 A Pan Wales Interpretation Strategy for Cadw

This Interpretation will feed into a wider Pan Wales Interpretation Strategy, the principles for which are summarised in 'Interpretation Planning: The Historic Environment of Wales, Strategy Document for Cadw' for the Welsh Assembly Document (June 2009) by Atkins, Bremner and Orr.

The Strategy puts forward a new vision and approach to the interpretation of the 127 Cadw Monuments. The strategy summarises the capacity of Cadw's monuments to tell the history of Wales and its people, representing:

- Symbols of military and religious power
- Peoples' homes
- Spiritual life



Existing interpretation

The stories currently told by existing interpretation at these sites tend to be characterised by:

- a focus on the 'big' characters from history
- use of specialist technical, military and architectural information in an academically rigorous format
- dated, officious signage
- a lack of welcome
- gaps in the stories
- a limited choice in interpretation for visitors
- a lack of the necessary spark of interest

The Strategy notes the current importance of the guidebooks as an interpretive tool, although they are detailed and academic with a lot of technical terms and more likely to be purchased as a souvenir guide rather than interpretive aide on site.

Other detailed criticisms include:

- absence of visitor interpretation
- poor visitor reception buildings in some sites
- over wordy, crowded, text based, technical academic language
- reconstruction building drawings on the panels especially are too small
- focus on status figures and architecture makes it hard to understand how the monument was used and who lived there/ was linked to it
- limited interpretation on Welsh life
- little for families and for schools
- little evaluation of existing interpretation
- presentation style isolates the monuments from normal lives and the surrounding townscape/ landscape
- little welcome, orientation and presentation at unstaffed monuments

The strategy also notes that flagship Cadw sites tend to have a greater range of interpretation on offer and cater for different languages and that only 7 out of the 30 staffed sites offer audio tours.

Aspirations for interpretation

Goal: Creation of interpretation that is entertaining, imaginative, engaging and fun!

The Cadw monuments should be gateways for interpreting the wider historic environment of Wales, and:

- Place visitors at the heart of interpretation
- Use humour and emotion
- Improve the welcome through signage and branding
- Offer more for families
- Offer active learning where you can discover more
- Challenge and relate to visitors
- Provide first person narratives from different perspectives



- Increase the emphasis on Welsh history, culture and language, reinforcing messages about Welsh identity
- Use mobile phone technology and the internet
- Integrate learning with community outreach
- Help people want to understand their heritage and want to care for it and take ownership of it
- Work in partnership to interpret the wider historic environment of Wales
- Be creative, innovative and take risks

Proposed overarching themes for interpretation:

1. History happened here
2. I lived here
3. Look here
4. We care

Vision for interpretation

Every visitor to a Cadw monument should:

1. Feel welcome
2. Be able to understand, engage with and find meaning in everything they see and do
3. Leave wanting to learn more – and know how to do so

The vision is supported by the following strategic recommendations:

1. Implement a planned approach to interpretation guided by clear themes and measurable objectives
2. Adopt an inclusive, audience focused approach to interpretation and engagement
3. Ensure all visitors, particularly at unstaffed sites, feel more welcome by improving signage, orientation and presentation. The strategy recommends installing new welcome/ croeso panels on the approach to each monument, and improving the presentation of Visitor Receptions for staffed monuments including providing more space for interpretation and orientation. Visitors should also be signposted to where they can find out more when they leave.
4. Put people and their stories first, using engaging narratives to communicate significance and meaning from different perspectives
5. Bring Welsh history, language, perspectives and culture to the fore, including by offering every visitors to a Cadw monument the opportunity to learn a Welsh phrase, word or pronunciation
6. Encourage greater understanding through dialogue and active learning, providing more for children and family groups, including activities based interpretation aimed at 7-12 year olds, as well as games/ quizzes and activities that appeal to adults as well



7. Make innovative use of new technologies, including reviewing audio guide provision, rolling out Bluetooth narratives
8. Develop interpretation in conjunction with learning and outreach to strengthen the links between monuments and people
9. Work in partnership with others to tell the story of the wider Welsh historic environment.
10. Monitor, review and remedy the interpretation against objectives

Priorities

The Strategy suggests that the following should be priority activities for Cadw:

- Improve the welcome offered to visitors
- Offer more for children and families
- Introduce new interpretation via mobile phones and Bluetooth

It suggests that 13 monuments should be prioritised for improvements, amongst them Conwy Castle.

The *Map to show the Atkins Report recommendations* (Map 2) summarises the site-specific recommendations made in Atkin's individual Monument Interpretation Plans for sites of relevance to this study. These comprise Penmon Priory, Basingwerk Abbey, Ewloe Castle, Denbigh Castle, Criccieth Castle, Castell y Bere and Montgomery Castle.



2 A history of the Princes of Gwynedd

2.1 Introduction

Medieval Wales was a fragmented land of many kingdoms and dynasties, with four main territories: Gwynedd, Powys, Deheubarth and Morgannwg. Gwynedd and Powys had emerged following the departure of the Romans. Morgannwg was partly conquered by the Normans and thus did not survive as a kingdom into the 12th century, whereas Gwynedd came to dominate the rest of Wales in the 13th century. Gwynedd was naturally divided by the Conwy with the land to the west forming the heartland of the kingdom, backed by the fertile grain producing areas of Anglesey and the Lleyn peninsula. The Perfeddwlad or middle country to the east of the Conwy was frequently prone to attacks from across the river Dee, either from Powys or from the Earl of Chester.

The borders of these territories and smaller areas were constantly changing, either through absorption by their neighbours or conquest, through the ceaseless expansionist activities of their rulers *'selfishly engaged in their own, almost endless political and military competition.'* (Turvey 2002).

Dynastic rivalry and competition between rulers was rife. There was not, arguably, any political sense of 'Wales' or Welsh unity amongst the Welsh people until the 13th century – either because of a growing self awareness of their common heritage, language and culture or a shared experience of threat from the English. *"during the 13th century the Law of Hywel and the Welsh language were the two things that made the Welsh people feel that they belonged to one nation."* (Williams and Morris 1995) The territorial core and political heart of this emerging Wales was Gwynedd, from which emerged a leader of exceptional authority and skill who was able to make his mark on the wider political stage.

2.2 Wales, Scotland, England

Wales, like Scotland, was poor in comparison with England with a country far less populous. The Welsh landscape was a hindrance to building a strong, united state. High mountains, valleys, water meadows and extensive forests frustrated travel and communications and rendered government slow and laborious. The predominance of upland meant that Welsh and Scottish societies were for the most part pastoral and hence poor in comparison with England. In the 13th century there were still few towns in Gwynedd, compared to South Wales and England, and not much currency. Whilst Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's income *'compared favourably with that of the greatest English Lords, probably amounting to between £3,000 and £3,500 per annum'* (Pryce 2007) this was still small beer compared to £10,000 per year for the King of England (Morris 2008). Therefore the English did not regard their neighbours as equals.



However, where Scotland's rulers were seen as part of a 'civilised club' of European rulers, with French as their first language, Wales was seen as very different. Firstly the Welsh spoke Welsh, even amongst the ruling classes. Welsh social attitudes were also very different, with rules governing Welsh society at variance with those in the European 'hub'. The laws of inheritance in particular, and the law of partibility amongst freemen², with its resultant political consequences of familial warfare, so frequently present in Wales, was at odds with the primogeniture practised in what were deemed other 'civilised' European states.

This law of partibility was also a factor in the lack of a single political authority in Wales. Under Welsh law, a king or prince was meant to be able to nominate his chosen successor, but owing to the absence of a clear mechanism for choosing this successor, this was often contested. In addition, Welsh law recognised claimants that the European Church deemed illegitimate, i.e. those family members born out of marriage. This *'inherent instability meant that amicable relations (between European rulers) were hard to sustain'* (Morris 2008). In short, Wales was perceived to be a barbarous, uncivilised state, peripheral to the central European hub and the goings on of the superpowers such as France.

But in some ways Wales was a more united country than Scotland, comprised of a single ethnic group – *'the last survivors of an ancient civilization that had once occupied all of Britain, but that had been gradually driven into the western margins of the island by the English.'* (Morris 2008). However, *politically*, Scotland stood a better chance of uniting behind one ruler, due to the practice of primogeniture that has been firmly established in Scotland since the 12th century, thereby avoiding the power struggles that frequently destroyed Welsh political unity caused by the lack of a mechanism to definitively choose the successor.

From the Norman Conquest onwards, Wales and Scotland presented two very different prospects to the Anglo Norman ruling elite. Scotland was already a unitary kingdom, with administrative structures the Normans were familiar with and able to take advantage of. In Wales, society was fragmented into many kingdoms, each with their own political structures. The result was that the Normans simply took what they could in Wales, setting themselves up in competition with the Welsh along the Welsh March³, creating a powerful interest group of Marcher Lordships. These ambitious lords could be ally or enemy to the various Welsh factions, intent on gaining new territories on the Welsh border at the expense of the Welsh. Their presence transformed the power structure in Wales, especially in eastern and southern Wales, bringing in a new era marked by the building of timber castles to hold their conquests and from which they tried to bring in their own systems of political administration. In Scotland by contrast, the Normans were assimilated into existing Scottish society, in particular through marriage, and in doing so drawing Scotland into mainstream European culture well before these processes started to happen in Wales.

² Where each male relative has a right to power and lands

³ An area of contested land along the border between England and Wales



2.3 The Welsh and the English

Anglo Norman and then English rulers (as they became known having assimilated the Anglo Saxons they had conquered) were mainly concerned with maintaining Welsh recognition of their hegemony⁴ without necessarily having to physically enforce it in Welsh territory. There were no efforts by the English Crown to conquer Wales following the Norman Conquest, although several military expeditions were attempted. Apart from Edward I, Henry I was the only English monarch to have played more than a minor role in Welsh affairs. However, when English royal rule was at its weakest, Welsh rulers were able to take advantage of this and expand their dominions, as Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was able to do in the period of Civil Wars under Henry III.

2.4 Welsh society

In Welsh society, there were three grades of men: brenin (King), noble (breyr) and bondman/ serf (bilain), who were unfree (as opposed to free men). Overall, however, the Welsh administration was less bureaucratic than under the administrative system Edward later tried to impose on Wales, as noted in Gerald of Wales's prolific observations on 12th century Wales. The family or kindred was also vitally important to Welsh society, in that law ran according to familial bonds and obligation, including land ownership and inheritance. Land ownership meant power and was frequently contested, from macro level amongst different ruling dynasties, to micro level amongst different family claimants. Welsh Law decreed that Kings and later Princes were meant to choose their successors from their male heirs. However, under the Law of Hywel, all heirs had a legitimate claim. Society in Wales was set up for war far more so than for building wealth from the land, partly due to the geography of the land and its unsuitability for generating arable wealth.

Welsh kingdoms or countries (gwlad) were subdivided into cantrefs roughly equivalent to the English hundred⁵. These were subdivided further into the cwmwd or commote and the township (a smaller district within the commote). In Gwynedd these commotes were used in an administrative sense as well as being recognised as a political unit. The Prince had a court (llys) and officers in every commote, at which local inhabitants, the free and the unfree, would pay their dues and offer their service in cash or in kind. The township where the court was located in each commote was called the Maerdref (Mayor's township). It was at these llysoedd that the Royal Court of the Princes could be found, served and maintained by the labours of the bondmen.

These llysoedd were the places where bondmen lived, worked, worshipped and died and the bonds of society were kept together. They were also focal points for the wider community of freemen living and farming in dispersed homesteads across the commote. Llys were undefended sites, usually comprising at least a hall but are often associated with a defensive mound or motte, but are not the same as castles which were installed by later Princes of Gwynedd (and other Welsh Royal dynasties) as a response to the Marcher impositions in Wales, to guard strategic passes and crossings, imprison political enemies, and to assert the status of the Welsh Princes.

⁴ overall leadership or overlordship

⁵ An area set by the Anglo Saxons to equate to roughly one hundred homesteads



“The usual routine in those days was to go from one court to the other in a circuit, each one in its turn, with the bond people of the maerdref, who lived near the court, providing food and keep.” (Williams and Morris 1005)

The hall would have been just one large room which people ate, met, conducted business and slept in. There would have been few items of furniture. Food was provided by bond families of the Maerdref, including corn, oats, wheat, cattle and sheep linked to upland pastures or ‘Ffriddoedd’ as guarded by Dolwyddelan Castle in Snowdonia. Bond families had a duty to work a fixed number of days on the Prince’s land as well as their own.

Whilst the geography of Wales helped isolate different dynasties from one another, culturally all dynasties referred back to a common past of the ancient Britons who had once ruled Britain. This past was upheld and maintained by the Welsh learned classes: ‘Gogynfeirdd’ (bards and poets), ‘reciters’ and lawyers who played an important role in Welsh society, and from whom much of the history of Wales is known. The work of these bards was a craft. They were given patronage by the Princes and therefore produced poems praising their patrons. These bards kept the genealogies of their royal patrons as guardians of his status and the legitimacy of his bloodlines, in old manuscripts and in memory. Much of the verse was composed as propaganda, harking back to real and invented histories to lend credence and popularity to the rulers of the day.

But if Welsh society clearly maintained different traditions and cultures to other European societies, it must also be recognised that Welsh princely dynasties were constantly adapting the laws and traditions of their lands to further their own political ends. This ongoing change is a process that can be seen right the way through the era of the Princes of Gwynedd and has often been connected with the ‘Europeanisation’ of Wales, as the Princes grew in power and influence and started adopting European practices through their military experiences and also through diplomatic negotiation, trade and marriage. In particular the introduction of castles, first in wood and then in stone, followed by use of siege engines, armoured horse and the adoption of the European style of heraldry and equestrian seals (Pryce 2007).

Other introductions included the beginnings of cash payments, the development of a core administrative staff around the Princes and a greater use of documents to help define their legal rights. The Princes also began fostering the introduction of towns, hitherto little developed in Wales, due to the poor rural economy and small population. The other major area in Wales that saw direct European influence was in aligning the Church more closely with the European trend for encouraging the establishment of religious foundations, especially for the Cistercians and Augustinians. These were to have their own impacts on the landscape.



2.5 Princes not Kings

In the 11th and 12th centuries the title King for rulers of the principalities of Wales gradually gives way to Lord and Prince. The reason for this change is not abundantly clear but it corresponds with a changing political situation following the Norman Conquest of England. The English King was increasingly recognised as overlord by Welsh dynastic rulers which meant that by the reign of Henry II in England, Welsh rulers either chose not to (or were not allowed to) be dubbed King. Whether this was because the English King would not allow the use of the title or because the Welsh rulers took the decision themselves is a moot point.

Inside Wales, these dynastic rulers were 'petty Kings', who acknowledged the authority of overall Angevin Kingship within a larger sphere. However, for a while, the title King was still frequently conferred on Welsh rulers by chroniclers as a mark of respect for greatness, often after they had died. It is also apparent that the title of Prince was held with great pride amongst the Welsh ruling elite, defining rulers as leader of the Welsh people across multiple kingdoms in Wales, and therefore of territorial unity. This meant that the title Prince was not necessarily inferior to the title King as we understand it today. Indeed, Henry II was angered by Owain Gwynedd changing his title from King to Prince.

2.6 Rise of the Princes of Gwynedd

The Princes of Gwynedd were direct descendants of post Roman native British rulers and 9th century Kings from the Isle of Mann. Successful rulers included Rhodri Mawr in the 9th century, from whom the dynasty of the Princes were descended. Gruffudd ap Llywelyn was also very successful in the 11th century, by 1055 making himself King of all Wales. The Saxon Earl Harold of England eventually burnt down his court at Rhuddlan before Gruffudd was killed by his own men. By the 12th century Gwynedd's primacy in Welsh affairs was consolidated by Gruffudd ap Cynan, who had spent most of his early life in Ireland, and his son Owain Gwynedd. Gruffudd ap Cynan allied with Rhys ap Tewdwr, King of Deheubarth, to secure Gwynedd, eventually establishing a firm base within Anglesey despite numerous setbacks and imprisonments at the hands of the Normans.

Up until this point, the ruler of Gwynedd called himself 'King'. Gruffudd ap Cynan and Owain Gruffudd as successive rulers created a stable and prosperous kingdom through their hold on church and state and, crucially, by acknowledging English overlordship. Owain was able to capitalise on the civil war between Stephen and Matilda in England and take back much of North Wales for Gwynedd. Gruffudd and Owain promoted the idea that Gwynedd possessed authority over all of Wales, partly by cultivating friendships with foreign rulers beyond the English to suit their own dynastic gains.

"Here was a dynasty that strengthened the traditions of our nation. There was great poetry, and the bard was an important figure at the Prince's court. The word of God was respected, and it is said that by the end of Gruffudd ap Cynan's reign, his kingdom sparkled with whitewashed Churches like stars in the sky." (Williams and Morris 1995)



Two Gwynedd rulers above all stand out as particular successes, having succeeded in establishing (and, crucially having acknowledged by other rulers both English and Welsh) their rule over the majority of Wales: Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and his grandson Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. *'That they both hailed from Gwynedd reveals the extent to which this kingdom, with its naturally defensive core in Snowdonia, realised its potential to be the most powerful element in Welsh dynastic politics.'* (Turvey 2002)

Key to the successes of these two Llywelyns was their military prowess and ability to bring other dynastic rulers in Wales together under one agenda, at the same time excluding the Marcher lords and acknowledging the English Crown as their overlord (in return for gaining its acknowledgement of their status within Wales). At the zenith of their power, between 1267 and 1277, following the Treaty of Montgomery, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was able to realise the ambition of the Princes of Gwynedd in ruling a single united Wales.

2.7 Llywelyn ap Iorwerth

This growing trend towards pan-Welsh political unity had begun at the start of the 13th century. Gwynedd, the most remote and traditional of Wales's three ancient 'kingdoms', had extended its power from Snowdonia to cover most of Wales, through the long reign of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, who became known as Llywelyn Fawr (Llywelyn the Great). Grandson of Owain Gwynedd, Llywelyn was able to defeat the storm of opposition from other male relatives for ascendancy in Gwynedd to emerge in 1201 as undisputed ruler of Gwynedd. His position was recognised by King John of England and in 1205 strengthened by marriage to the King's daughter, Joan.

However, by 1210 Llywelyn's expansionist aims had incurred the wrath of John, who invaded Gwynedd twice in 1211. Having come to terms, in part through the intervention of Joan as ambassador for her husband, Llywelyn was able to capitalise on a degree of unity amongst Welsh rulers caused by the threat from England, enabling Llywelyn to exercise extensive control over much of Wales until his death in 1240. Key to Llywelyn's success was his management of Marcher relations, including using marriage and political alliances with his own children and the most influential Marcher families. In addition, Llywelyn recognised the threats to the stability of the Gwynedd dynasty and sought to change the laws of Wales to enable his son, Dafydd, to be recognised by other Welsh rulers as his chosen heir.

The arts and Cistercian monastic foundations particularly flourished under Llywelyn's long rule, and he sponsored the establishment of several religious foundations linked directly to mother houses in France, including Aberconwy Abbey, Llanfaes Priory and Cymer Abbey. As testimony to the relative prosperity of the period, Llywelyn was also innovative in castle building, in part influenced by his contact with Marcher Lords and Marcher society. Castell y Bere, Dolwyddelan, Dolbadarn, Deganwy and Criccieth are all attributed to Llywelyn ab Iorwerth *"a chain of castles... built to defend the roads into the heart of Snowdonia"* (Williams and Morris 1995).

Llywelyn's work was then undone to some extent by Henry III, who had confiscated from the Welsh for himself a large area of northern Wales between the rivers Dee and Conwy, known as the Perfeddwlad (middle country) or the four cantref (an area that had been contested between Welsh and English/ Anglo Norman for hundreds of years).



2.8 The rise of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd

The political unrest and Civil War of the 1260s had seen Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, grandson of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth secure major gains at the expense of the English from the late 1250s onwards. He had defeated his two brothers and Henry III in warfare in the 1250s. In 1263 Prince Edward, Henry III's heir, had lost his land in north Wales to Llywelyn with the fall of the castles at Dyserth and Deganwy. *'After their fall, the prince's power in Wales was entirely uncontested'* (Morris 2008). Henry III and his son Edward, weakened by the struggle with Simon de Montfort, (whom Llywelyn had expediently supported) were forced to make a Treaty with Llywelyn in 1267: The Treaty of Montgomery, which handed to Llywelyn all the prizes he had sought since the start of his career, from territorial gains to the homage⁶ of other Welsh lords. Henry III was obliged to accept Llywelyn's supremacy throughout Wales, with his chosen title, Prince of Wales, recognised. So when Edward came to the throne in 1274, he was determined to recover his rights, and the lands and powers his father had lost in Wales.

2.9 The aftermath of the Treaty of Montgomery

Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was the only notable absentee from King Edward's coronation in 1274, despite evidence that at that time the two leaders shared mutual understanding. This was largely because a lasting peace between the English and Welsh had been rendered impossible by the circumstances of the Treaty of Montgomery and by the relationship between Llywelyn and his near neighbours, the Marcher Lords, for whom peace with Wales threatened to limit their expansionist aims. In particular the Treaty had not clarified Llywelyn's rights over his recent land gains in Glamorgan, at the expense of the powerful Marcher Lord Gilbert de Clare. The two protagonists were at war. In 1270 Llywelyn destroyed de Clare's new castle at Caerphilly but a year later the earl was back in possession. The effort he went to rebuild his new castle at Caerphilly can still be appreciated, as *'one of the greatest castles in the British Isles'* (Morris 2008).

De Clare's success encouraged other Marcher Lords to challenge the Treaty of Montgomery and tensions between Llywelyn and the Marchers began to mount. By 1273, Llywelyn was effectively in an arms race with Roger de Mortimer, constructing a brand new castle, Dolforwyn, in the vicinity of Montgomery. With Edward away on crusade, Llywelyn's efforts to force the Marchers into recognition of the Treaty were largely ignored. With Wales's comparative poverty, the high costs of this war against the Marchers and the castle building that went with it, plus the payments required under the terms of the Treaty, Llywelyn was in financial jeopardy. By 1271 he had stopped paying his annual dues to the English Crown, instead blaming the activities of the Marchers for his reluctance to pay.

⁶ Homage: *'an ancient ritual, practiced for centuries in every corner of Europe, where one individual acknowledged that he or she was subservient to another'* (Morris 2008). People in the medieval period were chiefly concerned with land, rights and privileges. Through asserting and maintaining your rights, a landowner would have financial benefits.



In addition, by 1274, Llywelyn's popularity in Wales was diminishing. He uncovered a plot to overthrow him led by Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn, lord of Powys, and his own brother, Dafydd. Dafydd immediately fled across the border for protection in England, where he was used as a political pawn by Edward. Llywelyn continued to ignore Edward's requirements for him to pay homage or the payments due from the Treaty. It is unlikely that Llywelyn had an objection in principle to doing homage to the King of England, since Welsh lords had been doing the same for generations. Llywelyn was challenging Edward by linking the question of his status as a vassal of England with the question of the King addressing his grievances. Edward travelled to the Welsh border and to Chester on respective occasions to meet the Prince in 1275. But Llywelyn still did not appear to do homage. The King was offended and could no longer ignore this challenge to his authority.

A final provocation on Llywelyn's part spelled the end of peace. The Prince decided to marry Eleanor de Montfort, daughter of Simon de Montfort, who had in the 1250s brought England to Civil War. Since the English Crown still feared baronial rebellion in the wake of the Montfort rebellion, the prospect of this wedding was a worrying political act. Edward resorted to kidnapping Eleanor at sea on her way to meet her husband and kept her imprisoned for the next three years. The Marcher Lords were encouraged to attack Wales and a cold war between England and Wales had begun. Llywelyn continued to ignore summons to Edward's court to do homage whilst complaining of infringements of his rights at the hands of the Marcher Lords. Llywelyn was taking a stand – determined to submit only on his own terms.

2.10 The 1276-77 War

Edward took no chances in preparing for war with Llywelyn, expending huge amounts of money on the campaign. A vast army was recruited through the system of feudal obligation, including support by sea. Roger de Mortimer was able to achieve swift victories in the middle March, taking Dolforwyn after a week's bombardment, reversing all of Llywelyn's conquests in central and southern Wales. Edward's brother Edmund's army swept through South Wales to Aberystwyth and began a castle there. The Princes' erstwhile vassals deserted him. *'When it came to warfare, the economic and industrial gulf between England and Wales was all too apparent.'* (Morris 2008) Llywelyn lacked money to hire troops, ammunition supplies and resources in general so direct confrontation was out of the question. Instead, he adopted a 'scorched earth' policy, destroying the castles of Deganwy and Dyserth, most recently in English hands, so that Edward would have no secure base for his army in north Wales and was forced to fall back onto the tried and tested tactic of guerrilla warfare:

'The Welsh may have lacked the latest military hardware, but they themselves were famously fierce and fearsome. Dressed in leather, armed with bows, arrows and spears, they would sweep down on their enemies, catching them unawares and wreaking havoc, before retreating with equal swiftness into the woods and hills.' (Morris 2008)



Edward's plan hinged on the creation of new and better castles, starting at Flint, to underpin his steady advance into Wales. Swathes of woodlands were cleared for the routeways of Edward's advance into Wales to reduce the chance of surprise attack. Finally Edward sent a fleet to conquer Anglesey which was a devastating blow to the Welsh forces who relied on the harvests of Anglesey for their winter food supplies. Llywelyn had little choice but to submit.

2.11 The Treaty of Aberconwy

Negotiations were made for a new treaty (the Treaty of Aberconwy, 1277) which comprehensively undid the Welsh gains of the Treaty of Montgomery. Lands and castles across Wales were widely redistributed, including the granting of lands to Dafydd, Llywelyn's treacherous brother. The establishment of new towns alongside the castles of Edward as administrative centres to rule over the Welsh heralded further ominous changes. Llywelyn himself was allowed to keep Gwynedd but had to pay to keep hold of Anglesey. He was also permitted to retain the title Prince of Wales, a hollow gesture, since he was now overlord of very little following the Treaty and was obliged to give homage at Rhuddlan and later Westminster in front of all Edward's magnates.

2.12 Revolt and war: 1282-83

Following the Treaty of Aberconwy, the Welsh suffered various injustices and indignities at the hands of English Royal officials. In particular, extensive and drawn out legal wrangling took place between Llywelyn and his adversary Gwenwynwyn over who should rule Arwystli on the borders of Gwynedd and Powys. The Welsh were oppressed by their new overlords and neighbours: *'Life under Llywelyn had seemed taxing at the time, but now, with the advent of English officialdom, the prince's rule was assuming the retrospective aspect of a golden age.'* (Morris 2008)

Widespread revolt finally erupted across Wales in 1282, led by an attack on Hawarden castle by Dafydd ap Gruffudd. Although not involved in this initial outburst led by his brother, Llywelyn had little choice but to get involved. His young wife had recently died, leaving only a daughter, which dynastically left him little for the future. *'On this occasion, by contrast, the opposition was far more general, the fighting fiercer and more widespread.'* (Morris 2008) Llywelyn rejected Edward's terms, including the offer of an English Earldom if he would quell the revolt, stating that *'The people of Snowdonia do not wish to do homage to a stranger, of whose language, manners and laws they are entirely ignorant'*⁷.

⁷ From the Acts of Welsh Rulers, 1120-1283, ed. H Pryce (2005)



Edward became determined to crush Wales once and for all, again mustering the vast resources at his disposal. However, events aided him while Llywelyn was in central Wales consolidating support. Possibly tricked into a battle at Cilmeri⁸, the Prince was killed unrecognised at first. His death represented a disaster for the Welsh since without him they could scarcely hope to remain unified. Llywelyn's brother Dafydd ap Gruffudd took up the Princely title as Llywelyn's heir but with all hope in abeyance. Within months he was a fugitive and Edward's army had for the first time ever reached the heart of Snowdonia and taken the castle of Dolwyddelan, the symbolic heartland of the Princes of Gwynedd. Edward also established a new base in Llywelyn's hall near Aberconwy Abbey, relentlessly appropriating the possessions and houses of the Princes of Gwynedd. Dafydd fled south to shelter at Castell y Bere before being ousted by siege, and then came back to Snowdonia and Dolbadarn, in hiding. He was finally captured near Llanberis by fellow Welshmen.

2.13 The aftermath and conquest

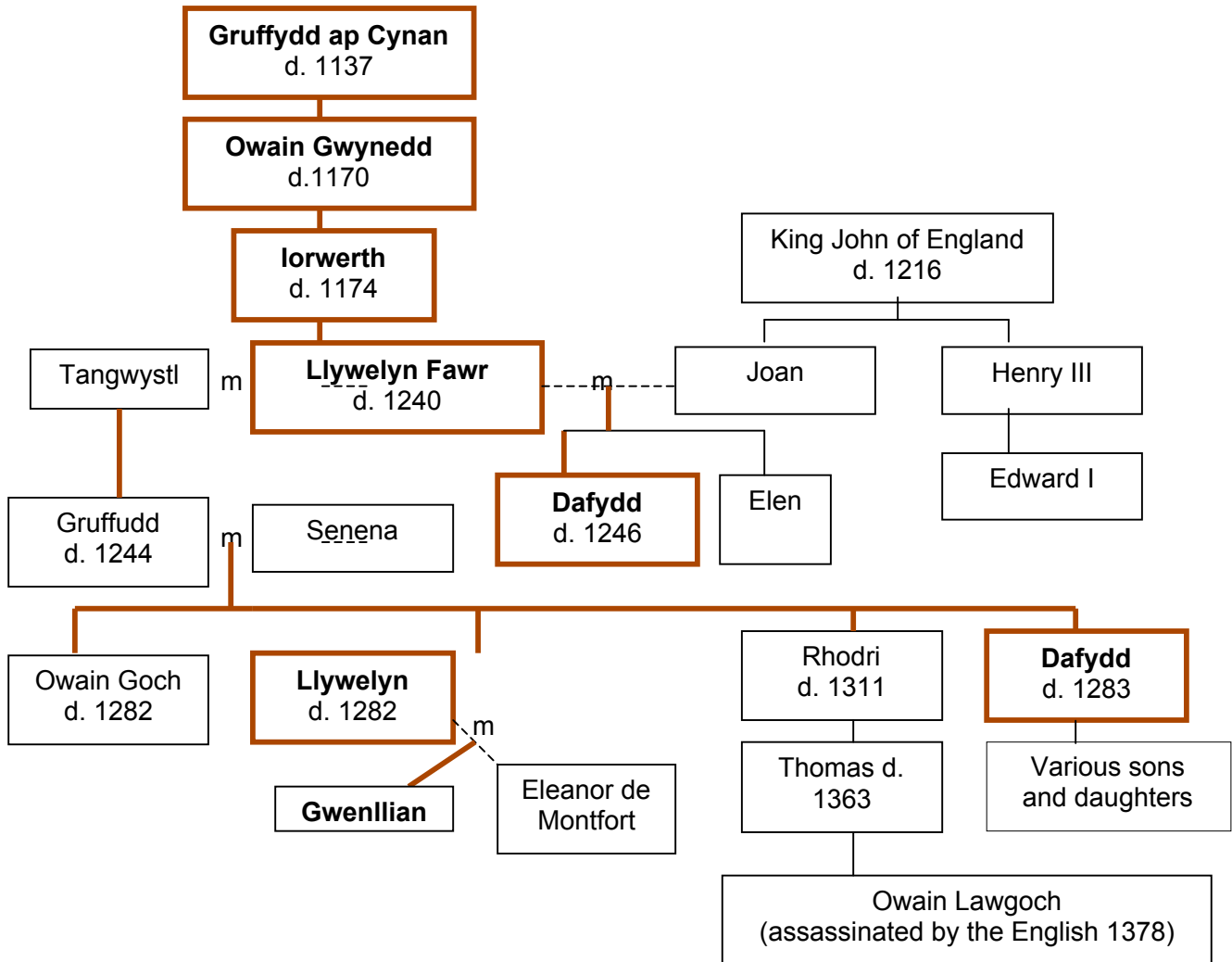
Wales had not just lost a Prince. Halls, houses and castles that had belonged to Llywelyn's dynasty for centuries were appropriated, Welsh secular treasures and holy relics were taken, churches and abbeys were destroyed, most notably the abbey at Aberconwy. The child heirs of the Princes of Gwynedd were imprisoned in castles and religious houses in England for the remainder of their lives. Welsh suffering and loss must have exceeded the English death toll many times over. Dafydd was condemned to death as the instigator of rebellion and for his absolute treachery against the King – and was gruesomely hung, drawn and quartered at Shrewsbury. The Statute of Rhuddlan was established to set out a new governance for Snowdonia and other lands ceded to the English Crown in Wales. Whilst the Statute allowed for some continuation of Welsh procedures, it was on the whole based on the installation of the English administrative and judicial system, to be administered by a new class of Royal officials – sheriffs, coroners, bailiffs and their deputies, answerable to a new justiciar of north west Wales based in Caernarfon.

Edward established more state of the art new castles and towns to be supplied by sea in Gwynedd and had some of the existing Welsh castles improved and rebuilt. He arranged for his Queen, Eleanor, to give birth at the new castle of Caernarfon, to a son Edward, a story later interpreted as Edward presenting his son to the Welsh as their future Prince.

⁸ The Brut y Tywysogyon suggests that Llywelyn was betrayed in the Belfry of Bangor Cathedral by his own men



2.14 Family tree of the Gwynedd Dynasty





2.15 In the wake of the Princes

In reaction to the implementation and enforcement of a new system of governance under English and quasi English officialdom, Wales seethed.

'The whole of Wales, it is true, had now been conquered; but conquest had not been followed by the integration of the country within itself institutionally or by its assimilation into the body politic of England. On the contrary, the essentially piecemeal and protracted character of that conquest had only served to entrench and indeed to deepen the particularism so characteristic of medieval Wales.' (Davies 1987)

In 1287, a major rebellion erupted in south Wales whilst Edward was overseas in Gascony. Rhys ap Maredudd, who had previously consistently supported the English Crown, raided and burned several castles and towns. The revolt was speedily put down.

Again in 1294 trouble erupted on a serious scale throughout Wales led by Madog ap Llywelyn and Morgan, distant relatives of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. Three baronial castles were taken and Harlech, Conwy and Criccieth were besieged. Caernarfon, still unfinished, the centre of royal power and symbol of Edward's imperial rule, fell to the rebels – the walls were pulled down and the new town burned. *'More than ever before, the rising was popular.'* (Morris 2008) Welsh resentment against English rule had been growing, encouraged by a familiar pattern of oppression and apartheid, in particular an unfair tax regime and the new expectations and demands of military service for the English.

As a result, Edward had the Welsh town of Llanfaes levelled and its inhabitants moved to a new site for a town on the other side of the island, named Newborough. Llanfaes was to be superseded by Beaumaris, another great castle, for the future security of Anglesey for the English Crown.

A century later, in the Wales of Owain Glyn Dwr's day, not much had changed. English authorities continued to struggle to impose any kind of authority, for example at Caernarfon, governmental centre for north Wales: *'It was difficult to escape a sense of tension in Caernarfon. The tiny town was encompassed by strong walls; its burgesses bore English names and took pride in them; they complained bitterly at the way the Welsh inhabitants of the hinterland were ignoring the town's commercial privileges'* (Davies 1997). Wales was a conquered country unconquered, with persistent ethnic tensions, leaderless and fragmented. The legacy and inheritance of the Princes of Gwynedd was to raise its head once again with the rise of Glyn Dwr and growing sense of Welsh nationalism.



3 Context

3.1 Audiences for the Princes of Gwynedd

A range of evidence was gathered to assess the potential audiences for interpretation of the Princes of Gwynedd. Since the variety of sites that could potentially feature interpretation or tell some part of the story of the Princes is so great (see Map 1), we have made generalisations for the regional (North Wales) spread of potential audiences, drawn from sources outlined in Appendix B and from consultations (see Appendices C and D). Audiences consist of:

- Family groups⁹ on holiday in the area from the UK, especially in peak season
- Adult visitors in couples, especially 55+ 'empty nesters'
- Local people, including Welsh speaking visitors and people resident in Wales
- People on Activity Holidays, especially people using the countryside for recreation
- More likely to be of white ethnicity
- From socio economic group ABC1
- School and education groups
- Special interest groups

Less well represented audiences include:

- 16-34 year olds
- C2DE socio economic groups
- BME groups
- Overseas visitors, although will be better represented for higher profile heritage sites e.g. Conwy
- The group travel market, although again more likely to get to higher profile heritage sites like Conwy

Some key characteristics of audiences are:

- There are more family group visits in the summer months (especially May, July and August) and more older couples visiting in the shoulder months
- Paid for attractions tend to be more seasonally dependent than free attractions
- Local people will be key repeat visitors for some of the free attractions close to neighbouring settlements (e.g. Ewloe castle, Dolbadarn, Penmon Priory)
- Many sites are also more likely to be frequented incidentally by walkers and cyclists as they are on key routes and public rights of way (e.g. Castell y Bere, Cymer Abbey) but are less accessible to the group travel market and less 'on the beaten track'
- Group sizes for visits are typically 3-4 people
- People are more likely to be motivated to visit by the scenery and landscape than for an interest in Welsh culture and history
- The weather is a key factor in influencing visits

⁹ Classed as adults with children under 16 years old



3.1.1 Target audiences

Our target audiences will comprise a combination of existing and less well represented visitors, ensuring that existing audience visits are consolidated through the proposed interpretive provision as well as finding ways of appealing to non visitors through new interpretive measures. We recognise that there are considerable overlaps between some of the groups and have therefore attempted to rationalise the target audiences into broad categories as far as possible.

The table below lists the target audiences and suggests the possible interests and expectations linked to each group, based on the research undertaken by previous Cadw studies (see Appendix B) and the consultations undertaken to inform this report.

Target audiences	Interests and expectations
Family groups on holiday	<p>Child friendly environment with plenty for the children to experience and opportunities to learn, play and explore as a unique part of the holiday</p> <p>Somewhere to go on the bad weather days</p> <p>A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery</p>
Local people and people resident in Wales	<p>Welsh language provision</p> <p>Places with authentic representation of Welsh culture and history including local history</p> <p>Events, festivals</p> <p>Opportunities to get involved as local 'custodians' of the heritage</p>
Older couples	<p>Visits with a degree of comfort and adequate facilities, scenery and views</p> <p>A distinctively Welsh experience (including culture and scenery)</p>
Activity holiday market	<p>Temporary halt locations with facilities as part of routes to add extra ingredient to experience</p> <p>Uniquely Welsh storylines, culture and history. Great scenery</p> <p>Wish to get "off the beaten track"</p>
Special interest groups	<p>Detailed site specific interpretation of Welsh history and heritage including its links with the surrounding landscape</p> <p>Wish to get "off the beaten track"</p> <p>Opportunity to find out more</p>
Overseas visitors	<p>Understanding what is on offer and how it links with the wider heritage of Wales and Wales in Europe</p>



	A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery
Group travel audiences	Understanding what is on offer through a brief 'taste' and on site experience focusing on the 'highlights' including scenery and views
	A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery
Schools and education groups	Bespoke catering to the National Curriculum for core subjects (such as the Princes of Wales) and group friendly facilities
	Attractions that are non weather-dependent
Young adults	Events, festivals
	Wish to get "off the beaten track"
	A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery
C2DEs	Understanding what is on offer and its relevance to them, how it links with the wider heritage of Wales and Wales in Europe. Family friendly interpretation.
	A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery
BME groups	Understanding what is on offer and its relevance to them, how it links with the wider heritage of Wales and Wales in Europe. Family friendly interpretation.
	A distinctively Welsh experience including culture and scenery
People with disabilities	Understanding what is on offer and what facilities are available to help plan a visit. Expectations of a range of media choices with which to experience the site and reasonable access provision including facilities such as WCs, seating, hearing loops in visitor centres etc

3.2 The strategic context

A range of strategies were reviewed. These have been summarised in Appendix A. The strategic context for this plan from the tourism context can be summarised as follows:

- Tourism needs sustainable growth including through:
 - Extending the season
 - Spreading visitors out/ signposting other places, destination management including at village and town level and built around key tourism hubs
 - Better use of visitor management
 - Improving access
 - Rationalised web and print material
 - Using cultural distinctiveness to help destinations stand out
- The quality of tourism infrastructure needs improving, including at individual attractions and for activities



- The countryside, mountains and coast of North Wales are key natural assets, alongside heritage product and attractions, and the range of activities on offer. There is a need to capitalise on these aspects that make the area so special
- Tourism needs to make more of opportunities offered by ICT and digital delivery
- More effective interpretation is needed to bring Welsh heritage to life. This needs to be multi-lingual and offer audiences an improved understanding of the Welsh historical context at each site, using cultural gateways
- There needs to be increased access to Welsh culture, including through language, music, story-telling, poetry and traditions, providing enriching, distinctive experiences
- Wales needs a positive, motivating identity as a destination, aimed at key audiences. The current brand 'The Big Country' focuses on the natural beauty of Wales. 'The Big Tickets' for North Wales also support this brand
- There is a need for more partnership working across Welsh tourism
- Towns and villages need an improved sense of place
- More information and provision of trails, routes, themes and clusters, cultural trails/ networks is needed
- There should be a focus on high level projects conveying a coherent message linked to the overall brand

3.3 Significance

At present, we are not aware of any Conservation Management Plans or Statements for any of the project sites. Where possible, the recommendations of this plan try to build on the significances of this collection of monuments, as far as we understand them today. However, it is equally apparent from the consultations that these significances are not widely understood or universally agreed. The consultation workshop, held in March 2010, with key stakeholders (see Appendix D), identified numerous debates over the significances of the sites we have linked to the Princes of Gwynedd. It is also clear that there is simply not as much known and understood about some of these sites, including their links with the Princes, as would be liked, to ensure authentic and appropriate interpretive provision. It will therefore be important that Cadw, in seeking to better understand and research the evolving significances and relationships between these sites, ensures that interpretation developments keep up with this.

3.4 Conservation

Any interpretation proposed will need to take into account the conservation needs of the monuments, (including the existing built form and sub surface archaeology) and their significances, including the setting and any documentary or collections-based material that goes with each monument.



Where measures to improve visitor access are suggested, it is expected that Cadw will assess and manage the risk potentially posed by these access improvements, including visitor management and interpretation measures.

Many of the sites under consideration are designated Scheduled Monuments and/or Listed Buildings. Many are also situated in the boundaries of Snowdonia National Park (see map 1 for the extent of the National Park). This means that the sites and monuments and their settings are protected by the planning system.

3.5 Collections and archives

The sites visited as part of this study were notably devoid of collections or references to collections associated with each site¹⁰. Criccieth castle, Llys Rhosyr (Pritchard Jones Institute) and to a lesser extent Conwy castle, were the only sites with exhibitions that featured collection items, although many of the Churches contained interpretation for the items, fittings and fixtures of that Church, linked to the Churches' past.

However, there are important collections associated with many of these sites, which are even alluded to in some of the interpretation (e.g. at Dolforwyn castle, in the material produced for the previous Princes of Gwynedd Interpretation initiative). Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery has been considered as a potential part of a new interpretive scheme for the Princes of Gwynedd, and does contain collections relevant to the story. We also understand that the National Museum Wales (National Museum Cardiff) may hold some collections of relevance. The churches contain items of relevance to the story, such as the choir stalls from Llanfaes Priory at St Mary's Beaumaris and this material could be an important inspiration for artworking and interpretive approaches.

Documentary and archival sources are widely referenced in the interpretation and are of considerable significance to understanding the story of the Princes of Gwynedd, (for example references to the Brut y Tywysogion, other Welsh and English Chronicles, the Law of Hywel and the Black Book of Chirk, references to Gerald of Wales and his 12th century writings about Medieval Wales, the surviving letters of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd and the Mabinogian (ancient Welsh stories). However there is no direct signposting to where you can see these documents or find out more about them.

A key recommendation that follows is the potential of the Princes of Wales sites to be conveyed through 'storytelling' interpretation in the Welsh style.

3.5.1 Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery

*"The aim of Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery is to contribute towards the understanding of the history and culture of Gwynedd and its people by collecting, caring for and by providing access to its collections so that everyone can share its rich heritage."*¹¹

¹⁰ We were unable to access the interior exhibition at Valle Crucis which we believe may contain displays with collection items

¹¹ See the museum's website at Gwynedd County Council (April 2010): http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/gwy_doc.asp?cat=3657&doc=13261&Language=1



As perhaps the most important repository for collections and artefacts in the study area, the museum's relationship with the interpretation of the Princes of Gwynedd is important in terms of the supporting role the museum can play in helping visitors and local people alike understand the history and culture of Gwynedd. *"This is Gwynedd's only general museum. Learning about the ways of life led by previous generations helps us to place our own experiences in the context of an unfolding story."*

There is potential for the museum to be referenced and signposted from Cadw sites. There is also great potential for the museum's collections to be represented at Cadw sites and other places that tell the story of the Princes of Gwynedd to help illustrate and bring to life the life and times of the Princes.

In the archaeological collection, finds from all time periods are represented including representations linked to medieval trade and routeways, Christianity, patterned medieval tiles from Llanfaes and medieval finds from Owain Glyndwr's home at Sycharth.

The museum also holds collections of:

- Pottery, ceramics and pewter table ware
- Traditional Welsh furniture including dressers, tables, chests and chairs
- Costume and traditional Welsh costume
- Welsh 'slate art' and carved horn art
- stones and grave slabs

3.5.2 National Museum Cardiff

Finds of national importance from all over Wales are usually held by the National Museum Cardiff (National Museums Wales). Of relevance to this study, the medieval collections and later¹² include early Church and monastic items, the swords, spears and arrowheads from times of warfare in 'various Welsh castles', domestic secular finds from town and country, from buckets to jewellery, seal matrices, floor tiles and ceramics.

The Collections Strategy for delivering Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales' Vision¹³

includes medieval and later significant collections from medieval sites of national importance (many in the Guardianship of Cadw), in particular castles and abbeys. The list includes:

- The Magor Pill boat (best-preserved 13th-century boat in Britain)
- National collection of medieval seal matrices and impressions (well documented).
- National reference collection of medieval ceramics
- National collection of medieval floor tile (fully published)
- Stone sculpture collection of national importance, including surviving elements from the chapter house door, Strata Florida
- Growing collection of medieval and later gold and silver jewellery

¹² See National Museum Wales's website (April 2010): www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/113/

¹³ Available to download (April 2010) from <http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/en/collections/use/>



- Individual artefacts of iconic significance (e.g. the stone head of Llywelyn from Deganwy, the 'Levelinus' stone, the armorial mount from Harlech bearing the arms of Owain Glyn Dwr)
- Individual artefacts of high quality and national importance on archaeological, artistic, historical or technological grounds (e.g. Raglan ring, Kemeys rood figure, Llandaf ivory diptych, Oxwich brooch)

Clearly there is scope to bring representations of the collections, be they replicas or images, into pre visit and on site interpretation for some locations to support the stories of everyday life in the Wales of the Princes. In addition, visitors can be signposted to the national museums so that those that wish can find out more, helping support a better understanding of the work of Cadw and the national museums of Wales and the range of processes in terms of archaeology, conservation, recording, researching, interpreting and archiving.

3.6 Relationships to other plans

This interpretation plan crosses over with a number of storylines that are also due to be interpreted at Cadw sites in Wales. These include:

- The castles and town walls of Edward I
- The Princes of Deheubarth
- The Lords of the Southern March
- Owain Glyn Dwr

3.6.1 Cadw commissioned plans

A conference call was held with consultants of the Interpretive Plans for the Lords of the Southern March, Princes of Deheubarth and Owain Glyn Dwr studies to discuss synergies in approach and potential overlaps between the projects. The following table illustrates these findings:

Princes of Deheubarth	Lords of the Southern March	Owain Glyn Dwr
A major force in south west Wales (central and eastern Wales) and part of the native dynasties that when united with the Princes of Gwynedd posed a threat to the stability of the English realm	Strong links between the Princes story and the Lords of the Southern March	Glyn Dwr had links with all the former Welsh Princely dynasties
As a rival dynasty to the Princes of Gwynedd in the 12 th century, the Princes of Deheubarth could also oppose the Princes of Gwynedd and weaken their hold on Wales, undermining Welsh unity	These are complex stories to understand – need to strike the balance between simplifying the stories and conveying enough information	Alliances/ marriages very important to the background/ context



Princes of Deheubarth	Lords of the Southern March	Owain Glyn Dwr
Understanding how the geography of Wales affected the story is important	Understanding how the geography of Wales affected the story is important	Harlech represents a major overlap with the Castles and Town Walls Plan and Glyn Dwr
Note the influences of Pan European religious trends e.g. monastic settlement	Note the influences of Pan European religious trends e.g. monastic settlement	Similarly changes in land, tenure, inheritance also affected Glyn Dwr
Note the contrasts between the social organisation of the Princes and the Marchers	Note the contrasts between the social organisation of the Princes and the Marchers	Aberystwyth is in need of interpretation
Stories subject to tides of influence/ adaptations: complex	Stories subject to tides of influence/ adaptations: complex	Marketing key to the success of interpretation – should be marketing key sites that ‘every Welsh person should visit’
Key difference is that South Wales was affected by colonisation rather than conquest	Key difference is that south Wales was affected by colonisation rather than conquest	
	Marcher Lords also represent foreign power in Wales – which the Welsh don’t want to celebrate	

It is clear that this study aligns very closely with the story of the Princes of Deheubarth, a dynasty of similar status and cultural background to the Princes of Gwynedd. Both studies will focus on a mixture of site types as potential locations to convey aspects of the story of the Princes, including religious houses and castles. The story of the power struggles both dynasties had with other rivals in Wales, the Marcher lords and the English Crown will be a crucial, if complex, point to convey.

Glyn Dwr’s story is about the growing sense of a Welsh state and Welsh unity, united under a national hero, tying in with the story of the Princes of Wales. Indeed Glyn Dwr was almost seen as successor to the Princes of Gwynedd. Potential ways of linking the interpretation approach could be through the use of the Coat of Arms of the Princes of Gwynedd as a logo – as suggested in the Owain Glyn Dwr planned approach. In terms of marketing, there is the potential to market these sites as ‘must see’ attractions.

Finally we are aware that the plans for the spiritual and inspirational landscapes have yet to be commissioned. However, there are clear parallels between the Princes of Gwynedd and the ways sites associated with them are embedded in the landscape or linked to spiritual Wales, Welsh legend and the early Church.



3.6.2 The Welsh Cultural Heritage Initiative

Cadw celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2009 and was consequently awarded £2million from the Welsh Assembly Government for a new Cultural Heritage Initiative. The fund is to be targeted at sites of particular significance to Welsh culture, heritage and nationhood and will enhance physical and intellectual access to 10 sites within Wales.

'The works will ensure that the sites are conserved, made safe and are both physically and intellectually accessible. It is hoped that these sites will be better able to contribute to local community and national aspirations to regenerate communities and maximise cultural and heritage tourism, community identity and lifelong learning.' (the Cadw website)

In particular all sites that will receive funding will have close links with the medieval Welsh Princes and with match funding will be able to attract up to £3.1 million. The focus will also be on the human stories associated with these sites:

- Glyndyfyrdwy (Owain Glyn Dwr connections)
- Sycharth Castle (Owain Glyn Dwr connections)
- Castell Nanhyfer (Princes of Deheubarth connections)
- Cefn Caer, Pennal (Owain Glyn Dwr connections)
- Strata Florida (Princes of Deheubarth connections)
- **Abbey Cwm Hir (Princes of Gwynedd connections)**
- Machynlleth parliament (Owain Glyn Dwr connections)
- **Abergwngregyn Historic Landscape (Princes of Gwynedd connections)**
- **Llys Rhosyr (Princes of Gwynedd connections)**
- **Dinas Emrys (Princes of Gwynedd connections)**
- Tomen y Mur (Roman Wales connections)
- **Deganwy (Princes of Gwynedd)**

This means that the strategic recommendations from this plan for the Princes of Gwynedd has the potential to directly inform plans on individual site level. It should be noted that the priorities for this funding for Deganwy and Dinas Emrys are for conservation rather than interpretation.

3.6.3 Rural Conwy Church Trails

Conwy County Borough Council has secured funding under the Rural Development Plan for Wales 2007-2013 to raise the profile of Churches and Chapels in rural Conwy through the development of interpreted walking and public transport trails between the churches, offering visitors the opportunity to travel between Churches in the Conwy Valley to learn about and enjoy their history, culture and heritage. Since many of the sites linked to the Princes of Gwynedd are religious buildings, including churches, there are important potential links between the projects.

The following Churches correspond with both this study and the Rural Conwy Church Trails project:

- Church of St Mary, Trefriw
- St Grwst Church and Gwydir Chapel, Llanwrst
- Llanrhychwyn Church (near Trefriw above the Conwy valley)



The Church Trails Project was still at planning stage at the time of writing. However, consultation about the links between the reports indicates that:

- The brand name for the Church Trails Project will be 'Sacred Doorways'
- Story clusters of Churches could be brought together, including The Princes of Gwynedd, the Wynns of Gwydir, celtic and druid pilgrimage, holy wells pilgrimage, Thomas Telford, droving and the landscape
- These need to fall into a wider brand for rural Conwy due to its important landscapes
- The churches represent an important opportunity for family history research
- Each site will have its own interpretation board and leaflet. Boards within the Churches will be movable. All leaflets will include maps showing other churches in the cluster (e.g. Princes of Gwynedd)
- Each trail will have external interpretation boards with a stylised black steel frame
- St Marys (Trefriw) will have a panel on the road to help draw people down the road to the church
- St Grwst will have a panel on the gates to draw people to the churchyard from the town square. There is also a feasibility study underway to set up a small interpretation centre nearby
- Living history events will also support the interpretation delivery for the church trails, comprised of local guides managed by a local Community Enterprise company

Therefore the delivery of interpretation on the Princes of Gwynedd can tie in with the Rural Conwy Church Trails Project and there may be opportunity for both projects to add value to each other.

3.7 Past interpretation of the Princes of Gwynedd

During consultations at site visits to Anglesey and the Pritchard Jones Institute, we were made aware of a previous initiative to interpret the Princes of Gwynedd in Gwynedd and Anglesey undertaken by Gwynedd County Council and launched in the 1990s. Bilingual leaflets, booklets and an Education Pack were still on offer from the Pritchard Jones Institute.

3.7.1 Leaflets and tours

The leaflets are simply titled 'Princes of Gwynedd' (Tywysogion Gwynedd) with a crown and sword motif. It advertises a holiday tour targeted at the US holiday market 'The Princes of Gwynedd Trail', priced in \$US '*for the individual who seeks something a little different from the ordinary*'. The package includes a week's accommodation, car hire, admissions to attractions, and Princes information pack and is endorsed by popular author Sharon Penman. The visit begins with a stop off at Penrhyn castle, a neo-Norman fantasy castle near Conwy, to view the Princes of Gwynedd exhibition. The rest of the tour includes stopping at Conwy, Pen y Bryn (Aber), chapels of the Conwy valley, Dolwyddelan castle, Cymer Abbey, Castell y Bere, Harlech and Criccieth (plus the exhibition). Also Beddgelert, Dinas Emrys, Dolbadarn, Aberffraw, Beaumaris (St Mary's Church) and Penmon Priory.



It is clear that this experience of the Princes of Gwynedd was supported by a number of exhibitions that are not in place now, including a major exhibition at Penrhyn castle (National Trust), and a small display at Oriel Ynys Mon in Llangefni. Visits to Pen y Bryn, Aber, were also available, by appointment.

Five independent trails are also suggested in the same leaflet *'to guide you around a selection of sites throughout the county which have connections with the 12th and 13th century Princes of Gwynedd'*: Each trail at one time had its own leaflet with further information.

- Central Gwynedd Trail – Dolbadarn (prison of Owain), Beddgelert (legends and priory site), Criccieth castle (Llywelyn Fawr connection) and Clynog Fawr (Tudor Church with shrine of St Bueno)
- North Coast Trail – Conwy (Aberconwy Abbey at the Church and Llywelyn's Hall), Aber (court of the Prince – hill, tower and mound), Bangor Cathedral (ancient religious site)
- Mon (Anglesey) Trail – Aberffraw (Court and symbol – Llys Llywelyn), Oriel Ynys Mon (exhibition in Llangefni), Llanfaes (remains of), Penmon Priory (Augustinian Priory), St Mary's Church, Beaumaris
- Nant Conwy Trail – Deganwy, Caerhun (Roman fort and ford), Trefriw (connections with Llywelyn Fawr), Betws y Coed (effigy of a descendant of Dafydd ap Gruffudd in the Church), Gwydir Church, Llanwrst
- South Gwynedd Trail – Dolwyddelan castle, Cymer Abbey, Castell y Bere

The Mon Trail – Passion and Survival – Discover the Real History of the Princes of Gwynedd is a leaflet previously distributed in Anglesey, providing a trail around churches, chapels and courts of the Princes, supported by exhibitions at Newborough and Oriel Mon. Sites on the trail included Llys Rhosyr, Aberffraw, St Cybi's foundation at Holywell, Hen Capel Lligwy (12th and 14th century chapel ruin), Camaes (former Llys site with historic church), Penmon and St Seiriol's well – connections with Owain Gwynedd and Llywelyn Fawr, Llanfaes, Llangefni (Oriel Ynys Mon) and Beaumaris (castle and Church).

3.7.2 Booklet

The booklet to go with the five above (Gwynedd County Council initiative) trails is entitled 'Courts, Castles and Churches' was designed to provide more detailed historical information about the trail sites. Whilst the style, especially the cover, is somewhat old fashioned, the text is broken down into very reader friendly chunks of information that explains the background and complexities of the Princes story very well. More pictures would help.

3.7.3 Education Pack

The Education Pack, aimed at Key Stages 2 and 3, retailed at £5 and included a 'dramatic 20 minute programme' on VCR for schools plus a 24 page booklet in both English and in Welsh. It encouraged schools to travel back to age of the Princes, focusing on the lives of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (1170 – 1282). The booklet contains suggestions for practical classroom work based on the video and assessing archaeological and documentary evidence. It supports the curriculum through:



- Building chronological awareness, e.g. when the Age of the Princes fits in to the bigger picture
- Understanding lordship and homage
- Understanding court life
- Understanding weapons and warfare
- Understanding how the landscape influenced history e.g. communication, settlements, courts, defence, resources
- Why there was conflict between England and Wales
- Why the Princes supported monastic foundations
- Welsh towns
- Living conditions at different levels of society
- Encouraging assessment of different viewpoints and source material
- Investigating sites associated with the Princes
- Studying archaeological evidence

The pack focuses on the following sites:

- Dolwyddelan castle
- Dolbadarn castle
- Castell y Bere
- Criccieth castle
- Abergwngregyn
- Llanfaes Priory
- Aberconwy Abbey
- Builth Wells
- Castell y Bere

In addition, Rhuddlan – Gruffudd ap Llywelyn's 11th century Court, Aberffraw, Montgomery castle, Hawarden castle and Dolforwyn castle are also mentioned.

The story presented is successful in weaving the story of the Princes as individual rulers around the sites above, whilst explaining important but complex reoccurring themes such as Welsh laws, homage, castles and courts, inheritance and treaties. It indicates a range of ways in which the history curriculum can use sites and evidence linked to the Princes.

A key recommendation of this study would be to review the uptake and success of these initiatives. However we understand from consultation that the relevant data was never collected from the Gwynedd Council initiative, which only ran for three seasons before it was dismantled/ print runs ceased. There are clear opportunities to reuse some of the material, in particular from the published booklet, which can be updated, and to develop the trails approach as taken up in the Sharon Penman Princes of Gwynedd website (see following section).

3.8 Princes of Gwynedd online

There is a dedicated website for the Princes of Gwynedd: <http://www.princesofgwynedd.com/> that offers guides to historical attractions associated with the Princes, focusing on those mentioned in Sharon Penman's popular trilogy based on Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.



“This website is intended to assist you in locating and exploring these historical sites. Follow the footsteps of the Princes of Wales on the circular car tours, or you can make up your own route from the sites that interest you most. There are also a few walks including visiting the majestic Aber Falls and the beautiful peaceful church at Llanrhychwyn.”

The site uses Betws y Coed as hub and places the emphasis on Snowdonia National Park as the place to explore the Princes (although parts of Anglesey are also included).

6 driving tours are suggested:

- Deganwy castle, Conwy and Abergwngregyn
- Llanwrst and Trefriw
- Anglesey, including Penmon Priory, Llanfaes, Beaumaris, Newborough and Aberffraw
- Bangor, Caernarfon and Llanberis (Dolbadarn castle)
- Dinas Emrys, Beddgelert, Criccieth castle, Dolwyddelan castle
- Denbigh, Basingwerk and Rhuddlan

Accommodation links are also provided. The crossover with the castles and towns of Edward I is very evident within the tours.

The site also includes an excellent factfile for people wanting to find out more about the Princes of Gwynedd, including life in a Welsh court, inheritance in Wales, law and order (including women's rights), castle decoration, weaponry and the medieval Welsh Church.

The bilingual site is part funded by the National Park Authority, Tourism Partnership North Wales and the Welsh Language Board.





4 SWOT Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The SWOT analysis has been informed following a review of sites visited (see appended audits) and consultations (see appendix C).

STRENGTHS

- Intriguing range of sites, in superb scenic and at times dramatic locations.
- Churches offer real atmosphere and sense of place
- Sites make you feel as though you are seeing 'hidden Wales' – it is rewarding to find them
- Castles are impressive – command their territory from lofty strategic positions and feel like they are an organic part of the landscape. Distinctive Welsh features
- Stories associated with the Princes are packed with human drama and events – betrayal, war, heartbreak, imprisonment, romance, adultery
- Lots of overlap with the story of the castles of Edward I, which were often built on or close to sites linked to the Princes
- The Princes are on the Welsh history curriculum
- The Princes have achieved a raised profile through popular literature and TV more recently e.g. Sharon Penman novels and website, Tywysogyon SC4 production and website

WEAKNESSES

- Many sites have a low profile and are unknown visitor attractions or the most impressive monuments in terms of their physical presence
- Many sites lost in the landscape altogether, or subsumed by later developments e.g. Aberconwy Abbey, Abergwngregyn
- History of the Princes of Gwynedd and the Age of the Princes not well understood even locally
- Complex story to convey, including how medieval Wales operated under the various principalities and the systems within this as compared with the more bureaucratic structures that Edward then tried to impose
- Also complex differences between the Church of Wales and the Church of England
- Links between some sites and the Princes are tenuous e.g. monastic sites
- Existing interpretive provision is very limited and inconsistently applied
- Some sites offer a disappointing visit
- There is some repetition of information between sites and interpretation can be rather general
- Guided tours offered in some of the Cadw guidebooks are extremely hard to follow
- Information and interpretation not offered in a range of formats
- Inaccessible sites including closed churches and information centres, including the interpretation within them which can be hard to find
- Remote sites hard to find e.g. hill top fortifications
- Physical access challenges to hilltop sites such as Deganwy, Dolforwyn, Bere
- Poor signage/ orientation to and around sites
- Some sites not set up to take visitors



- Archaeological sites lacking in public access or interpretation
- No information about ongoing research or finds
- There has been a history of short term funding for interpretation initiatives such as trail literature which fail to fulfil their potential due to the lack of funds to re-print material (in particular)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Potential to use vantage points presented at many of the sites to interpret the landscape of the Princes of Gwynedd
- Interpretation need not be site specific – it is the story of the Princes of Gwynedd in medieval Gwynedd that is to be told and this to some extent transcends individual sites
- Potential to provide links between specific sites and build on existing efforts to do this
- Links to Church Trails project – strong story but low key interpretation
- Target different interpretive packages to different audiences
- Potential to overlap with the interpretation in the Edwardian Castles and towns: opportunity to present the Welsh story of the conflict
- Use reconstructions to provide venue for live interpretation
- Potential to improve public realm/ sense of place at key sites through low key improvements e.g. in villages like Trefriw
- Potential to support storytelling with objects from the excavations and museum stores – public access and display in partnership with local museums
- Potential to build on the oral tradition of the Princes of Gwynedd and deliver interpretation through means which allude back to this

THREATS

- Lack of infrastructure for some sites including road signage, car parking, public transport links, facilities
- Offer lacks a wow factor or flagship product at present (e.g. World Heritage Site castle)
- Delivery will require a reliance on ongoing partnership working to make investment pay off (e.g. the coming together of promotion and marketing, site improvements, ongoing maintenance and evaluation)
- Overdevelopment of the visitor product could undermine the intangible qualities of some of the key sites
- Lack of agreement about the history of some of the key sites, academic disputes and unpublished work could undermine authenticity of interpretive messages and delivery, diluting sense of place



5 A Critical Review

The following review summarises the consultant team's observations to date and are drawn from our experiences visiting the sites, as represented in the site audits (see appended) and from consultation with various stakeholders (see appendix C).

5.1 The Princes of Gwynedd 'product'

The 'Princes of Gwynedd' as a heritage product in Wales is currently ill defined and not apparent. There are places where strong references to the Princes are made, e.g. Criccieth, Dolwyddelan, the Pritchard Jones Institute, but these appear isolated and incoherent within the wider historic environment. If a person from outside Wales wanted to go to somewhere in Wales where they could find out about the Princes of Gwynedd, they may well end up somewhere in modern-day Gwynedd with the feeling that somehow they had missed something. It is also likely that whilst the Welsh themselves may have a better awareness of the Princes, the sites they would link with them would be the ones they themselves have local knowledge of. Partly due to the strength of the World Heritage Site designation, the castles and town walls of Edward I that so closely tie into the story of the Princes, form a far more prominent and better linked offer. Consultations confirm that, apart from a localised effort to interpret this story in Gwynedd fifteen years previously, this story remains hidden within the wider heritage product of, in the main, North West Wales.

The other challenge for interpreting the Princes of Gwynedd across the sites we have identified is, as discussed in the stakeholder consultation workshop, the massive geographic range of sites and places associated with this story. Whilst the majority are in North West Wales, there are outposts in mid and South Wales, such as Dolforwyn and Montgomery, Abbey Cwm Hir and Cilmeri that are a long way from a family's holiday base, say, at Betws y Coed. This means that the story will keep 'popping up' amidst a sea of other information about Marcher Lords, Princes of Deheubarth etc. It makes by far the most sense to concentrate the focus of a Princes of Gwynedd scheme on the heartland of historic Gwynedd, and refer really keen visitors to further outposts from there.

Many of the sites we have considered as potential assets to support the Princes of Gwynedd offer have only tenuous links with the story and do not offer visitors any obvious reasons or 'hook' to visit. They are also ill prepared for an increase in the number of visitors, due to a lack of basic infrastructure and poor access on a number of levels.



5.2 Pre Visit information

The main sources of pre-visit information on the sites we have considered are the printed publicity leaflets for Cadw sites such as Valle Crucis, “*I am a remarkably complete Cistercian Abbey*”. This leaflet focuses on the site’s connections with the Cistercians and makes no reference to any connection with any of the Princes of Wales. References to other Cadw sites in the area are made, including Dolwyddelan, Gwydir Chapel, Conwy castle and Town Walls, Plas Mawr, Rhuddlan castle and Flint castle. Criccieth castle, Dolbadarn, Dolwyddelan and Conwy castles also benefit from similar leaflets in the set. Some of the historic Churches have their own leaflets, although these are unlikely to have been distributed far from the Church itself. Llys Rhosyr also advertises via a simple bilingual leaflet ‘*Discovering a Royal Court of the Welsh Princes*’, and the National Trust offer information in leaflet form for Craflwyn. However, little direct reference to the Princes of Gwynedd is made and some sites have very little pre visit presence whatsoever (e.g. Ewloe castle, Basingwerk Abbey, Abergwngregyn, Deganwy castle, Cymer Abbey).

The web presence for the Princes of Gwynedd is dominated by the Princes of Gwynedd walks and driving tours website, based on the Sharon Penman novel, discussed earlier in this report. The strapline: ‘*Visit the North Wales Locations of Sharon Penman's 'Princes of Gwynedd' Novels*’ instantly deters those who are not aware of the Penman trilogy. Wikipedia offers 27 pages on the Kingdom of Gwynedd, symptomatic of the level of interest in this subject. However, obvious sites and locations are not easy to pick out.

The Cadw website brings up the Heritage Tourism Project when you search under Princes of Gwynedd, and also Rhuddlan castle in variations of this search. A news article about the Uncovering of Dolforwyn castle in 2003 also appears which references Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. In general the site offers little to help the visitor discover the Princes of Gwynedd – you have to know what you are looking for first – preferably a site name, from one of the following monument categories (see picture).



The Visit Wales website refers to castles under ‘*Things to do – Wales Top 10*’. However there is no reference to the Princes of Gwynedd (or any other dynasties). In ‘*short break itineraries*’ ‘*The Secret Castles of Wales*’ are presented, based on castles of South Wales. Whilst Owain Glyn Dwr gets a mention in the history of Wales section ‘*the last native Welsh person to hold the title Prince of Wales*’, none of the Princely dynasties are mentioned.



5.3 Orientation – between sites

There is little direct referral from one site to the next when actually visiting one of the attractions. Site references tend to cluster between those of common ownership (e.g. the Cadw sites) and geography (e.g. the Anglesey sites). Cadw's guidebooks 'group' Welsh castle sites based on geography which may spread awareness of different sites across an area, if the guidebooks are widely available enough to get into people's hands before their visit. Ewloe and Flint and Dolforwyn and Montgomery are twinned together whilst Dolyddelan, Dolbadarn Castell y Bere are in a trio. Monastic sites, such as Valle Crucis and Cymer Abbey, tend to refer to other monastic sites in Wales, such as Tintern Abbey and Strata Florida. This approach tends to silo visitors into 'castles' visitors or 'abbey' visitors. Some sites offer no information whatsoever and have no guidebook e.g. Deganwy.

On the other hand, several of the sites visited were part of a wider visitor offer, for example a Heritage Park or Country Park, and therefore benefit from being part of a 'critical mass' of attractions in one area. There are opportunities for Cadw to work with partners such as the Greenfield Valley Heritage Trust, Wepre Park, Padarn Park etc to promote these sites' special qualities within that wider offer, as well as sharing facilities and maintenance costs.

The promotion of other Princes of Gwynedd sites within a similar geographic cluster would help reinforce the presence of this story theme and the diversity of sites it has to offer.

5.4 Getting there

Having assumed that visitors will know that the sites audited have some connection with the Princes of Gwynedd and therefore feel inspired to visit, the next problem that follows is locating some of the sites. Whilst some Cadw sites (Valle Crucis, Castell y Bere, Dolforwyn) have adequate signposting including brown signs to help guide visitors to the approach by road, many others do not. Penmon Priory still feels somewhat 'hidden away' which adds to the remote feel and special magic of the site, but could also hinder access to the site.

Deganwy, Ewloe castle, Dolbadarn and Basingwerk Abbey were not easy places to navigate to, partly due to their location within wider visitor attractions (Wepre Park and Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, both in Flintshire; Padarn Country Park, Gwynedd). All give the impression that these sites are primarily accessed by local people who know their way around the footpath networks of the area, for example as dog walkers. You would not know that any of the sites were there by looking out for them, as they are in effect hidden within their landscape context until you get quite close. By contrast, sites such as Criccieth and Montgomery castles benefit from their strong visible presence which does help navigation. However, with Montgomery, Deganwy and Dolwyddelan, whilst finding the site from arrival car parks/ the nearby settlement/ railway station was relatively easy, getting to it from there was another matter due to the absence of wayfinding information.



In terms of the other non-Cadw sites noted as part of this study, locating churches was relatively straightforward by seeing the tower (rather than any helpful signage). However, in locations like Beaumaris where there are more than one church building, going to the wrong one is very easy. Llanrhychwyn Church was hard to find, again adding to its remote appeal. It was not easy to find Dinas Emrys, in part due to its identity as part of the National Trust's wider Craflywyn site at the foot of Snowdon. You really have to search for it within the guided walks leaflet to find the right trail. Finding Aberffraw and Abergwngregyn villages was straightforward but the 'arrival point' within those villages was not, leaving you feeling as though you have come to the wrong place. There is absolutely nothing to indicate the site of the former Abbey at Maenan unless you are very persistent. By contrast, signposting to Llys Rhosyr and the Pritchard Jones Institute was excellent.

Few of the sites visited seem to be accessible by public transport, unless you are a very good planner and map reader, or know the area well, and are willing to walk the extra mile(s). Those located in settlements on the bus network or main roads between settlements include Criccieth, Montgomery, Beddgelert, Dinas Emrys, Deganwy, Trefriw, Llanwrst, Beaumaris, Newborough, Aberffraw, Valle Crucis and the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park. However, for some places the bus timetabling options may be rather limiting. Conwy, Deganwy and Ewloe are possibly the only sites accessible from the main rail network. Cadw's website gives map grid references for map and co-ordinates for GPS for each Cadw site on the website, and also advice on how to get there by train, bus, cycle (through a connection with the Sustrans site) and footpath.

Many of the sites are most likely to be accessed today by ramblers and walkers using the countryside, due to their rural locations. In particular, Ewloe, Penmon Priory, Deganwy, Abergwngregyn, Llanrhychwyn Church, Dinas Emrys, Castell y Bere, Dolforwyn, Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan are all either on popular walks or require countryside walking to get to them. Therefore signage in addition to the Rights of Way signage in existence is required and often welcome for people who may come across the sites by accident, e.g. those on activity breaks in Wales. Castell y Bere, Llanrhychwyn Church, Cymer Abbey and some of the quieter villages such as Aberffraw are also on or close by cycle friendly routes yet most sites do not seem to have cycle stands, as fitted in the car park at Castell y Bere, for example.

5.5 Approach and welcome, facilities



Facilities vary widely from site to site. In some locations, it would be inappropriate to expect facilities, such as toilets, close by, for example when in the more remote countryside such as Penmon Priory, Castell y Bere or Llanrhychwyn Church. Many venues are in towns that are already well set up for tourists, such as Conwy, Llanwrst, Trefriw, Montgomery, Beaumaris, Criccieth and Beddgelert. There is a very evident divide between 'remote' sites, where there are no facilities, and those that are in (or close by) settlements.



The welcome and sense of arrival for the various sites also ranges from good (e.g. the car park welcome panel at Dolforwyn castle, signposting and facilities at Llys Llywelyn, Aberffraw) to non existent (Llanrhychwyn Church, Abergwngregyn). Sites that would benefit from a better approach/ arrival and welcome include Ewloe castle, Basingwerk Abbey (which needs a higher profile within the park), the Pritchard Jones Institute, Penmon Priory, Abergwngregyn which is currently not set up to receive visitors, Deganwy castle, Dinas Emrys (which needs a higher profile within the Craflywyn offer), Cymer Abbey and Dolbadarn.



Some of the historic churches visited were better at welcoming visitors than others, for example through providing clear welcome and information in the Church porch inviting you within the building (St Mary's Beaumaris was good at this). For visitors who are less comfortable culturally visiting churches, some appropriate welcoming encouragement in both pre visit information and at the gates/ entrance porch to the churches would help. Coupled with readily apparent interpretation, e.g. close to the entrance once you get inside, this would help people feel confident in exploring the building. We found the issue of gaining access to the keys for some of the churches particularly difficult, as it is not always apparent where to go to get the key (e.g. signs refer to the vicarage – how do you know which building this is?).

Some sites audited as part of this study cannot be considered a visitor attraction at present – such as the site of Maenan Abbey, now the Maenan Abbey Hotel, and the small villages of Abergwngregyn and Trefriw. There is, however, potential to provide public realm/ artwork at these sites to enhance sense of place as people pass through those sites. Aberffraw already manages this well through village signposting and sculpture. This type of project would need to be done with the local community to ensure community buy in and ownership.

5.6 Orientation – on site

Adequate on-site orientation varies widely from site to site. The current interpretive package for Cadw sites places a heavy reliance on the souvenir guidebook for orientation, maps and plans and a site tour. Whilst guidebooks are available for all the Cadw sites under scrutiny for this study, they may not be readily available to buy in the nearby area for many of these sites, for example when visiting somewhere like Ewloe castle which has no shops or tourism information centre in the nearby area, other than the Country Park Visitor Centre which is closed out of season.



In addition consultations indicate that the guidebooks are used as a 'souvenir' to be read after a visit or when stationary at least, rather than actively carried round and consulted for orientation and information purposes. This is hardly surprising given that the guidebook covers do not do anything to imply that they are the key means of getting more from your visit. Conwy castle's guidebook, for example, does not even mention on the cover that it also includes a sizeable section on the town walls.

The tours provided also tend to be hidden away in the guidebook, usually after a considerable chapter on the monument's history. The tour itself is lengthy, detailed and not very user friendly. To use on site would require the visitors' heads to be mainly in the guidebook, rather than looking round them taking in the place. They are also, in places, extremely hard to follow, with unhelpful references to features like 'curtain wall', 'inner bailey' and 'north west tower'.

The churches visited nearly all had some form of visitor leaflet or reference book to refer to, with varying degrees of information and orientation. At best there would be a numbered plan of the building to help identify key features of interest and which works best if you can carry it around with you.

Sites that really lack orientation included Aberffraw, at which you arrive at the café and gallery (called Llys Llywelyn) but are not directed anywhere else/ encouraged to explore and find the village trail or church, for example. Others lacking orientation include Cadw sites such as Penmon Priory, where you have to follow your nose, Deganwy and Cymer Abbey which lack any orientation aid, and Castell y Bere, Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan where it is simply not clear where you are going/ what the site includes.

On all sites there is a lack of any information or interpretation that would help the visitor understand the site context within the landscape and the features and sites that can be viewed from what are often tower tops and craggy outposts with fine views. This is important because it helps answer fundamental questions about the place and enables audiences to build a more meaningful picture of how all the information they are taking in fits together e.g. why did the castle or llys need to be at this point on the river; where did they expect their foe to come from; where was the nearest town; why is the church here in relation to the town; who were they in the first place?

5.7 Events

Although there were no events on at the time of visiting, we were able to review events provision for 2010 online, via the Cadw events search engine, the Community Profiles for those sites that have them and through consultations with stakeholders.

Events for 2010 include:

- Guided walks, talks, family events and activities to help visitors enjoy the cultural and natural heritage of Wepre Park e.g. badger watch, micro-beasties tour, night walk to the castle by moonlight, bat walk
- Local fairs and festivals e.g. at Criccieth, Conwy
- Local Authority events programme for Anglesey including heritage based events



As this short list shows, there are few events advertised at any of the sites associated with the Princes, and it was hard to track down those that were. The Cadw search engine for events was particularly off-putting to use, since each site entered returned a 'no results' answer which makes one question why it is provided in the first place.

Events like the Conwy Feast Food Festival draw major visitor numbers in the off peak season. They also enable heritage monuments to showcase local arts and crafts. There are also opportunities to involve the heritage of the Princes of Gwynedd with local community events in and near to the sites.

In general the Cadw sites strongly linked with the Princes of Gwynedd tend to be low key attractions not benefiting from any events organised by Cadw at present. Those events that are taking place appear to have little or no reference to the Princes.

5.8 Access

As already implied from various sources in this report, **intellectual access** to the story of the Princes of Gwynedd is patchy across the existing interpretation for these sites. It is particularly unclear if and how historic churches and abbeys relate to this period of history or why they are important built heritage and of intangible significance to the time of the Princes. Opportunities to build the contextual story of Wales and Welsh life in the early medieval period are not taken at these sites. They do not link up with or reference other sites associated with the Princes such as llys, castles or settlements.

At castle/ fortress sites it is not abundantly clear how these sites differentiate themselves amongst the wider abundance of Welsh castles in Wales. For many sites there is a degree of uncertainty about who established which site and which tangible remainder of the castle, and, as indicated in the consultation workshop, there is a clear differentiation in the minds of many Welsh people between 'native' castles, such as Criccieth and Bere, and non-native castles, such as Beaumaris. However, for sites like Deganwy, they were occupied by a whole series of rivals. Existing Cadw interpretation has helped emphasise the important difference between native Welsh castle building styles when compared to those of the Marcher Lords or Edward I's building programme in Wales. This is part of an overall story of the spreading European influences and local adaptations. Clues as to whether the castles are perceived as 'native' and therefore of the Princes of Gwynedd (or other dynasties) or not (and are therefore valued differently) can be found on site, for example the painted coats of arms of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd at Bere and Ewloe. This value-set is a complex story to convey to visitors.

Finally understanding llys sites, be they excavated remains as at Llys Rhosyr, or in name only at villages like Aberffraw, Abergwngregyn and Trefriw is difficult when there is so little physical evidence to see and engage with. This almost undermines the motivation to visit. Using public realm design, low key interpretation that references the wider landscape setting and referring to archaeological finds and documentary evidence could help inspire the imagination.



Physical access poses major problems for many of the sites considered for this study. Castles and fortress sites tend to be high up on deliberately inaccessible crags or hilltops. These monuments are also physically demanding to explore, often with rough steps and walkways. Churches are also prone to physical access obstacles, such as steps and the buildings can often be very gloomy inside. Many of the sites are basically countryside sites on the public rights of way network, although those in towns/ villages tend to be more accessible and supported by more facilities.

Other sites are also rendered hard to access by **organisational issues** – for example the difficulties of obtaining a key for the closed church at Trefriw and the absence of information in the public domain about when the Pritchard Jones Institute is open to visitors.

Different **learning styles** are not currently catered for, for example people who learn through activity rather than passive engagement such as reading or listening. There is limited interpretation that appeals to the senses and opportunities to bring sights, sounds, touch and smells to the fore. In terms of fit with the National Curriculum, existing interpretation offers few opportunities for engagement with people in the past. In particular, the recently introduced topic 'The Age of the Princes' is perceived as an under-resourced and therefore difficult topic to teach at Key Stage 2, and there is therefore an important opportunity for this topic to be presented through new interpretation at many of the sites visited.

Conwy castle alone had a range of supplementary material (education pack) available for download, targeted at education groups but available to anyone. This includes suggested tasks designed to fit the curriculum and a good range of background information. There is also multilingual (Welsh and English) primarily pictorial information about the castle in 1300, the castle and town and different building features with excellent reconstruction drawings showing cut-away features.

Social and cultural access tends to favour people with an aptitude for exploring 'off the beaten track', including through walking through the countryside. As already mentioned, a degree of cultural familiarity with church buildings and the correct protocol for visiting churches also favours visitors from nationalities with a strong Christian heritage. You would also have to be very interested in and knowledgeable about Welsh history already to get the most out of visiting many of the sites. They would probably be particularly boring to children as there is so little for them to do.

The consistent plurality of information provided by the style of Cadw panels at all but one of the Cadw sites¹⁴ does serve to underline the essential Welshness of each location which helps reinforce sense of place. However, consultations undertaken by Cadw indicate that the formal style of the Welsh used in the panels, and the fact that it has been crudely translated from the English, undermines its purpose. In addition, Welsh consultees felt that the Welsh translation should be placed on the left hand side of the panel with the Welsh title at the top rather than the base, to reinforce the Welsh precedence.

¹⁴ For some reason Castell y Bere has a much older style panel

5.9 Overall interpretive provision

Overall interpretive provision across the sites visited was poor in terms of providing any focus on the Princes of Gwynedd. Some of the sites, Cymer Abbey and Deganwy in particular, were disappointing to visit. Other sites have their story subsumed behind the wider offer of the country park/ heritage park/ town they are in. Some, on the other hand, convey a 'hidden Wales' magic at which the heavy-handed use of new visitor infrastructure or on site interpretation would be ruinous.

The Cadw sites have a heavy reliance on the guidebooks to make meaning of each place, which cannot in all likelihood reach the vast majority of visitors to these sites. Most of the historic churches provide some form of printed information, if you are confident enough to hunt around for it. However, these are inconsistent and often intellectually heavy-going, bearing little if any reference to the Princes of Gwynedd and the Wales of their time. The latter is also true of the information provided at the abbey sites, which focus on the spread of monastic foundations in Wales and the life of the monks. The fact that the vast majority of sites are open and unstaffed also serves to limit what can reasonably be achieved at these sites.

Criccieth and Dolwyddelan castles both include exhibitions on the Princes of Gwynedd, which are like islands of story amidst a sea of disjointed snippets and vague references at other sites. Dolwyddelan castle has a simple panel-based exhibition themed on the Welsh Princes and Criccieth has an exhibition (unusually) featuring models and collection replicas in its foyer on the castles of the Welsh Princes, and in a lower area in the Visitor Centre a further exhibition on Gerald of Wales and the Welsh Princes, featuring a popular audio visual programme. The Pritchard Jones Institute also features a small exhibition on Llys Rhosyr and Welsh life, including collection finds and an AV show, but this is currently hard to access due to organisation issues regarding site opening.

The bulk of the on-site interpretation on Cadw sites is in the form of external panels, substrates protected by GRP (glass-reinforced polyester) facing held in a powder-coated steel frame. These panels have a distinctive curved top and come in two forms – a lectern arrangement with a twin-post tubular frame, and a wall-mounted panel in a metal frame. The panels are segregated bilingually and tend to be text-rich. In many instances they feature a cut-away section or reconstruction illustration of the monument which they refer to, which, whilst being helpful, is often on the small side.

With regard to content, the emphasis is on the building itself and its architectural features. For example, Dolbadarn has just a single panel which explains the functioning of the Keep but provides no information about the remains of other buildings and structures on site. Dolwyddelan, although it has a beautifully produced exhibition in its main internal space has only a single panel at the castle itself, one external panel remotely located at the car park and no other interpretation to explain in-situ features.





As stated in the previous section, there is a general absence of any information or interpretation that would help the visitor understand the site context within the landscape of medieval Wales, which is important to help visitors conceptualise a hidden medieval Wales, pre-Edwardian conquest and later development. Aside from Conwy castle with its Time Detectives trail there is generally no active engagement incorporated into any of the interpretation. Events and other family-friendly interpretation are generally absent from these out of the way sites and what remains is a little in-situ interpretation which is, in the main, static and passive.



6 A new approach

6.1 Introduction

The following suggestions offer a strategic approach to interpreting the Princes of Gwynedd. They will be developed in more detail on a site-specific basis in section 8.

6.2 Strategic approach

We have developed 3 maps that can be referred to alongside these recommendations. They illustrate:

- 1) The key sites referred to as part of this study and their broad 'type' (see map 1)
- 2) The interpretive recommendations put forward for some of these sites in the 2009 Atkins review (see map 2)
- 3) Site 'clusters' to help target audiences experience a taste of the hidden Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd (see map 3)

In order to address the current situation, outlined above, and to develop truly effective interpretation we need to employ an approach that can present interpretation on a number of levels to increase and maximise engagement with as wide a range of visitor audiences as possible. The following framework for the interpretation is proposed:

Pre-visit: ***Off-site access to interpretation which inspires people to visit.*** Over-arching interpretation for the composite site which can be used in conjunction with a branding and marketing campaign. Aimed at encouraging potential visitors to plan a visit and providing them with all the information and guidance they require, offering portable resources that can be taken with them from site to site.

On-site: ***Site-based interpretive provision for visitors.*** Interpretive experiences, media, resources and materials at each individual site which, along with any pre-visit info visitors have brought with them, can help them engage with the site and to identify and understand in-situ features and characteristics.

Near site: ***Linking interpretation.*** Waymarked routes and trails that link individual sites to other sites and features in the vicinity, that encourages people (not necessarily intending to visit e.g. walkers in the area) to explore a site in more depth, or extend their visit to additional sites.

Repeat visit: ***Adaptive interpretation to encourage repeat visits.*** Forms of interpretation that are updated on a regular basis, change throughout the year, e.g. to reflect changing seasons, festivals, commemorative dates etc and provide a multiplicity of options (such as a range of family-based interactive tours) which encourage visitors to return.



6.3 Pre-visit: off-site access to interpretation

Visitors to north west Wales should be made aware of, and inspired to visit, 'hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'. This could be presented as a package of suggested itineraries and must be seen almost as a juxtaposition to the castles and town walls of Edward I. The idea is that discovering the Princes of Gwynedd presents an exciting alternative experience of exploring the 'inspirational landscapes'¹⁵ of Wales, either for families looking for something different in a day out, local people wanting to explore and get involved in their heritage, people on activity holidays who can discover sites of the Princes incidentally through their walk/ cycle/ ride, special interest groups, guided tours etc. Different packages should be targeted towards the different audience groups, so that activity holiday makers can experience a bit of Welsh heritage and culture as part of their activity trip, or people on beach holidays from less well off and educated groups can try taster trips into the Welsh countryside to explore a Welsh castle and town.

Site 'clusters' as part of separate geographical itineraries have been suggested in Map 3.

Interpretive proposals will need to be aligned with a promotional branding and marketing campaign which attracts attention to the story of the Princes of Gwynedd, focusing on the two Llywelyns, and directs interested parties into visits, trips and itineraries through which they can try to discover the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd. This will include promotion within the education sphere, so that Welsh schools in particular are made aware of this important resource that can help support teaching of the Princes of Wales history module and any cross curricular links with this. The Princes experience should be promoted for Wales alongside and with equal weight to Castles and Town Walls of Edward I to the available press and media, including by:

- Establishing a website dedicated to 'hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd', linked to the Cadw website, Sharon Penman tours website, Visit Wales website etc. This can provide the over-arching themes, history and significance of sites that tell us about the era of the Princes as a group. Individual web pages for the main 'Princes' visitor attractions peppered with reconstruction illustrations with games, active links¹⁶, QTVRs¹⁷, activities and downloadable resources to enliven the interpretation and encourage people to see the range of sites and landscapes connected with the Princes of Gwynedd and visit different clusters in their locality.

¹⁵ One of the overarching Cadw themes

¹⁶ To explain terminology, provide a glossary of terms, further detailed drawings and illustrations, contemporary images etc.

¹⁷ Quick Time Virtual Reality - 360° panoramic photography from identified locations to enable people to transport into the monument or a reconstruction image of it



- Provide downloadable resources from the website: audio tours, trail leaflets and packs. These could be customised to suit the needs of different audiences e.g. more detailed resources for special interest groups, 'fun' packs for families with children, themed cycle routes or walks for those on Activity holidays, resources catering for different themes (life in 13th century Wales, the landscape setting and what you can see, skills and crafts in the 13th century etc). The beauty of the download includes the removal of any reliance on partners to find the revenue funding for the supply of new print runs.
- A simple audio tour can be embellished by maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture,¹⁸ relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion, a collection of native Welsh tales that has survived from the tradition of an official storyteller (known as *cyfarwydd* in Welsh) who received patronage from the royal court.
- An approach could be developed which reflects the importance of the Welsh oral tradition and adds drama to the interpretation, enabling it to be told through first-person interpreters in 'character', through audio tours, podcasts and filmed sequences as part of an audio visual experience. As an example, "*Whispers, shouts and screams*" could represent three kinds of story: '*whispers*' being mythical stories of folklore and tradition, '*shouts*' as if from rooftops, or in this case, castle tops, extolling and describing the magnificent landscape of the Princes, and '*screams*' evoking the turmoil of the age, the rivalry between the Princes and violent clashes with their foe.
- The new website should also be a platform for downloadable education resources on the subject of the Princes of Wales – the Princes of Gwynedd. Materials could include notes for teachers, downloadable packs and suggested itineraries, information about facilities and access, games and quizzes targeted at KS2 and 3 and so on.
- Provide bilingual 'Podscrolls' as a downloadable resource. These are miniature books which are ideal for providing self-guided trails. They incorporate maps, images and a small amount of text to create a series of pages which can be flicked through on the screen of a mobile phone or MP3 player.
- The new website should contain a link for people to instantly discover the huge range of sites that have strong links with the Princes of Gwynedd, even if there may be no tangible evidence of this today.

¹⁸ Wales has one of the earliest literary traditions in Northern Europe, going back to the second half of the 6th century. In Welsh literature the period before 1100 is known as the period of *Y Cynfeirdd* ("The earliest poets") or *Yr Hengerdd* ("The old poetry"). It roughly dates from the birth of the Welsh language from Brythonic to the arrival of the Normans in Wales towards the end of the 11th century



- Consider the development of a Cadw 'app'¹⁹ for use on smart phones which utilises the GPS capability of the phone to make users aware of sites they are near to, directions/ map data on how to find them, and detailed information about each individual site.
- Feature *the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd* more prominently in all marketing and advertising campaigns (regionally and nationally – working with the relevant tourism bodies).
- Provide hooks to tempt visitors e.g. must see attractions and experiences such as ancient churches full of stories of past lives, isolated castles perched high on a rocky crag, walk in the steps of the Princes of Gwynedd etc.
- Market clusters of 'Princes sites' within a distinct geographic area as a day itinerary, linked to one larger visitor attraction from which to disperse people out. This could mean starting from an Edwardian castle (e.g. Denbigh, Conwy, Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Criccieth, Dolwyddelan) and then moving through the nearby landscape to experience a Welsh castle, or historic church or abbey site. Provide options and suggested times within the itinerary, so that people can do as much with their day as they like.
- Different types of portable interpretation, not by any means hi-tech e.g. bespoke cards that point out key features of a site and its relevance to a theme or story, a tour of the site, a brief history to convey the significance of the site. Either downloadable from the website or as a printed supplement to the guidebook which visitors will not have to pay for (see below). All tours could be presented in the style of 'telling the story of the Princes' as linked to that particular site or cluster.
- Alternatively, as an encouragement to purchase the Cadw guidebooks for the Cadw sites, these user friendly supplements could be part of the guidebook offer, so that in effect you are purchasing a take-home guide with an on site 'toolkit', as a combined (or separate) two-tier offer. This 'guidebook' would be clearly advertised, marketed and designed to be more user friendly on site, for example through having a pull out feature in the front of the guide, designed for on-site ease of use, containing user friendly tour/ trail of site – key features and bite-size facts relating to identified stories and themes.
- Reuse and update the existing literature produced to interpret the Princes of Gwynedd, including 'Courts, Castles and Churches' (Gwynedd County Council 1994). This booklet and education pack that accompanies it would benefit from being edited to include the updated trail itineraries and more recent historical analyses and archaeological finds. They could be repackaged to better appeal to modern audiences and include appropriate references to the website and other online opportunities.

¹⁹ The National Trust launched an 'app' (shortened from 'application') for the iPhone in March 2010 which has been extremely well received by users



6.4 On-site: site-based interpretive provision for visitors

6.4.1 For unstaffed²⁰ Cadw sites

(Dolbadarn, Dolwyddelan, Montgomery, Castell y Bere, Dolforwyn, Cymer Abbey, Valle Crucis, Deganwy, Penmon Priory, Basingwerk Abbey, Ewloe)

All interpretation on site should be produced with the presumption that the visitor has no prior knowledge of the site and without any pre-visit information or resources with them. It is therefore extremely important to provide an introduction to each site which conveys its unique qualities, what makes it special, and helps the visitor experience the highlights of the site. The following menu of recommendations is proposed:

- A distinctive introductory welcome panel for each site that conveys the facilities and access for the site; the USP of the site and suggested highlights.
- Where appropriate, include a cast-bronze 3D model of each site as it may have looked in its heyday in some appropriate yet accessible location on site. Model mount could support panels to interpret aspects of the model/ key topics in relation to it.
- Upgrade all interpretive panels e.g. using vitreous enamel, to enable brighter and more colourful renditions of illustrations and drawings reproduced at a far larger size²¹. Perhaps a more robust system for non-supervised sites could be utilised e.g. photocast cast metal signs which are extremely robust as well as elegant and can be re-painted/ maintained on site.
- Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature of the monument, perhaps using image or symbol iconography that transcends all languages. This can then be used in conjunction with portable media interpreting the feature in the visitors' own language - in hi-tech: audio tour, podscroll etc; and low-tech: printed 'feature guide', PDF leaflet downloaded from the website, printed tour of the castle etc).
- Availability of an audio tour in Welsh and English. This would be downloadable onto personal media prior to visiting or part of a 'mobi-tour'²² and help convey a sense of the people once linked to the site in some way, real or imaginary, and reflecting the importance of the Welsh oral tradition e.g. *"Whispers, shouts and screams"*, as described above in section 6.3. A 'download centre' could be provided at key supervised sites, e.g. Criccieth, Conwy, enabling visitors to choose a site and tour that suits them and download it onto their phones along with guidance on how to find the site. Guided tours could be advertised at some of the sites and may be possible with a sufficient local volunteer guides force.

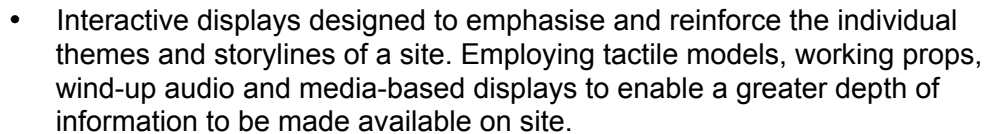
²⁰ for staffed Cadw sites, (Criccieth Castle and Conwy Castle) please refer to the recommendations made in the Castles and Town Walls of Edward I report

²¹ E.g. as used for the access points to York's city walls, a scheduled monument.

²² Mobile phone operated audio tour



- Introduce collection items in existing exhibitions linked with individual and collective sites, or replicas/ sculptures of them, as part of in situ interpretation. Replica pieces such as weapons, tools and other personal items can help populate the stories. Church art in particular could be used to inspire the interpretation, such as the carved choir stalls from Llanfaes Priory in St Mary's Beaumaris.
- An individual trail pack available at each site (part of the suite of trails described in the next section) designed to bring out that site's unique story and draw attention to site-specific features.
- For some sites only, seating in the form of interpretive benches, but designed to feature motifs that reference the site's history would be appropriate. This would address the issue of a general lack of seating at some sites and provide additional opportunities to introduce interpretation by supporting or introducing a theme with a quotation, line from a poem, words in Welsh, names of protagonists, relevant imagery such as heraldic devices and symbols etc.
- 'Character cards' linked to themes that could be available from the guidebook or downloadable prior to a visit. Provide children with a role-playing aspect to their visit by issuing them with a simple printed card that describes their character: who they are, when they lived, clues about their role, encouraging children to find out more about what their own character did at that site and some of the events they took part in or witnessed. This could provide an opportunity to introduce non-Welsh speaking visitors to Welsh words such as 'river', 'mountain', 'Prince', 'bard', 'court', 'castle' etc.
- Make use of the superb reconstruction drawings and artist's impressions of sites already present within the Cadw guidebooks and wider historical image research available on site. Interpretive panels displaying an image of the area you are in as it would have looked can be very powerful prompts for the imagination.



- Clear arrival and welcome signage at the main entrance/ porch to the church letting visitors know about access arrangements, e.g. where to get the key from, directions, when you can visit, what you should be mindful of and some of the key significances of the church.
- Additions to bi-lingual interpretive leaflets/ future additions that guide visitors around the church, pointing out any key features. Include mention of the Princes of Gwynedd and how the church is relevant to that story e.g. at St Mary and St Nicholas Church, Beaumaris, this would be the tombstones of Princess Joan and the Bulkeleys.

- Consider feasibility of undertaking experimental archaeology reconstructions²³ with local community groups to rebuild what the site, or elements of it, may have been like. Could be undertaken off site or in a site adjacent to the archaeology.²⁴

²⁴ We note that there is the possibility of the reconstruction of Llys Rhosyr at St Fagans (National Museum of Wales)



- Make use of the superb reconstruction drawings and artist's impressions of sites already present within wider historical image research and display on site. Interpretive panels displaying an image of the area you are in as it would have looked can be very powerful prompts for the imagination.

For sites that lack the infrastructure to be visitor attractions e.g. Abergwngregyn:

- Enhance arrival points through public realm improvements that build sense of place e.g. through community arts projects (murals, bespoke furniture designs, village signage, pavement sculptures, plaques etc). Consider adding interpretive panel at these places to explain the significance of the site to the Princes of Gwynedd.

6.5 Near site: linking interpretation

Trails offer opportunities to extend the visitor experience for those already visiting a site and also provide an opportunity to draw attention to the site for locals, walkers and incidental visitors passing through the area. There is also a great need to describe what is beyond a site itself, identifying adjacent sites and features which help broaden understanding. Therefore the following are proposed:

- Routes featuring a 'cluster' of 'Princes sites' within a distinct geographic area, based on a day itinerary, linked to one larger visitor attraction from which to disperse people out from that also creates a bad weather option because it has covered space. This could mean starting from an Edwardian castle (e.g. Denbigh, Conwy, Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Criccieth, Dolwyddelan) and then moving through the nearby landscape to experience a Welsh castle, or historic church or abbey site. Provide options, suggested times and modes of transport within the itinerary, so that people can do as much with their day as they like.
- Way-marked trails in the vicinity of the attraction or monument to encourage exploration of the neighbouring settlement or countryside and features in the wider area. This will also open up an opportunity to interpret the context for the monument/ location, physically but also intellectually e.g. to gain a 13th-century Welsh perspective. Used in conjunction with some strategically-placed interpretive panels, walking trails can also act as 'pick-up' points to attract visitors into the monuments, allowing for further engagement. For example, there is nothing at Llys Llywelyn to encourage you to explore the village, even though there are things worth seeing in the village. Where existing town trails and village circular walks exist, there is potential to add to these.

Good examples of where this could work, in partnership with other interests, would be Basingwerk Abbey, through interpreting medieval connections with the holy well as a site of pilgrimage and also Basingwerk castle, a large motte above the well, in addition to Penmon Priory, where a number of features around the priory site evoke the different periods of use at Penmon (dovecote, carved stones, holy well and shrine).



- Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of way-marks to help direct visitors to individual sites.
- Panels which interpret the views from strategic locations on a site, particularly walls and towers – based on an illustration of the actual view pointing out key features, related sites, making links to stories and themes, the likely direction of neighbouring settlements, routeways and castles.
- Use of a trail pack for each cluster, used in a similar way to the 'Time Detective' crime file but across more than one site. This could be part of a suite of trails for different clusters e.g. 'Prince Llywelyn versus the Marcher Lords' for a cluster around Dolforwyn, Newtown and Montgomery or 'Defending the heartland of the principality of Gwynedd' for a cluster based around Dolwyddelan, Dinas Emrys and Dolbadarn. Consider the use of podscrolls, PDF trail leaflets and other downloadable resources to support trails.
- Add a dedicated Princes of Gwynedd layer on Google Earth featuring the sites associated with the Princes of Gwynedd.
- Ensure Cadw guidebooks can be purchased at locations close to each site, where possible, including within local cafes and Tourist Information Centres. This would broaden opportunities for the purchase of guides for unstaffed sites. In addition, guides for each 'cluster' should be available from the site within the cluster with the most facilities e.g. an Edward I castle within that cluster. Also consider provision of a 'download centre' to enable visitors to download podscrolls, audio trails, PDF leaflets, maps and guides onto their phones and MP3 players, for visitors looking for other opportunities and those without access to the web or did not plan their visit.
- Working in partnership with local museums such as the Museum of Gwynedd and even the National Museums Wales to identify opportunities for displaying and interpreting material relating to the Princes of Gwynedd, for example as part of wider curation and displays on Medieval Wales. There could be opportunities to develop schools handling objects or replica items linked to the collection that could then be used on site.

6.6 Repeat visit: adaptive interpretation

If a visit has been successful and fulfilling as an experience then there will be a greater likelihood of a repeat visit. So it is therefore important to get the basic visitor offer right in the first place. Once this has been achieved, to encourage further visits and a greater frequency of visits there are other measures which will need to be employed. One method is to incorporate a level of adaptive interpretation by:



- Offering a number of packaged options for the visitor, (see the cluster proposals above in section 6.5) only one of which can be chosen per visit, therefore encouraging visitors to return. The mini-tour packaging approach proposed for exploring the Princes sites will offer an element of choice to visitors for them to come back and try. Other specific packages targeted at different audiences could also be offered e.g. the Princes of Gwynedd and Edward I: for group travel audiences; Churches and abbeys associated with the Princes of Gwynedd: for special interest groups/ academic audiences; the Princes of Gwynedd: easy access tour; Princes of Gwynedd – where to go if it's raining tour, the *"Whispers, Shouts & Screams"* tour etc as described above in section 6.3.
- Providing geocaching trails in and around sites, potentially within specific clusters of sites, that supports delivery of interpretation themes. These could be packaged to contain replica handling items, notebooks and clues to get people exploring the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd and moving from location to location.
- Setting aside a budget to develop new interpretive material on a rolling programme, such as additional themed trails, challenges, and quizzes etc which encourage family and group participation and which centre on human aspects of life at the time of the Princes - for the rich, the poor, men, women and children will help renew the offer. This material would have to be pre-downloadable from the website. When on site, visitors should be made aware of the web resource available to supplement a future visit, if they are unable to access the internet via personal media then and there.
- Events also offer a major opportunity for attracting repeat visits, particularly from people who live more locally. Consultations reveal that events that are much more Welsh in flavour would add a far greater sense of place and appeal to locals as well as tourists. These could be low key, less labour-intensive and expensive events, such as "Meet Brother Ivan" or "Aled, the Prince's bard" or storytelling in a 'medieval tent' with reference to the Welsh story telling tradition. Explaining the events that touched on that particular site, e.g. focusing on one particular story, could really add something unique to that visit.
- Finally encourage visitors to feedback on their experiences via the internet and posting on social networking sites, for example recording their experience of hidden Wales, posting their photos on Flickr and Facebook, and sharing their experiences and stories – how they "captured" the castle.



7 A framework for interpreting the castles

7.1 Objectives

The following objectives, based on generic learning outcomes, are proposed for the interpretation:

Knowledge and Understanding

Visitors will:

- Visitors will understand the importance of the Princes of Gwynedd in medieval Welsh history
- Visitors will know some of the key characteristics of Wales before the conquest
- Visitors will understand that the Princes of Gwynedd were the first Princes of Wales
- Visitors will know the important role played by the Church in the story of the Princes of Gwynedd

Skills

Visitors will:

- Visitors will be able to link key landscape characteristics in North Wales with the story of the Princes of Gwynedd
- Visitors will be able to identify common Welsh phrases in placenames such as Llan, Aber, Afon, Llys

Enjoyment/ inspiration/ creativity

Visitors will:

- Visitors will be able to experience a Wales they did not know through visiting the locations and experiencing the stories and sense of place offered by the Princes of Gwynedd interpretation
- Visitors will be inspired by the stories of the Welsh Princes and feel proud to be Welsh / recognise the pride in this Welsh legacy

Attitudes and values

Visitors will:

- Feel that a wide range of Welsh, English and other points of view are represented on the site
- Appreciate where different identities come from
- Value the ongoing research and conservation work of Cadw and partners and what this tells us

Activity, behaviour and progression

Visitors will:

- Visitors will want to find out more about the Princes of Gwynedd and the wider Princes of Wales
- They will develop a taste for exploring places 'off the beaten track'
- They will want to visit the castles and town walls of Edward I to find out more
- They will want to experience the museum collections associated with the sites to find out more



7.2 Messages

The following messages and themes have been devised for application at all the sites considered as part of this study. As such, whilst particular themes could be of greater relevance to one site than another, it is important that a flavour of all themes be applied at each site. This approach will allow the unique stories and topics applicable to each site to emerge within each theme.

Over-arching message:

The powerful Princes of Gwynedd played an important role in forging a sense of Welsh nationhood and identity

Supporting message 1:

The Princes of Gwynedd were the first Princes to claim rule of all of Wales

Theme: “Princes of all Wales” – especially Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd

- Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd
- Paying homage
- Inheritance in Wales
- Treaties
- A Wales divided

Supporting message 2:

Amongst all the groups of Princes in Wales, the Princes of Gwynedd had a long and successful dynasty

Theme: A mighty dynasty – success and longevity, even to today

- Introducing the Princes of Gwynedd
- Legends and dynastic claims
- Background to medieval Wales and the Welsh
- Welsh resilience
- Setting the scene prior to Edward’s campaigns in Wales
- Powerful women
- Betrayal and loss
- Legacy of the Princes of Gwynedd

Supporting message 3:

The heartland of the Princes of Gwynedd was in North West Wales in Anglesey and Snowdonia

Theme: The heartlands of Gwynedd – Anglesey and Snowdonia



- The mountainous homelands of the Princes
- Anglesey, breadbasket of North Wales and Llanfaes
- The unique geography of the area
- Both tangible and intangible heritage connections with the Wales of the Princes are hidden in the landscape today
- The Four Cantrefs
- The importance of rivers and river crossings

Supporting message 4:

The Princes of Gwynedd fought for land and power against other Welsh Princes, the Marcher Lords and the English Crown

*Theme: **A warlike people** – the necessary military capability of the Princes*

- Competition with the Normans and the Welsh Marcher Lords
- Edward I and the events leading up to the first and second campaigns
- Edward and Llywelyn – roles; friends or foe?
- Castles in Wales: purpose of the castles
- Welsh castles: siege and besieged
- Guerrilla warfare Welsh style
- Castle building styles in Wales
- Rebellions following the Conquest including Madog and Glyn Dwr

Supporting message 5:

The Princes operated from a network of Llys, (courts) that they travelled between throughout the year

*Theme: **Court and Country** – The Welsh and Welsh Wales in the era of the Princes*

- Welsh laws, customs and culture
- How the llys worked
- Castles as prisons
- The Welsh language
- Bards and poetry
- Europeanising influences in Wales
- Religion and religious houses in Wales
- The Statute of Rhuddlan (1284) and arrival of new English administrative structures
- The impact of English towns (including on trade and administration)
- An unfinished business: the extent of the Conquest
- How the Welsh continued their traditional ways of life, trade/ assimilation with the English



8 Developing the interpretive proposals

The matrices below refer to the themes and supporting messages set out in Section 7.2, drawing out one main theme/topic to emphasise the characteristics of that particular site. In addition, a cast of historical 'characters' has been included for each site, some based on documented sources while others are composites derived from generic contemporary descriptions, which are intended to form the basis for 'character cards', audio tours, podcasts and other relevant media.

Note that proposals have been developed on a site by site basis and are supported by the costs sheets in Appendix E.

EWLOE CASTLE Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		The heartlands of Gwynedd – the four Cantrefs A mighty dynasty – setting the scene prior to Edward's campaigns A warlike people – competition with the Normans and the Marcher Lords, Welsh castles	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Sentry (on duty on the castle walls looking out for the English) A Woodcutter (supplying fuel for the castle) A female Servant (working in the princely household)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At off-road parking places and key points of entry	Introduction Welsh castles: siege and besieged A mighty dynasty	Two distinctive introductory welcome panels at the main points of access, covering key themes and announcing the facilities available in Wepre Park
	Outer Ward	A mighty dynasty	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern
	Outer Ward	A warlike people, including the Battle of Wepre Woods between Owain Gwynedd and the Normans in 1157 Competition with the Normans and the Welsh Marcher Lords	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted
	Upper Ward	Court and country The Welsh language, bards and poetry	New interpretive 'audio panel', lectern-mounted. Solid-state soundstore, photovoltaic cell & battery enclosed in steel housing within lectern
	The Keep	Court and country Describe views from castle An unfinished business: the extent of the conquest	New interpretive panel, parapet-mounted



		How the Welsh continued their traditional ways of life, trade/assimilation with the English	
	Keep, Circular Tower, building foundations within Upper Ward, Outer Ward	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	Kissing-gate entrance	n/a	Upgrade/repair kissing-gate and incorporate Princes of Gwynedd heraldry into ironwork
Near site	Approaching the site from the A494/A55	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors from entry points to Wepre Park
	Inside and outside castle walls	Princes of all Wales The heartlands of the Princes of Gwynedd - 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the castle, inside and out, including the wider Wepre Park
	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' ²⁵ to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players. Could be at the Wepre Park Visitor Centre.
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, ²⁶ PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. the story of Llywelyn Fawr

²⁵ A computer-based facility located in a visitor centre or other closely supervised site which allows visitors to select from a menu of options (trails, maps, field guides and audio tours) and load onto their own mobile phone or MP3 player. Alternatively they can print a copy of a PDF trail or guide for a small fee.

²⁶ Miniature 'books' which are ideal for self-guided trails. They incorporate maps, images and a small amount of text to create a series of pages which can be flicked through on the screen of a mobile phone or MP3 player



		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Ewloe Castle model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups
	On site/ near site	All	Work in partnership with the Country Park to build on existing events programme for this well visited park to establish storytelling guided walks through the woods evoking the age of Owain Gwynedd and the Normans etc



BASINGWERK ABBEY Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Court and Country – Europeanising influences, religion and religious houses in Wales A warlike people – castles in Wales, purpose of Welsh castles	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Monk/Lay Brother (observing his religious duties) A Chaplain (assigned to Flint Castle by the abbey) A Novice (newly arrived at the abbey)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At entrance to site	Introduction Religion and religious houses in Wales	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main points of access, covering key themes related to this site and announcing the facilities available along the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park
	Between entrance and abbey ruins	Court and country: religion and religious houses in Wales	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern
	At entrance to the abbey	The heartlands of the Princes A warlike people	New interpretive panel to introduce the four cantrefs and the area's proximity to the border
	Between entrance and abbey ruins	A mighty dynasty: introducing the Welsh Princes Edward I and his use of the abbey as a base while building Flint Castle	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted, with reconstruction artists' impressions images prominent on it. Explain the fate of the abbeys following the age of the Princes
	Near former cloister	Court and country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted – how the Princes used abbeys day to day – transactions, hospitality, kudos, Europeanising influences
	Nave, Choir, Transepts, Chapter House, Dormitories, Cloister, Refectory, Drains etc	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	To be agreed	Court and country: religion and religious houses in Wales	Bench seating incorporating imagery and text (2 x benches)
Near site	Approaching the site from the A548/A5026/A55	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors from entry points to the abbey site
	Inside and outside abbey ruins	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the abbey and the Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, including St Winifred's Well and



	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	the motte of Basingwerk Castle Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' in the Park shop to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Court and Country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion, what Gerald said about Wales etc
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Basingwerk Abbey model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. illuminated letters and Latin 'manuscripts'
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups
	n/a	All/ any	Investigate feasibility of working with the Heritage Park staff to support events days in peak season where one aspect of events focuses on the valley in the medieval period and how the landscape was used (and by who) – patronage of the holy well, the abbey and society, farming the land, defending the land



VALLE CRUCIS ABBEY Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Court and Country – Europeanising influences, religion and religious houses in Wales	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Madog ap Gruffydd Maelor (the founder of the abbey) A Choir Monk (observing his religious duties) Richard fitz Alan, earl of Arundel (patron, c. 1300) Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At entrance to site	Introduction Religion and religious houses in Wales	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access, covering key themes in relation to this site and announcing the facilities available at the site
	Victorian Summer House	Court and country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	A new exhibition (or section of existing exhibition) to introduce the role of the Welsh Princes and their relationship with the religious houses in Wales, and with other Princes. Interactive displays involving role-playing activities. Explain the fate of the abbey following the age of the Princes
	Between entrance and abbey ruins	A mighty dynasty: introducing the Welsh Princes	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted
	Between abbey ruins and abbey mill	Court and country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	New interpretive panel, lectern-mounted. Make reference to Welsh themes in proposed exhibition
	Nave, Choir, Transepts, Chapter House, Dormitories, Cloister, Refectory, Drains etc	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	To be agreed	Court and country: religion and religious houses in Wales	Bench seating incorporating imagery and text (3 x benches) with fixed replicas
Near site	Inside and outside abbey ruins	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the abbey and nearby Eliseg's Pillar, a 9 th century Christian cross (and perhaps further afield with Dinas Bran)



	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players – potentially in the mill exhibition
Pre-visit	Website	Court and Country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Valle Crucis Abbey model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. illuminated letters and Latin 'manuscripts'. Could also be distributed from mill building when staffed.
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides and live interpreters from local history groups
	n/a	All/ any	Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props



LLYS RHOSYR (and the Pritchard Jones Institute) Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture, how the Llys worked, bards and poetry The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Bard (the 'Bardd Teulu' of the Royal Household) A Groom (to the princely household) Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At entrance	Introduction Bards and poetry Princes of all Wales A might dynasty	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access, covering key themes and announcing the facilities available in Newborough. Retain exciting reconstruction artists' impressions in the existing panels
	Hall and Chamber	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	Whole site	The heartlands of Gwynedd Princes of all Wales	Role-playing and dressing-up activities for school groups (using resources housed at Pritchard Jones Institute, see below)
	At appropriate locations on site	Court and Country	Develop experimental archaeology projects and events with local schools and education establishments such as Bangor University to develop small scale reconstructions on the site which could be used to shelter visitors e.g. the bondsmen's home. Use this to interpret the life of the bondsman and his family and how they served the llys. Completed structures would provide 'living history' environments for school groups etc
Near site	Inside and outside site	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing Newborough village walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the wider area, passing key facilities such as the car park and toilets and the Pritchard Jones Institute
	Pritchard Jones Institute	The heartlands of Gwynedd: Anglesey, breadbasket	New exhibition providing museum-standard



		of N Wales, the 4 cantrefs A mighty dynasty	display cases for archaeological material, interactives and role-playing resources for school groups to take on site. Consider re-use or updating of the AV presenting Llys Rhosyr.
	Pritchard Jones Institute	Court and country: Welsh laws, customs, culture, language, bards and poetry	Potential for an oral history archive – prose, poems, songs and music. Replica musical instruments to have a go at playing, or which trigger a sound sequence. A collection of <i>“Whispers, Shouts and Screams”</i>
	Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale (Pritchard Jones Institute?)	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site ‘tool-kit’). Provide ‘download centre’ to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales ‘Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd’	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides. Provide reliable information about access and opening times for the Exhibition at the Pritchard Jones Centre, working with the community trust that run this site.
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>“Whisper, Shout & Scream”</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. how the Princes used to llys system in Anglesey and what happened to this following the Conquest
		Princes of all Wales	Themed trail pack for families with children in



		'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Llys Rhosyr model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups and trusts including from the Pritchard Jones Centre



ABERGWYNGREGYN Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Princes of all Wales – Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd A mighty dynasty – Welsh resilience, betrayal and loss Background to medieval Wales and the Welsh The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Eleanor de Montfort (also known as Princess of Wales, Lady of Snowdon) Princess Joan, wife of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	The Information Centre/ cafe	Introduction Legends and dynastic claims Princes of all Wales Court and Country ‘Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd’	Graphic panels and simple hands-on displays e.g. topographic model of Aber and the ancient crossing point of the Lafan Sands to Anglesey, links to the pastures above Explain how the court at Aber worked and what became of it
Near site	Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale e.g. the cafe	All	Encourage guidebook sales from the café and related sites such as the Pritchard Jones Institute, Beaumaris Castle, Conwy Castle (combined with on-site ‘tool-kit’). Consider provision of ‘download centre’ in the cafe to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales A mighty dynasty ‘Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd’	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations



DEGANWY CASTLE Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Princes of all Wales and a Mighty Dynasty – introducing the Princes of Gwynedd Welsh castles – siege and besieged, Edward I's campaigns The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Longbow Man (in the service of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd) A Noblewoman (in the princely household) Captain of the Prince's Household ('Penteuleu' in charge of Prince's war band) Master Instructus – Cleric and envoy for Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Henry III	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At entry points on all approaches	Introduction A mighty dynasty The heartlands of Gwynedd	Six distinctive introductory welcome panels at the main points of access, covering key themes
On site	At key entry points to approaches	Introduction The heartlands of Gwynedd A mighty dynasty	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main points of access, covering key themes
	Near Gatehouse, in a more accessible location	A warlike people Welsh castles: siege and besieged, scorched earth policy	Replace existing slate panel with new (more expansive) interpretive panel, plinth-mounted
Near site	Approaching the site from the A546 and from the railway halt	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors to entry points
	Conwy castle and town walls	Introducing the Princes of Gwynedd	See proposals for Conwy and Conwy castle and town walls ²⁷
	Inside and beyond castle	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new circular walk exploring the castle and the wider landscape, including the remains of the former settlement. Leaflet dispensers could be provided at key approaches

²⁷ In the Interpretation Plan for the castles and town walls of Edward I



	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage leaflet sales from other sites. Provide 'download centre' possibly at Conwy Castle to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours for Deganwy onto their mobile phones and MP3 players.
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look – various phases	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the story of the rise and fall and rise again of the Princes and how Deganwy played a role in this before its last abandonment
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Deganwy Castle model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page
	n/a	All/ any	Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



CONWY TOWN and WALLS Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Princes of all Wales – Treaties A Wales divided A mighty dynasty – setting the scene prior to Edward’s campaigns in Wales Legacy of the Princes of Gwynedd Court and country - the impact of English towns (including on trade and administration), how the Welsh continued their way of life A warlike people – rebellions following the Conquest	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Grave Digger (witness to the burial of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth in Aberconwy in 1240) A Shepherdess (from outside the town in the surrounding hills and mountains) A Lay Brother (who worked the land of the former Aberconwy Abbey)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	Conwy Castle Visitor Centre and TIC	Introduction The impact of English towns The heartlands of Gwynedd A mighty dynasty Court and Country	Develop new Welsh Princes’ theme as part of a new exhibition on the town and castle proposed for Conwy Castle ²⁸ . Content and displays designed to appeal to all and cater for the Welsh history modules of the curriculum. Dressing-up and role-playing activities, recreating life in Conwy as a court and monastery pre Conquest and as a frontier town post conquest. Also potential for an oral history archive – prose, poems, songs and music based on documentary accounts from the time. A collection of <i>“Whispers, Shouts and Screams”</i>
	Visitor Centre	All	Provision of ‘download centre’ enabling visitors to access trails, podcasts, podscrolls and resources onto their own mobile phones (multi-platform)
	Town Walls	Princes of all Wales ‘Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd’	Self-guided trail around walls, with plaques set into walkway to indicate sightlines and key features, in and outside the town, including Deganwy Castle and the Conwy valley, the former monastic site and Llywelyn’s Hall, for use in conjunction with leaflet,

²⁸ Direct link with Interpretation Plan for the Castles and Town Walls of Edward I



			podscroll or audio tour. Links to 6 panels proposed to tell the story of the town ²⁹
	Town Centre	Tour around the town – <i>"Whispers, Shouts & Screams"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. tell the story of Aberconwy and what happened here. Potential to link to the town walls walk and existing town trail offer
Near site	Conwy Castle visitor centre where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations of Llywelyn's Hall or Aberconwy Abbey, the medieval settlement
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take with you when you visit the town
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or to 'download centre' at the Castle) for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from on town heritage trail
	n/a	All	Tap into existing events programme for Conwy to provide storytelling sessions with a live interpreter dressed in medieval costumer, aimed at families. Stories all based on the Princes in Aberconwy and

²⁹ Direct link with Interpretation Plan for the Castles and Town Walls of Edward I



			what happened to them, but from the perspective of different characters e.g. Welsh freeman, English soldier, a maid of Princess Eleanor etc
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DINAS EMRYS Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		A mighty dynasty: legends and dynastic claims, inheritance in Wales The Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Chief Falconer (The 'Hebogudd' looked after the Prince's hawks & falcons) Groom (to the princely household)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At National Trust car park	Introduction The heartlands of Gwynedd A mighty dynasty	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access to the trail up to the fort, covering key themes (would need to be done in partnership with NT)
	At natural pause point(s) on the route, including on the main site	Legends and dynasty	Working with the NT and volunteers, develop carved wooden seating 'naturalistic' furniture with references to the legendary background to the Princes of Gwynedd. Could be developed as a community arts project and help broaden access to the walk. (Note – the NT have already started developing carved furniture at Craflwyn)
Near site	Approaching the site from the A498	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors
	Beyond the Dinas Emrys route	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing NT walk/trails or extend trail to create a new circular walk that explores the castle within its wider landscape context
	Other sites TICs in surrounding area e.g. Beddgelert	All	Provision of 'download centre' enabling visitors to access trails, podcasts, podscrolls and resources onto their own mobile phones (multi-platform)
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How the site may have looked	Downloadable reconstruction/ artistic illustrations/ impressions



		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>“Whisper, Shout & Scream”</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Dinas Emrys model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Owain Gwynedd
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



CYMER ABBEY Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture, religion and religious houses, Europeanising influences, the extent of the Conquest	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Visiting Cistercian Monk (from Clairvaux, the mother house in Burgundy) The Abbot of Cymer Abbey Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	Replace existing generic panel on Cistercians in Wales	Introduction Religion and religious houses in Wales	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access, covering key themes relating to Cymer Abbey and announcing the facilities available in Dolgellau
	Anywhere appropriate within the abbey ruins	A mighty dynasty: introducing the Welsh Princes Court and Country – religion and religious houses in Wales	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted focusing on the people connected with this abbey site, why abbeys came in to Wales under the Princes, how the abbey was used as a place to conduct business under Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.
	Near former cloister	The heartlands of Gwynedd 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted – how the abbey worked the land (and how the Princes benefited) – dairy farming, the abbey grange, horse breeding
	Nave, Choir, Transepts, Chapter House, Dormitories, Cloister, Refectory, Drains etc	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	Edge of site, in view from arrival	Court and country	Commission sculpture (possibly in silhouette) of two horses to be located on site, with reference to the yearly render of horses to Llywelyn ab Iorwerth from the monks in return for the land
Near site	Approaching the site from the A470/A494	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors to car park (which is currently extremely unclear)
	Inside and outside abbey ruins	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail (St John Robert's Trail) or extend it to create a new walk exploring the abbey's impact on the wider landscape.



			Consider potential for partnership working with the Forestry Commission to link abbey with popular mountain bike trails at Coed y Brenin. The abbey could be a 'green trail' picnic site or pause point for family cyclists.
	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' in appropriate nearby location (Dolgellau Tourist Information Centre) to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Court and Country 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. the story of the two Llywelyns and the changes they introduced to Wales
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Cymer Abbey model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. illuminated letters and Latin 'manuscripts'
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded



CASTELL Y BERE Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		The heartlands of Gwynedd: the mountainous homelands of the Princes; the Princes are hidden in the Welsh landscape today A warlike people – castle-building styles in Wales	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Blacksmith (in the service of Dafydd ap Gruffydd) A 'Bakeress' (one of the few female roles at court) A Master of Song (the 'Pencerdd', a visiting bard)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At the car park, near entrance	Introduction The mountainous homelands of the Princes A might dynasty	A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access, covering key themes in relation to Castell y Bere
	Outer Ward	Princes of all Wales (Betrayal and loss)	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted focusing on Dafydd's short months as Prince of Wales
	Outer Ward	A warlike people	Install interpretive model of the castle as it would have looked in Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's reign
	Upper Ward	Court and country The Welsh language, bards and poetry	New interpretive 'audio panel', lectern-mounted. Solid-state soundstore, photovoltaic cell & battery enclosed in steel housing within lectern – storytelling about the Princes
	The Keep	Court and country Describe views from castle An unfinished business: the extent of the conquest How the Welsh continued their traditional ways of life, trade/assimilation with the English	New interpretive panel, parapet-mounted
	Keep, Circular Tower, building foundations within Upper Ward, Outer Ward	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	In the existing shelter	How the Welsh continued their traditional ways of life, trade/assimilation with the English	Interpretive graphics and simple tactile display in existing shelter
Near site	Approaching the site from the B4405	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors



	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players. Could be at Dolgellau?
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, including from documentary sources, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. the story of the final days of Llywelyn and Dafydd and what happened next
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Castell y Bere model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	n/a	All/ any	Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props
	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded



DOLFORWYN CASTLE Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		A warlike people - competition with the Marcher Lords Events leading up to the Edward I campaigns Edward and Llywelyn – friends or foe? Welsh laws, customs and culture Welsh castle building, purpose of Welsh castles, siege and besieged	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Hawise (wife of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, who briefly had custody of the castle) Llywelyn's Stonemason (building the castle following the Treaty of Montgomery) A Cook (one of the few female roles at court) Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At the car park and near the site entrance at the top of the steep track walk up to the site	Introduction Competition with the Marcher Lords A might dynasty A warlike people	Two distinctive introductory welcome panels at the main points of access, covering key themes in relation to Dolforwyn Castle
	Outer Ward	A warlike people Competition with the Welsh Marcher Lords	New interpretive panel, wall-mounted, introducing Llywelyn ap Gruffudd and the Treaty of Montgomery
	Upper Ward	Court and country The Welsh language, bards and poetry	New interpretive 'audio panel', lectern-mounted. Solid-state soundstore, photovoltaic cell & battery enclosed in steel housing within lectern. Story of the building of Dolforwyn and its circumstances; its eventual loss and takeover by the marcher lords
	The Keep	Court and country Describe views from castle An unfinished business: the extent of the conquest How the Welsh continued their traditional ways of life, trade/assimilation with the English	New interpretive panel, parapet-mounted
	Keep, Hall, North Tower, North Range, Round Tower, Well	n/a	Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
Near site	Inside and outside castle walls	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail that explores the wider landscape of the Severn Valley. Could potentially take in the ford site where all the



			treaties were undertaken and also Hen Dolmen hillfort – this wider area was one of the main flashpoints for war.
	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit'). Provide 'download centre' (could be in Montgomery) to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
Pre-visit	Website	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Dedicated website portal with full background information including virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs, 360° QTVRS, podscrolls, PDF leaflets, maps and guides
		How it used to look	Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the story of Llywelyn's arms race with Mortimer and Gwenwynwyn
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Themed trail pack for families with children in the form of a downloadable clue-based trail, a Dolforwyn model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded



Repeat visit	n/a	All/ any	Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes and the Marcher Lords. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props
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MONTGOMERY CASTLE Interpretive Proposals			
Main theme/topic for site:		A warlike people – competition with the Marcher Lords Princes of all Wales – paying homage The importance of rivers and river crossings	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Soldier (witness to Llywelyn ap Gruffydd's death at Llanganten, Builth Wells) A Scribe (responsible for writing the Treaty of Montgomery)	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	Outer Ward	A warlike people Princes of all Wales – reference to the Treaty of Montgomery	New interpretive panel, lectern-mounted
	Gazebo	All	Sound installation featuring <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i> describing history of site
Near site	Approaching the site from the B44385/86/88	n/a	Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors to car park at the top of the town
	Inside and outside castle walls	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the castle, inside and out, including the wider landscape (could link to the historic ford site where Treaties were made)
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	Refer visitors to dedicated Cadw website page (or nearest 'download centre') for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All/ any	Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes and the Marcher Lords. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props
	n/a	All	Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



CRICCIETH CASTLE Interpretive Proposals³⁰			
Main theme/topic for site:		Under the shadow of the castles and walls* Welsh castle building styles Europeanising influences Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and inheritance in Wales	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (who had the castle built in the 1230s)* A Welsh Archer (defending the castle held by Llywelyn ap Gryffydd, in the 2 nd campaign)* William Leyburn (Constable of Crickieth when castle taken by the English in 2 nd campaign)* Richard Havering (in charge of relief mission during Madog siege)* Farmer's Wife (from the nearby Gwynedd heartlands)*	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	At the car park, near entrance	Introduction A mighty dynasty A warlike people	*A distinctive introductory welcome panel at the main point of access, covering key themes
	From the visitor centre	All	*Free map guides and leaflets to guide visitors to 'must-see' features within the site and wider town, including a recommended route based on itinerary times, access arrangements and key features
	Outside the Outer Gatehouse	A mighty dynasty: Welsh resilience Appropriation by Edward I of existing Welsh castle with updated gatehouse and other features. Began early 13th century by Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and captured by Edward I during his 2nd campaign	*Cast-metal tactile model of the castle on its rocky promontory following Edwardian additions and alterations. Mounted on plinth/ lectern arrangement
	Outside the Outer Gatehouse (perhaps incorporated with the above)	Court and country Also describe views from castle including sites of importance to the Welsh administration e.g. routeways, Llys and other castles, and also the town, mountains and (on a clear day) Harlech Castle	*New interpretive panel, wall-mounted (or forming part of plinth to model, above)
	Existing 'Gerald of Wales' exhibition	Princes of all Wales The heartlands of Gwynedd	*New exhibition. Use space to include interpretation of medieval Wales and Welsh life,

³⁰ Note that some of the interpretive proposals set out here overlap with those in the Castles of Edward I Interpretation Plan (indicated by an asterisk *)



		Background to medieval Wales and the Welsh	introducing the Princes of Gwynedd, their mountainous homelands, the resilience they represented and setting the scene prior to Edward I's campaigns in Wales. Support story with summary audiovisual programme. Include family-friendly interactive content. Flexible and movable displays to allow space for community uses
	Existing castles of the Welsh Princes exhibition	A warlike people: purpose of the castles Princes of all Wales	*Retain. Consider potential for inclusion of general introduction to castles in Wales that includes Norman and European impacts
	Visitor centre	A life in stone/ A warlike people A legacy in stone	*Provide 'Story of Criccieth' audio visual in wider context of other North Wales castles
	Visitor Centre	All	*Provide 'download centre' within visitor centre to enable visitors to load trails, maps, field guides and audio tours onto their mobile phones and MP3 players
	Gatehouses, Inner & Outer Wards, North (Engine) Tower	n/a	*Metal plaques to indicate a significant feature using image or symbol iconography (to assist identification with portable interpretation)
	From visitor centre	All	*Multilingual audio tour
	Outside Outer Gatehouse	Seaside connections	*Consider upgrading existing telescope to a 'speaking' variety (pre-recorded bilingual captions describing views)
	Inner Ward	The dragon of Wales vs the lion of England Including the Owain Glyn Dwr rebellion	*Bench seating incorporating imagery and text (2 x benches)
Near site	Approaching the site from the A497/ B4411	n/a	*Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors to the castle
	Beyond the castle walls	Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	*Link in with existing coastal walk or extend it to create a new walk exploring the castle, inside and out. Potential links to the town heritage trail



	Dolwyddelan Castle, Dolbadarn Castle, Castell y Bere, Dolforwyn	A warlike people: castle-building styles in Wales	*Make reference to related sites within the interpretation (and vice-versa)
Pre-visit	Website	All	*Dedicated website portal with full background information linked to Princes of Gwynedd website
		Princes of all Wales	*Virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs and 360° QTVRS
		How it used to look	*Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	*Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – “ <i>Whisper, Shout & Scream</i> ”	*Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	*Themed trail packs for families with children in the form of a downloadable 'medieval' documents, a clue-based trail, a Criccieth Castle model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Edward I or Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	*Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or 'download centre' in the visitor centre) for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	Visitor centre	All	*Advertise visitor centre as available for community use for small events based at the castle
	n/a	All	*Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



DOLWYDDELAN CASTLE Interpretive Proposals³¹			
Main theme/topic for site:		The Welsh Dragon: introducing the Princes of Gwynedd* Court and country – Welsh laws, customs and culture The heartlands of Gwynedd – unique geography, mountainous homelands	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		A Sentry (in the service of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd)* A Lady (in the Welsh prince's household)* A Farmer (from the nearby Gwynedd heartlands)* Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	Car Park and farm entrance (if still appropriate?)	Introduction A mighty dynasty A warlike people	*Two distinctive introductory welcome panels, one at each of the main points of access, covering key themes and identifying nearest facilities
	The Keep, first floor	A mighty dynasty: Welsh resilience Built by Llywelyn ab Iorwerth then captured and remodelled by Edward I The castle's strategic importance in the landscape – for the Welsh and later when captured for the English	*Cast-metal tactile model of the castle to its fullest extent including surrounding topography. Mounted on plinth/ lectern arrangement
	The Keep, first floor	Court and Country The heartlands of Gwynedd	*New exhibition. To accompany the existing Princes of Gwynedd exhibition. Graphic panel-based displays with some basic interactivity e.g. metal rubbings, triggered bilingual audio & music, a chest with replicas and props (attached with heavy-duty snap cord)
	Outside the Keep	A warlike people Court and Country Also explaining the role of the castle under the Welsh and the functioning of the visible features Connections with how the Welsh managed the landscape and pastures, former llys site below the existing castle	*New interpretive panel, wall-mounted
	Inner Ward	Court and country	*New interpretive panel, wall-mounted

³¹ Note that some of the interpretive proposals set out here overlap with those in the Castles of Edward I Interpretation Plan (indicated by an asterisk *)



		How the Inner ward functioned and what life was like over the centuries. Use of Dolwyddelan by local land-owning classes Restoration and associations with the Romantics	
	The Keep, wall tops	The heartlands of Gwynedd Describe views from castle, the defensive function of the castle, natural features	*2 x new interpretive panels, parapet-mounted
Near site	Approaching the site from the A470	n/a	*Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors up the hill to the castle
	Inside and outside castle walls	A mighty dynasty	*Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the castle, inside and out, including former Llys site at base of hill below castle
	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	*Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit')
Pre-visit	Website	All	*Dedicated website portal with full background information
		Princes of all Wales	Virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs and 360° QTVRS
		How it used to look	*Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	*Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
		Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	*Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. through the Mabinogion
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	*Themed trail packs for families with children in the form of a downloadable 'medieval' documents, a clue-based trail, a Dolwyddelan Castle model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Edward I, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, arms & armour, costume & dress



Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	*Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or 'download centre' in the visitor centre) for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	*Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups
Repeat visit	n/a	All/ any	*Run events, including for schools groups, focusing on the medieval period and the Age of the Princes. Include a strong storytelling aspect, potentially supported by replica handling items as props



DOLBADARN CASTLE Interpretive Proposals³²			
Main theme/topic for site:		Sieges: making siege and besieged* A warlike people – Guerrilla warfare Welsh style A mighty dynasty – betrayal and loss Inheritance in Wales – castles and prisons	
Character/s to feature in the interpretation:		Owain ap Gruffydd (held prisoner here by his brother Llywelyn ap Gruffydd)* A Bowman (in the service of Dafydd ap Gruffydd)* A Foot Soldier (serving under the Earl of Pembroke in 1282)* Ednyfed Fychan, Seneschal to Llywelyn ap Gruffudd	
Interpretive Level	Location	Theme/ Topic	Proposal
On site	Car park and pedestrian approach	Introduction A mighty dynasty A warlike people	*Two distinctive introductory welcome panels, one at each of the main points of access, covering key themes and identifying nearest facilities
	Just inside the site entrance (with slate gate posts)	A mighty dynasty: Welsh resilience Built by Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and captured by the English in 1282. Appropriation of materials for building Caernarfon. Contrasts with Edward I's newer castles	*Cast-metal tactile model of the castle and its component parts at its previous extent, and in its mountain context. Mounted on a plinth/ lectern arrangement
	Top of Keep	n/a	*Re-design the 'cage' so that the top of the Keep allows better views and less intrusive to the visitor
	Top of Keep	The heartlands of Gwynedd A Warlike People Why the Welsh built a castle here and the English built at Caernarfon Geographical context – key mountain pass controlling important route to the sea. Story of why Edward I kept to coastal locations for his new castles	*New interpretive panel mounted near, or on, the existing cage
	Inner ward	Court and Country Also explaining the role of the castle under the	*New interpretive panel, wall-mounted

³² Note that some of the interpretive proposals set out here overlap with those in the Castles of Edward I Interpretation Plan (indicated by an asterisk *)



		Welsh and the functioning of the visible features, Welsh castle design characteristics and what became of Dolbadarn following the Conquest	
	The Keep	A mighty dynasty including inheritance in Wales Also how the Keep was used and what life was like. Use of Dolbadarn as a prison, and the life of a political prisoner here: Owain Glyn Dwr Welsh life and culture	*New interpretive panel, wall-mounted
Near site	Approaching the site from the A4086, Llanberis Pass	n/a	*Adequate road signage and an infrastructure of information signs and way-marks to help direct visitors to the castle
	Inside and outside castle walls	Under the shadow A life in stone	*Link in with existing walk/trail or extend it to create a new walk exploring the castle, inside and out, from Llanberis
	Other Cadw sites where guidebooks are on sale	All	*Encourage guidebook sales from other sites (combined with on-site 'tool-kit')
Pre-visit	Website	All	*Dedicated website portal with full background information
		Princes of all Wales	*Virtual reconstructions, walk-throughs and 360° QTVRS
		How it used to look	*Downloadable reconstruction illustrations
		How to find site, other sites, features and walks in the adjacent area	*Downloadable resources including map guides and leaflets to take on site
Pre-visit	Website	Tour around the existing ruins – <i>"Whisper, Shout & Scream"</i>	Bilingual audio tour maximising the wealth of poetry, songs, music and prose that can be drawn from Welsh culture, relating to the Princes of Gwynedd e.g. the story of how Llywelyn ap Gruffudd came to power
		Princes of all Wales 'Hidden Wales – the Wales of the Princes of Gwynedd'	*Themed trail packs for families with children in the form of a downloadable 'medieval' documents, a clue-based trail, a Dolwyddelan Castle model to cut-out and make and colouring exercises e.g. the heraldic arms of Edward I, Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and Llywelyn ap Gruffydd,



			arms & armour, costume & dress
Repeat visit	Introduction panel/s	All	*Refer visitors to dedicated Princes of Gwynedd website page (or 'download centre' in the visitor centre) for people with handheld media to instantly gain access to online resources, and also for those who may wish to return again with a tour pre-downloaded
	n/a	All	*Provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



9 Action Plan

Ewloe Castle

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panels on the site conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- develop suite of podcast tours for pre-downloading

Medium term priority:

- design and installation of new interpretive panels, including 1x audio panel
- design and install interpretive model of the castle
- upgrade gates to site incorporating heraldic designs
- improve signage to castle, including road signage and pedestrian way marking
- discussions with Wepre Park regarding inclusion of download centre at the park Visitor Centre
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast tours and themed trail packs for families
- work with Park Services/ local history groups to develop guided tours and events around the castle

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites including Park Visitor Centre
- work with Wepre Park to devise new interpreted walk around park



Basingwerk Abbey

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panel at site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information
- develop suite of podcast tours for pre-downloading
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link

Medium term priority:

- design and installation of new interpretive panels
- design and install interpretive model of the abbey
- introduce bench seating incorporating iconography
- improve signage to the abbey, including road signage and pedestrian way marking
- discussions with Greenfield Valley Heritage Trust regarding inclusion of download centre at the Visitor Centre/ shop
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast tours and themed trail packs for families
- work with Greenfield Valley Heritage Trust/ local history groups to develop medieval themed tours and events around valley

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites including St Winifred's Well and the Greenfield Valley shop



Valle Crucis Abbey

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panel at site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- design development of a new exhibition in the Victorian Summerhouse to introduce the background to the founding of religious houses in Wales, including links with the Welsh Princes
- design and installation of new interpretive panels
- introduce bench seating incorporating iconography
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- develop events at the abbey focusing on the Age of the Princes
- provide download centre in the Victorian summer house

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites
- develop interpreted trail linking abbey to nearby Eliseg's Pillar
- develop training and publicity support for guides and live interpreters



Llys Rhosyr

Short term priority:

- provide updated introductory welcome panel at site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information, including signage and opening times for the Institute

Medium term priority:

- design and installation of new interpretive panels
- design and install plaques indicating site of significant feature to go with audio tour link
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- develop experimental archaeology projects and events with local education providers and community groups
- develop new exhibition at the Pritchard Jones Institute
- provide download centre in the Pritchard Jones Institute

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- develop role playing and handling items kit resources to be housed at the Pritchard Jones Institute
- develop interpreted trail linking Llys Rhosyr with wider village trail and facilities
- develop training and publicity support for guides and live interpreters



Deganwy

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panels at key site entry and arrival points conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information
- remove existing slate panel and design and install new panel on upgraded accessible route

Medium term priority:

- improve signage to the monument, including road signage and pedestrian way marking
- develop self guided interpreted trail with leaflet dispensers from key entry points
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- develop events for school groups focusing on the age of the Princes supported by handling items and strong storytelling aspect

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage leaflet sales and downloads from other nearby sites including Conwy Castle
- develop training and publicity support for guides and live interpreters



Conwy town and Conwy town walls

Short term priority:

- develop Welsh Princes themes as part of the content for a new visitor exhibition at Conwy Castle visitor centre

Medium term priority:

- develop Welsh Princes themes as part of the Conwy town walls new interpretive panel design
- provide dedicated website portal for Conwy castle, town and town walls with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, maps, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- provide download centre at the Visitor Centre³³
- support Conwy castle and town events with events based on live interpreters weaving stories of the Princes of Gwynedd
- develop events for school groups focusing on the age of the Princes supported by handling items and strong storytelling aspect

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- develop training and publicity support for guides and live interpreters

³³ Overlaps with castles and town walls of Edward I



Dinas Emrys

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panel at the main point of access conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- develop a “naturalistic” community arts project to provide furniture, including seating, at pause points along the trail to Dinas Emrys
- improve signage to the monument, including road signage and pedestrian way marking³⁴
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- provision of download centre at nearby TICs e.g. Beddgelert
- develop a circular route for accessing Dinas Emrys that allows opportunities for interpreting the wider landscape context of the site
- develop training and publicity support for guides and live interpreters

³⁴ Would need to be agreed with the National Trust and the National Park Authority



Cymer Abbey

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panel at site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- design and installation of new interpretive panels
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- improve road signage to the site
- explore potential for the development of self-guided interpreted trails for walkers or cyclists in the nearby area
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites
- commission sculpture of horses with reference to the monk's yearly render to the Princes



Castell y Bere

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panel at site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- design and installation of new interpretive panels across rest of site
- low key graphics in the 'bothy'
- commission and install on-site model
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- improve road signage and waymarking for the site
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- investigate feasibility of installing download centre at Dolgellau

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites including Dolgellau
- work with local community/ history groups to develop guided tours and events around the castle



Dolforwyn Castle

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panels at key site entry points conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including reconstruction images, podscroll field guide, bilingual podcast audio tours and themed trail packs for families
- investigate feasibility of installing download centre in Montgomery

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- phase in design and installation of new interpretive panels across rest of site, avoiding duplication of material covered by existing panels
- encourage guidebook sales from nearby sites including Dolgellau
- develop self guided interpreted walk in wider Severn Valley area
- work with local community/ history groups to develop guided tours and events around the castle



Montgomery Castle

Short term priority:

- provide introductory welcome panels at key site entry conveying the key themes, facilities and visitor information

Medium term priority:

- improve road signage and waymarking for the site
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, including podscroll field guide and maps
- investigate feasibility of installing download centre in Montgomery
- develop sound installation in Gazebo on site

Long term priority/ nice to have:

- develop self guided interpreted walk from castle through town and into wider Severn Valley area
- work with local community/ history groups to develop guided tours and events around the castle
- provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups



Criccieth Castle³⁵

Short term

- provide introductory welcome panel(s) covering the key themes and visitor information
- design and distribute free map guides/ leaflets for the castle including visit 'highlights'
- design and install interpretive model of the castle
- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- develop suite of podcast tours for pre-downloading

Medium term

- design and install remaining interpretive panels
- develop new exhibition for the visitor centre focusing on the Princes of Gwynedd, add new 'introduction' to centre offer
- develop new AV show(s) to convey the Criccieth story with regards to other North Wales castles and the Princes of Gwynedd
- develop new download centre in the visitor centre
- upgrade existing telescope to 'speaking telescopes' for wall-top locations
- design and develop bench seating incorporating imagery and text
- develop road signage and pedestrian approach infrastructure
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, podcasts of audio tours and themed downloadable packs for families

Long term/ would be nice to have

- develop interpreted walking link from castle as part of Criccieth coastal walk, taking in historic elements of the town and setting
- advertise visitor centre as available for community use
- provide training and publicity support for tour guides from local history groups

³⁵ Parallels with Castles and Town Walls of Edward I plan



Dolwyddelan Castle³⁶

Short term

- provide introductory welcome panels conveying the key themes and visitor information
- design and install interpretive model of the castle
- develop suite of podcast tours for pre-downloading

Medium term

- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- develop new visitor exhibition alongside Princes of Gwynedd exhibition to focus on the conflict between the Princes and Edward I
- design and install remaining interpretive panels
- improve pedestrian approach infrastructure including for out of season visits
- investigate potential for community archaeology and heritage project to provide an interpreted walk linking this castle with the former Llys site below
- encourage guidebook sales from other sites in the area, including Criccieth
- design and develop bench seating incorporating imagery and text
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, podcasts of audio tours and themed downloadable packs for families

Long term/ would be nice to have

- develop an interpreted trail linking castle with Llys site below
- provide training and publicity support for tour guides and live interpreters from local history groups
- work with local community/ history groups to develop guided tours and events around the castle

³⁶ Parallels with Castles and Town Walls of Edward I plan



Dolbadarn Castle³⁷

Short term

- provide introductory welcome panels conveying the key themes and visitor information
- design and install interpretive model of the castle
- develop suite of podcast tours for pre-downloading

Medium term

- design and install metal plaques indicating significant feature and audio tour link
- design and install remaining interpretive panels
- improve road signage to the carpark and pedestrian signage to castle from carpark
- develop castle walk from Llanberis
- encourage guidebook sales from other sites in the area including Criccieth
- provide dedicated website portal for castle with downloadable resources, podcasts of audio tours and themed downloadable packs for families

Long term/ would be nice to have

- re-design the 'cage' so that the visitor can better appreciate views from the tower top
- provide training and publicity support for tour guides and live interpreters from local history groups

³⁷ Parallels with Castles and Town Walls of Edward I plan



10 Monitoring and evaluation

It will be essential for any new interpretation developments and installations to be subject to ongoing evaluation in order to guide future activity, funding and approaches.

10.1 Visitor survey

General visitor research (e.g. self completion surveys) is needed to help support Cadw and partners' ongoing understanding of who the audiences for the Princes of Gwynedd stories and sites currently are and an understanding of who they could be and to provide a baseline against which the implementation of convergence and other funded projects can be measured. We would recommend that Cadw and partners continue to monitor footfall counts at key unstaffed sites in addition to surveying visitors to staffed sites connected with the Princes of Gwynedd, including:

- Criccieth Castle
- Valle Crucis Abbey
- Aberffraw (Llys Llywelyn)
- The Pritchard Jones Institute
- Dolwyddelan Castle

Surveys should aim to collect information on:

- visitor profile and demographic
- motivations for visiting, expectations
- pre visit information
- the amount of time they spent on site and where they spent it
- what they did as part of their visit
- what they enjoyed most about their visit
- what they did not like
- how they feel about the site following their visit
- what, if anything, they learned from their visit
- what they would change
- what other sites they have visited in relation to the Princes of Gwynedd and where else they would like to visit

These points are as prompts only since each site should ideally have specifically tailored surveys that test specific interpretation media and services present at each site against the Generic Learning Outcomes identified during this study but still include the same profiling questions to allow comparisons.

If the surveys can be begun in 2010, this information can be used to inform the action plan and help inform the priorities for each site. Footfall counters for unstaffed sites will be important in monitoring the impact any new interpretation may have on the numbers of people finding out and being motivated to visit a location and on the quality of their experience and engagement with Princes of Gwynedd story.



10.2 Research on specific projects

In addition to the visitor survey approach, specific interpretive media interventions could be evaluated to test the performance and impact of new interpretive products introduced at specific sites, such as planned new exhibitions. A member of staff or volunteer could spend a day monitoring the experience of the target audience (families) in using new media packages on site through observation followed by a brief exit questionnaire before the group leave.


Likewise, many of the schemes we have proposed for each site could be monitored in a similar way, testing against specific generic learning outcomes.


It will also be important to monitor the level of impact the Princes of Gwynedd web presence has on visits and visitors to these sites over time. This could also be picked up through integrated systems online that 'count' the number of times specific podcasts/ pdfs have been downloaded, number of hits on specific pages, etc.


Map to show key sites: Princes of Gwynedd





KEY


 Castle / fort


 Religious buildings / remains


 Llys site

 Museum / information point

 Major Welsh trading centre

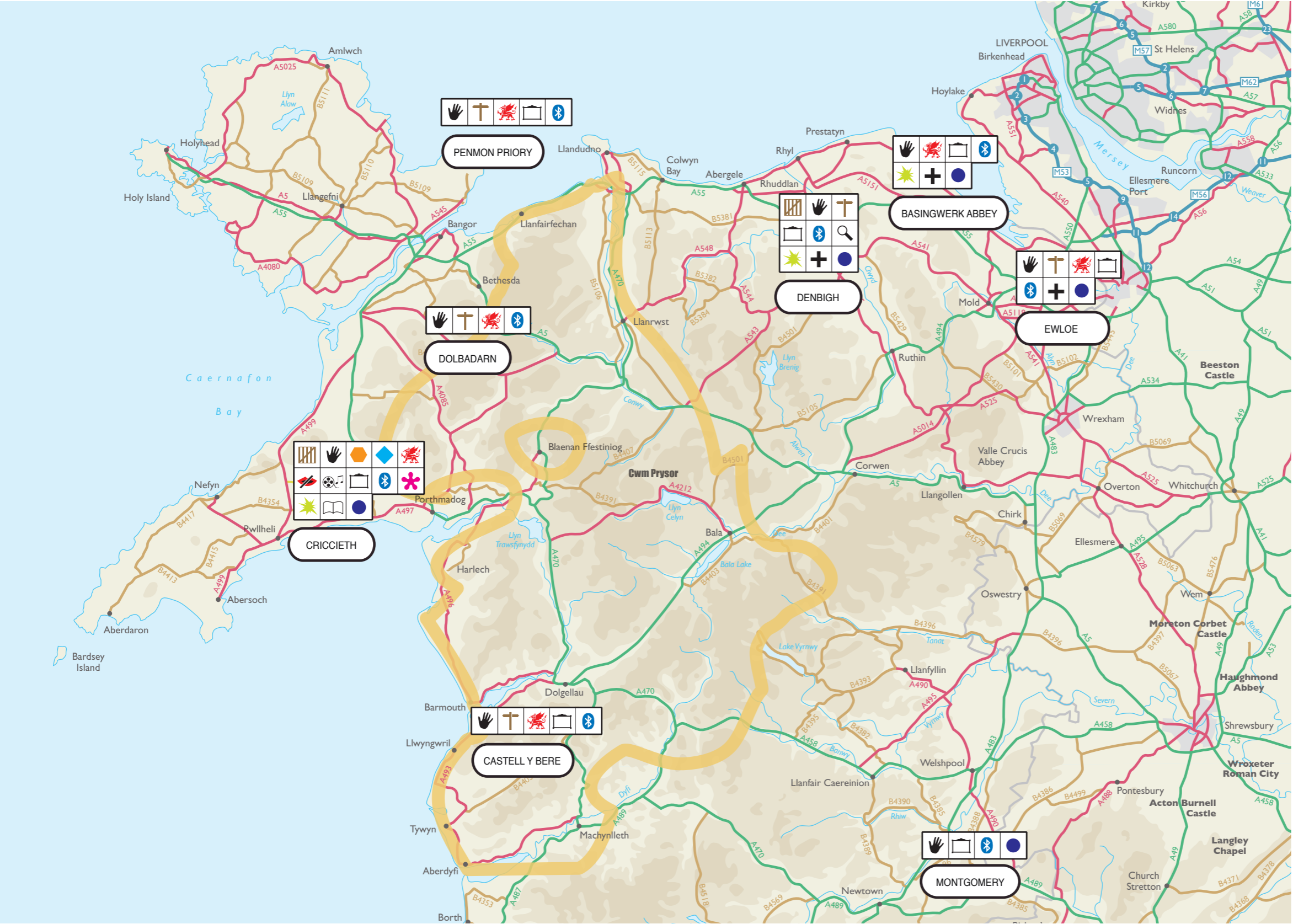
 Monument

 Pink Indicates sites not visited



Title: Map to show key sites: Princes of Gwynedd		
Scale: NTS	Date: May 2010	
Drawing No: 5523 - Map 1	Rev: A	

Map to show Atkins report recommendations

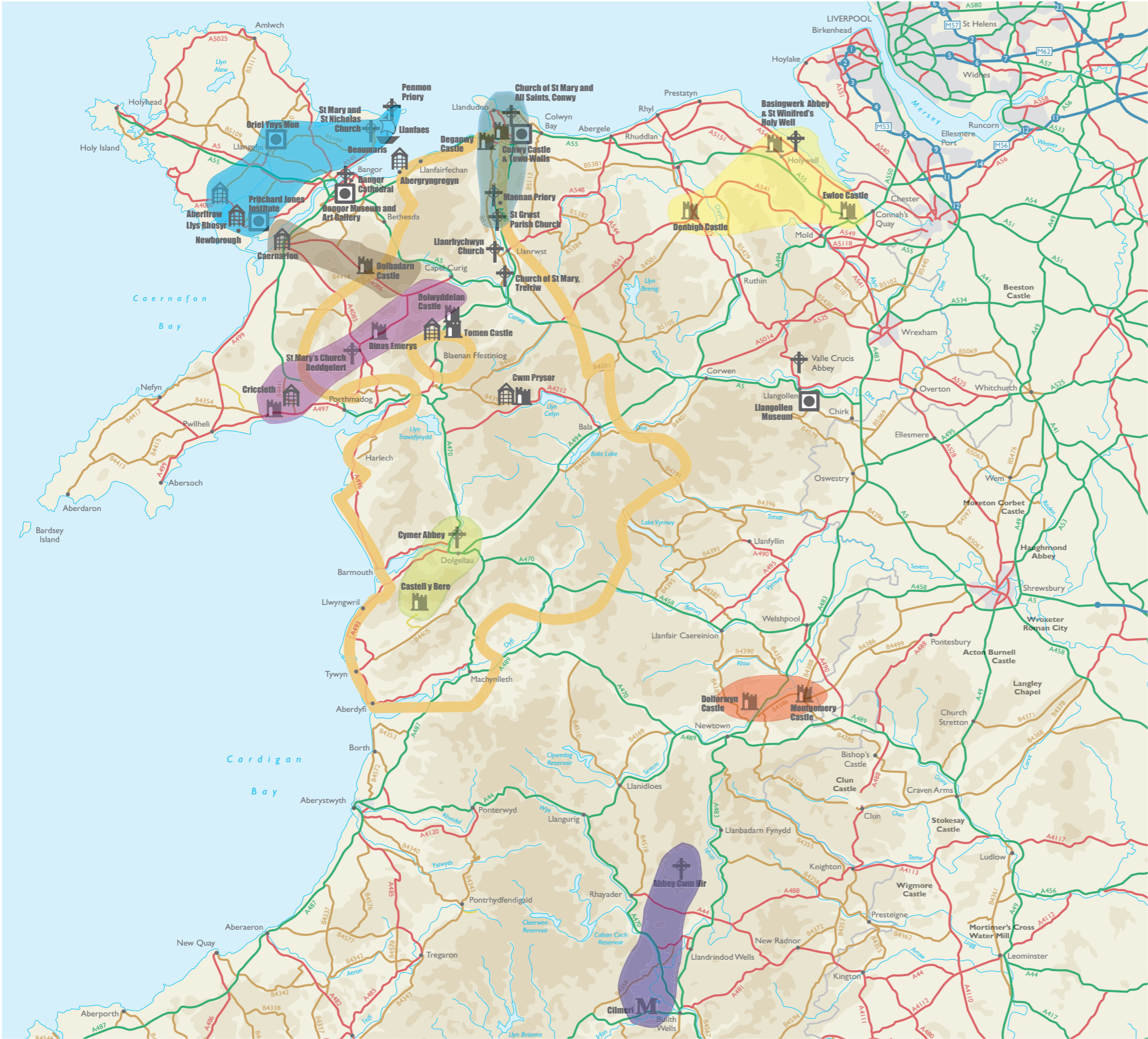


KEY


- Gateway
- Welcome
- Signage / Orientation
- New / refurbished reception
- Learning activity centre
- Exhibition
- Strong Welsh themes
- Unheard voices & perspectives
- Audio visual
- Audio tour
- Panels
- Bluetooth
- Time Detectives
- Other activities
- Events
- Partership opportunities
- Life long learning
- Community outreach


PLB,
Dovecote Stables,
Swinton Grange Courtyard,
Swinton,
Malton,
North Yorkshire,
YO17 6QR.
www.plbltd.com


Title: Map to show Atkins report recommendations	
Scale: NTS	Date: March 2010
Drawing No: 5523 - Map 2	Rev: -





KEY


 Castle / fort

 Religious buildings / remains

 Llys site

 Museum / information point

 Major Welsh trading centre

 Monument

Title: Map to show potential site clusters:	
Scale: NTS	Date: May 2010
Drawing No: 5523 - Map 3	Rev: -



Site Audits

EWLOE CASTLE

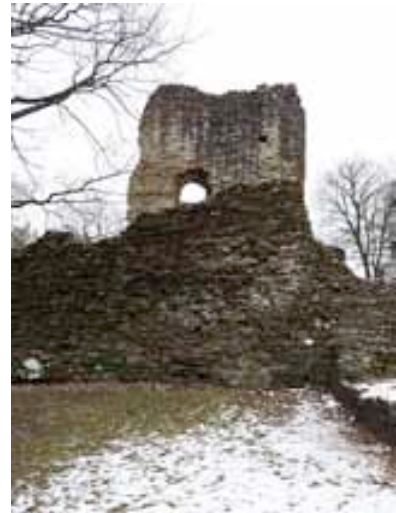
Local Authority: Flintshire County Council

USP: Dramatic and unusual Welsh Castle hidden in the woods

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. There are no signs on the major roads nearby and it was very difficult to locate. There is one dedicated car park (at the Wepre Park Visitor Centre) and 7 entry points into the park – but signing the park, not the castle. Signposting and orientation on site was unclear – you just follow your nose



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. There are graded paths and timber stairs to gain access to the castle but no signs at all and no other features around to help you identify where you are looking (or what direction).

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. Only one non-standard CADW panel on site which is largely about the park, the ranger service and all the things you can't do (although the CADW guidebook is available in the Wepre Park Visitor Centre, a walk away, when open).

The guided tour in the guidebook has a heavily architectural/ technical focus which leaves gaps in interpretation (who/ why/ where/ what)

Is the site comfortable?

No. The nearest facilities are located at Wepre Park Visitor Centre at the opposite end of the park.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panel. Non-standard twin post and panel

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

One panel. Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Clear but haphazard arrangement on the panel. Map not orientated correctly. Bit high.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Severely limited. Interpretation consists of a single paragraph on Llywelyn ap Gruffudd's building of the castle in 1257 (possibly on the site of an earlier castle) and that it was in the hands of the English by 1277. Dwells mostly on the park and what you shouldn't do e.g. pick flowers.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Map faring better than rest of panel which is fading a bit.

How robust is it?

Reasonable.

Are other sites referred to?

No. Potential to link with Wepre Country Park Visitor Centre for interpretation, Hawarden Castle, Flint Castle and other castles in the near area of the northern border (site shares Cadw guidebook with Flint Castle)

Welsh border castles

Is it physically accessible?

Not really. Site represents typical countryside setting in woods high above a steep valley. Earthworks add to the challenging topography. However, there are good bridges, ramped walkways, wooden stairs and even surfaces to walk on.

Kissing-gates are in poor condition in some locations in the country park and difficult to negotiate.

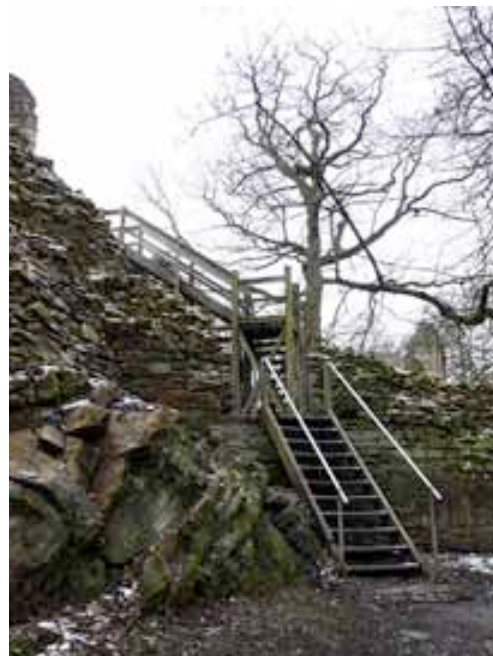
What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: So difficult to find – clearly the park is better known than the castle. The 'guided tour' in the guidebook was stuffy, difficult to follow and didn't answer any of the important questions about the site.

Most liked: Its dramatic and mysterious location and getting up to the top of one of the towers. Also the crudely painted coats of arms of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd on the gatepost to the woods where you enter the site

Is anything missing?

Complete lack of interpretation or relationship to other sites. Information about the setting and strategic location of the castle; its political context, the era including the Princes and life in medieval Wales. Potential to use plans, models, reconstruction drawings to help people understand elements of the site and a trail to get people looking for features/ clues to the past.



BASINGWERK ABBEY

Local Authority: Flintshire County Council

USP: Abbey ruins set amidst range of heritage features from early medieval period onwards tied to development of the valley: including well that becomes pilgrim's shrine, castle remains, mills, industrial development

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. Some signposting in close proximity but largely lost within cluster of other attractions along the Greenfield Valley: St Winifred's Well, Greenfield Valley Visitor Centre, and Meadow, Abbey Wire & Green field Mills.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. There are no helpful plaques or signs identifying key features. We were unable to precisely locate the castle site

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. There is a generic panel on the Cistercians in Wales but Basingwerk Abbey only appears on the map for the entire Heritage Park. Orientation to the abbey and the castle could be improved.

Is the site comfortable?

Yes. There are nearby facilities – a Visitor Centre, tea room and WCs, closed out of season.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panel. Wall-mounted GRP panel with a tubular frame.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

One external panel. Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Not very. Poor typography (long line lengths, bad spacing). Complicated maps showing arrival of monastic orders and dispersal in Wales.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Severely limited. The one panel on site contains generic information supplied on all the other CADW abbey and priory sites visited. This is primarily about the arrival of the Cistercians in Wales. No site-specific information about Basingwerk at all. Very little reference to the Welsh princes.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Generally poor. Has suffered some surface scoring and is fading. Frame aging and lichen

growing along bottom edge of panel.



How robust is it?

Reasonably. Clearly vulnerable to attack by vandals but text can still be read.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Written reference to other ecclesiastical sites including Tintern Abbey, Strata Florida in Mid Wales, and Whitland in SW Wales. Other sites like Basingwerk, Aberconwy, Cymer Abbey and Valle Crucis are only marked on the map. No reference to the surviving motte & bailey castle of Basingwerk Castle or St Winifred's Well.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes. Level surfaces to walk on around the site with few steps, many points of access to the park

However no physical access to castle mound apparent. More information about distances between places in the park needed

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Boring site with little interpretation to bring it alive.

Most liked: Connects with a host of other attractions and facilities, and good walks along the valley.

Is anything missing?

Site-specific interpretation making sense of Basingwerk Abbey, the castle and St Winifred's Well and why they are all here together in this place – the development of the landscape.

There is currently absolutely no reference to the Princes of Gwynedd



VALLE CRUCIS

Local Authority: Denbighshire County Council

USP: Surprisingly intact monastic ruin in idyllic, serene valley bottom setting

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Clear road signs lead you to the site from the A483 and Llangollen roads.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. There are no descriptive plaques but there are interpretive panels dispersed across the site. It is all on one level with no stairs to climb.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really. The story of the Cistercians coming to Wales, the relationship between them and the Anglo-Norman kings and Welsh princes appears complex and unclear.

The exhibition in the mill building was closed at time of visit

Is the site comfortable?

Yes. There is a Visitor Centre, shop, WCs and a nearby tea room associated with the adjacent caravan park and farm. Parking is available close by.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Wall-mounted tubular frame variety.

- Exhibition in the mill building (closed at time of visit). Audio interpretation guide also available from the mill – not available out of season

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

6 x external panels. Relatively sufficient (although no individual plaques naming and describing in-situ features).

How legible is the interpretation?

Not very. Text heavy bilingual panels with poor typography (long line lengths, bad spacing). Also, complicated maps to explain story of Cistercians and incorrectly orientated plans of the abbey.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Limited. Main themes cover the Cistercians in Wales incorporating a generic panel on this subject. Other panels relate specifically to the Cistercians at Valle Crucis, the Abbey in general and its component parts; the Church and Cloister, and W Turner at Valle Crucis. Relationship with the Welsh princes not made clear. However, there may be more detailed interpretation in the Visitor Centre and a new exhibition in the renovated Abbey Mill, which were closed during the site visit.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Good. All the external panels looked relatively recent and were in good condition although some were a little faded in places.

How robust is it?

Reasonably. The site is generally supervised so vandalism does not appear to be a big problem.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Written reference to other ecclesiastical sites including Tintern Abbey, Strata Florida in Mid Wales, and Whitland in SW Wales. Other sites like Basingwerk, Aberconwy and Cymer Abbey are only marked on the map.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes. All parts of the Abbey are generally on one level and access to the Abbey Mill to view the new exhibition is also via a ramped walkway/bridge.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Little in-situ interpretation to explain building features and lack of anything to bring the site 'alive'. Proximity of caravan park seems incongruous.

Most liked: Very beautiful abbey buildings with lots of visual interest and decorative detail in a superb landscape setting.

Is anything missing?

In-situ interpretation and lack of interactivity (although the exhibition may supply this – leaflet advertises an animatronic monk!).

Links to landscape of medieval Wales

Links to people associated with the site

Potential to link to other Welsh monastic sites and the Cistercian Way

References to other nearby sites like Dinas Bran



DINAS BRÂN

Local Authority: Denbighshire County Council

USP: Dramatic ruins high above the Llangollen valley

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. Although immediately above Llangollen, there are no signs up to this non-CADW site until you climb the hill at the back and find a path to the Offa's Dyle Path and branch off to the castle.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. Its ruinous state means that there is little left to explore. No explanation of views or the key features

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. Only one of the existing Local Authority panels describes the castle and it concentrates on what it originally looked like at one time. Little information on the iron age hill fort

Is the site comfortable?

No. Nearest facilities are at the bottom of the hill in the town.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. A wall-mounted panel on site and another twin-post lectern-mounted panel on the approach.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

2 x external panels. Relatively sufficient given the size of the site.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Generally very clear with a good use of imagery and a reconstructive illustration. Although text overlies the aerial view illustration on the approach panel.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Relatively limited. One panel on the approach to the castle refers to the walks around it and the other concentrates on the original appearance of the castle (although there is a reference to a bilingual guidebook available in Llangollen TIC).

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible. Each of the two panels is a different design and were probably implemented at different times. The use of illustration is strong in both panels however and not as text-heavy as the CADW equivalents.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Given the remote location the panels have survived well although the panel on site has been struck by either a stone (or air pellet?) in places.

How robust is it?

Reasonable. Despite the obvious attempts at vandalism the panels have survived and can be read.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Potential links with the nearby Offa's Dyke Path

Is it physically accessible?

Yes. Although it requires a steep climb up the hill and is very uneven across the summit of the hill in and around the ruins.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Little explanation of some obvious features e.g. the hole left by the quarrying of stone to build the castle.

Most liked: As part of a hill walk it makes for a great feature and the views are spectacular (or would be on a clear day!).

Is anything missing?

A general lack of interpretation of in-situ features, very little on the historical background of the castle and no explanation of the views.



ABERFFRAW

Local Authority: Angelsey / Ynys Mon County Council

USP: Lonely village at the site of the once principle residence for the ancient princes of North Wales (from C5th). Also the romanesque chancel arch in St Bueno's Church, remnant of the Royal Chapel of the former Llys

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?



Yes. Signposted from main roads on Angelsey.

Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. There is no 'site' as such although there is a Heritage/ Arts Centre close to the main road with a memorial to the princes. There is also the Church of St Bueno in the village which visitors are not directed to (you have to explore to find it). Access to the Church is by key collection only from elsewhere in the village.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. Despite the tagline 'Home of the Princes of Gwynedd' on the village signpost there did not appear to be very much info available at the Llys Llewelyn, the main car park, café and arrival point. There were some old panels outside the Church, if you explore that far, which discuss the Kingdom of Gwynedd and Maelgwn, 6th century King and the reasons why Llywelyn ap Iorwerth referred to both the mountains of Gwynedd and Aberffraw in his title. Also refers to the Conquest and end of the ages of the Llysoed including the removal of timbers from the old Llys at Aberffraw to Caernarfon Castle in 1317. Explanation of Llys, Maerdref and commotes, possible site of the old Llys in Aberffraw

Is the site comfortable?

Yes. There is a café, shop, art gallery/exhibition and WCs in the Heritage Centre (Llys Llywelyn).

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

A memorial sculpture. A modern sculptural piece at the Heritage Centre with inscriptions (in Welsh only). Interpretive panels at the Old Bridge refer only to the bridge, the local beaches and the coastline AONB. Interpretive panels at the church produced by Menter Mon – Heritage Footpaths

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Hard to find - not at the main arrival point

How legible is the interpretation?

Bi-lingual and in very small font size

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Very detailed but no hierarchy so hard to access

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Interpretation panels at the Church look dated

In what condition is it?

Panels at the Church subject to some fading

How robust is it?

Relatively robust panels

Are other sites referred to?

Some of the nearby sites relating to historic Angelsey. No reference to Llys Rhosyr, the Pritchard Jones Institute or anywhere else you could possibly find out about the Princes. Village has a circular walk although it was unclear how you could find out more about this.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes. Both the Heritage Centre and village are easy to access and explore.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The unfathomable sculpted memorial with its Welsh-only inscription.

Most liked: The village is very attractive with some walks and views across the tidal creeks, and the Heritage Centre (Llys Llywelyn) is very welcoming.

Is anything missing?

Site-specific interpretation at the key arrival point, links to historic trail, reference to Llys Rhosyr, signposting to the Church. A visit leaves you feeling like you've missed something



LLYS RHOSYR

Local Authority: Angelsey / Ynys Mon County Council

USP: Clear exposed archaeological remains of a Welsh commotal court or Llys

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Clearly signposted from the main streets in Newborough.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. Although the site consists only of lines of foundation walls, these do help you identify the footprints of buildings. A grassy path surrounds the archaeological findings.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really. Relatively minimal on-site interpretation although the reconstruction illustration on the introductory panel provides a basic impression.

Is the site comfortable?

No. Nearest facilities are in the centre of Newborough, which is a good few minutes walk away, including the nearest car park.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. One vertical panel set within a curved tubular frame and one twin-posted, lectern-mounted panel.

Display. Located in the Pritchard Jones Institute in Newborough and consisting of panels and a display of archaeological finds.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

2 x external panels and 4 x internal panels (at the Pritchard Jones institute). Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Okay. Bilingual blocks of text with images dotted about.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Limited. Minimal level of interpretation on site (reflecting limited knowledge at the time?).

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Just a bit bleached by UV.

How robust is it?

Relatively good. The on-site interpretation is okay because it is relatively new and the other displays are in a protected environment.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. The on-site panel refers to Welsh castles and ecclesiastical sites associated with the Welsh princes in Gwynedd. Other 'maedrefs' (royal estates) such as Aberffraw and Llanfaes, also Beaumaris in relation to the relocation of the former Welsh settlement there when building the castle. References to the Pritchard Jones Institute

Is it physically accessible?

To a degree. Although there is some uneven ground it is generally ok with a high level dump of earth which acts as a viewing platform.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The lack of anything else to engage with. The on-site panels also make no mention of the display in the Pritchard Jones Institute. Overhead cables and telegraph poles spoil the views across the site.

Most liked: Tangible evidence of the Welsh princes which is not in a castle. Artists impression of the site as it would have looked on one of the panels. Also fantastic views of Snowdonia across the Menai Straits.

Is anything missing?

More in-depth interpretation, car parking

Entrance/ enticing arrival point, more information on its role/ function

Reconstructions/ further images of how the Llys may have looked

Promotion needed hand in hand with the Pritchard Jones Institute





THE PRITCHARD JONES INSTITUTE, NEWBOROUGH

Local Authority: Angelsey / Ynys Mon County Council

USP: Grandiose historic building providing community facilities and heritage focal point for the village. Has particular links to Llys Rhosyr

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Clearly signposted from the main streets in Newborough.

Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

We were given a tour of the building – however it is anticipated that visitors would be met once they enter the building by someone staffing the Institute and also that there would be signage to the Llys Rhosyr exhibition in the library.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really. Relatively minimal on-site interpretation including information about the building and its history; and the reasons why the Llys Rhosyr exhibition is here.

Is the site comfortable?

Relatively although there are no facilities for refreshments.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Wall mounted panels in library exhibition supported by cased objects from the archaeological finds.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

4 x internal panels (at the Pritchard Jones institute). Some information on the previous Princes of Gwynedd interpretive initiative remains available.

How legible is the interpretation?

Okay. Bilingual blocks of text with images dotted about.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

The display in the Pritchard Jones Institute goes into more depth covering the following themes: The Age of Princes, Llys Rhosyr, The Life of the People and Newborough. The display accompanied by a (non-museum standard) display case of archaeological finds.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable.

How robust is it?

Relatively good - in a protected environment.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes – the Institute has recently been refurbished with new physical access improvements.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: It is hard (currently) to find out when the Pritchard Jones Institute is open (the Trust are trying to address this issue). It is unlikely that many visitors that access Llys Rhosyr get to come here to find out more in the exhibition.

Most liked: Detailed information about the world of the Princes, supported by real finds from the archaeological excavations

Is anything missing?

More in-depth interpretation, better promotion and access (in terms of opening hours) to the exhibiton

Better links with Llys Rhosyr and other sites associated with the Princes



ST MARY AND ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, BEAUMARIS

Local Authority: Anglesey County Council / Ynys Mon CC

USP: Burial/ memorial information that tells the stories of people associated with the town of Beaumaris e.g. Princess Joan, William Bulkeley and wife

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. Although it is not the only church in Beaumaris and there are no specific signs to it.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. The church was open and most of the relevant information was in the porch.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really. Unless you already had some background knowledge it would be difficult to understand the significance of Princess Joan's tomb stone and the wider history of the Church.

Is the site comfortable?

No, although there are facilities in the town nearby.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Small display. Wall-mounted inscriptions, Joan's tomb, A4 framed descriptions, framed flag, visitor guide leaflet (bilingual) that shows you the key features of the Church

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Reasonably sufficient, given the nature of the venue.

How legible is the interpretation?

Not very. The porch is not well lit and the text in the A4 frames was very small and the inscriptions not too easy to read, one was bilingual the other only in Welsh.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. Explained that the tomb of Joan, daughter of King John and consort of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth was originally from Llanfaes Priory, and for many years had been used as a horse trough(!). Not very much about the wider story of the princes.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Good in parts. The hand-cut inscriptions on the wall-mounted slate slabs and carved tomb cover were beautiful. Unfortunately not matched by the modern interpretation.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable.

How robust is it?

Not at all. The A4 info sheets, flag, leaflets etc all prone to damp.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Llanfaes Priory. Could refer to many more sites across Anglesey including

Newborough, Penmon but also Abergryngregyn across the Staits

Is it physically accessible?

No, due to steps. However, the church is kept open and the porch and rest of the church are largely on one level.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Random arrangement of elements, the modern interpretation just looks like a lot of 'clutter'.

Most liked: The statuary and tombs, the carved inscriptions including carved sarcophagus of Joan/ Joanna, wife of Llewellyn ap Iorwerth and the tomb effigy of the Bulkeleys, one of whom was Deputy Constable of the Castle. Also the carved choir stalls from Llanfaes Priory

Is anything missing?

A simple account of the events leading up to the death of Joan and the wider background story. (Also the lack of interpretation regarding Llanfaes Priory, or its former site?).

There is no central point in the town to disperse visitors to different attractions and get you going to the church and castle and thinking about Beaumaris and the reason it's there; the wider stories associated with it and its context to help make connections with Anglesey and the rest of Wales. Potential to link everything through a town trail. Church is a great place to find out about the history of people at Beaumaris and their lives, including interesting tombstones etc



PENMON PRIORY ST SEIROL'S CHURCH AND WELL

Local Authority: Anglesey County Council / Ynys Mon

USP: Isolated priory ruin with diverse range of interesting features to explore

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Reasonably. Although there is little incentive provided to find the site. Some signposting from Beaumaris but you still get the feeling you are heading 'off the beaten track'



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. The Dining Hall is easy to find, as is the separate Dovecote. The former Priory Church still continues as a working church, other elements you have to discover for yourself e.g. the 12th century Nave (behind glass), the Well and Pond.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really. Parts of it are not easy to find and the CADW panels present a predominantly architectural story of the remains. Does not attempt to explain why the Priory was built here. There is an unclear way-marked trail.

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities here.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Wall-mounted panels with tubular frame.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

3 x external panels plus light-up display. Reasonably sufficient in quantity but not necessarily in content.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Just prone to poor typography and text-rich due to bilingual content.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Relatively limited. The main panel is predominantly architectural in nature with some history of the Welsh monastery founded in the 6th century and its reorganisation as a Priory in the 13th century for Augustinian Canons. There is a mention of the Holy Well dedicated to the founder, St Seiriol, as a site of pilgrimage until 'recent times'. The two other panels describe the functions of the South Range and the post-medieval Dovecot which is quite a unique feature, using cut-away illustrations.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible. Standard CADW wall-mounted panels and name plaques.

In what condition is it?



Good. Panels look reasonably recent and no signs of vandalism.

How robust is it?

Reasonable.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. The quarries at Penmon supplied stone for the building of Beaumaris Castle, both Menai bridges and wharves at Dublin.

Is it physically accessible?

No, due to various steps and rural nature of much of the site. The church is on a higher level than the road and the path to St Seiriol's Well is uneven.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: It was frustrating not being able to have a closer view of the 11th century Nave and stone crosses which were behind a timber and glass partition. Visitors could switch on a light in the Nave to view it from a distance.

Most liked: A beautiful setting with parts of the monastery/priory dotted about the landscape. Carved stone crosses and ancient interior of St Seiriol's Church, original well "grotto".

Remarkably intact Bulkeley dovecote and the views of the sea and mountains are sublime.

Is anything missing?

Not enough site-specific interpretation to put the monastery/priory in overall context. No mention at all of the Welsh princes and the relationship between them and the church. No map or guide in evidence to help you follow the way-marked trail.

No interpretation in the chapel or at the well

No interpretation on the Bulkeley family and their use of the Priory buildings

No interpretation of later phases of the Priory's life, including the communities that lived here

Potential for tactile/ replica interpretation of stone crosses

Potential for trail around the site to take you through the different features and place Penmon in wider context of its setting and location



ABERGWYNGREGYN

Local Authority: Gwynedd County Council

USP: Historic Welsh village, 'Garth Celyn' home to Welsh Princes and Llys controlling ancient crossing point of the Menai Straits

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. Easy enough to find the village from the A55 but no public right of way/ access to the motte site itself and no signage.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. The site cannot be reached and only viewed from a distance (if you know where to look)

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. There is a small TIC and cafe in the village (which was closed on the day of the site visit) which may have some info on the Llys site but there was no other information available.

Village at the start of a popular walk up to Aber falls

Is the site comfortable?

No. Although there would be an open cafe in the village at the height of the season.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

None. (Unless this was available in the closed TIC).

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

None.

How legible is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

In what condition is it?

Not applicable.

How robust is it?

Not applicable.

Are other sites referred to?

Not applicable. (Unless referred to in TIC).

Is it physically accessible?

No. Motte/ mound site is located on private land with no obvious means of entry.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Lack of access and information. NO real reason to visit

Most liked: The village is attractive and there is access to some great walks from here (e.g.

Aber Falls). Seeing the earthen mound (Pen y Mwd) in the village (possible site of Llys and Princes' residence).

Is anything missing?

Any indication that the site exists let alone info about it. (This also applies to the Llywelyn's supposed family residence).

Potential to reinforce sense of place, arrival e.g. public realm opportunities, depending on community goodwill and involvement

Little capacity/ infrastructure for visitors in any number, especially those arriving in car or coach

Potential to interpret landscape connections of Aber, including historic routeways, fording the Menai Straits, links to the key players of the conflict who were at times here at Aber



Llywelyn's family residence, Abergwyngregyn, Gwynedd.



DEGANWY CASTLE

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Ancient stronghold that offers an important opportunity to understand the lie of the land in the pre and post conquest years

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. This is largely dog-walking territory behind the town and very much a site used by locals. Virtually no signage or dedicated car parking.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. There is one inscribed panel marking the gatehouse but no other interpretation to make sense of the castle or the views.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. In its present state it would be very easy to miss. There is no story presented and the panel (above) gives no mention of the Welsh princes or any indication which phase this 'gatehouse' represents (English or Welsh?).

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Panel. Slate with hand-cut lettering on stone plinth.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

1 x panel (as above). Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Although it reads as light grey on darker grey so not good for those with vision-impairments.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. The bilingual panel simply marks the location of a former gatehouse in the 13th century.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Reasonable. The use of a natural material is complementary to the site context but little design has been applied to the typography.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Although there is some surface scoring the panel remains largely legible.

How robust is it?

Very.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?

No. Sloping walkway up from the streets below.

Steep climbs about the site with rough, eroded pathways in places

Poor Rights of Way infrastructure such as gates and stiles

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: So little information. There are signs (earthworks) of the former borough in the landscape which are easy to miss due to the lack of interpretation.

Most liked: Fantastic views across the Menai Straits to the mountains and Conwy Castle.

Is anything missing?

There is no interpretation, no history of the site and the various phases of building and destruction, no explanation of the views e.g. mountains, Conwy Castle, interpretation of wider landscape links

No links with finds from archaeological excavations

No mention of longstanding links and associations with the rulers of Gwynedd and their protagonists

No interpretation about the settlement that once existed in the land directly below the fort – you can still see the earthworks

Need for signposting from various routeways around the site

Potential for off-site interpretation from related historic attractions such as Conwy Castle

Could introduce an on-site model, to interpret strategic importance

Could introduce replicas/ references to key finds from site

Handheld interpretation to provide coherent tour of the site



CONWY | TOWN WALLS

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Compact, almost complete wall circuit of historic town with great views in all directions

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Not really. There are only 4 access points onto the walls (it states only 3 on the CADW panel) with some blocked off, probably for health & safety reasons. The signage leading you to the walls is concealed and in places misleading. Insufficient signage from within the town.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. Once on the walls it is easy to see where you are in relation to the town and castle and the panels include a map indicating your position.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. There is very little information on the panels about the reason why the walls were built and the relationship between the castle and the borough which Edward I created (or what preceded it).

Is the site comfortable?

Relatively. There is some seating, other facilities available in the town.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Wall-mounted GRP panels.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

3 x panels. Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Usual issue with long line lengths but includes map indicating where you are.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. Very little content, 2 of the 3 panels are the same and simply state when the walls were built (1280s) and that the circuit is complete. One of the panels provides more detail on the purpose of the walls and the creation of the new town. Remaining information warns visitors about the uneven walkways and steep gradients.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. No signs of obvious damage or vandalism.

How robust is it?

Reasonable.

Are other sites referred to?

No. Just the castle, no other sites in Gwynedd.

Is it physically accessible?

No. Access by stairs and some steep, uneven sections, gradients

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: There is a missed opportunity in that no other features or sites are referred to e.g. St Mary's Church, Plas Mawr, Aberconwy House, or Deganwy Castle in the distance, and visitors are not encouraged to find out more at the castle visitor centre. Also annoying that some access points were blocked and signage so poor.

Most liked: A fantastic walk and introduction to the town and castle with fantastic views especially from the highest point (even those these were not explained).

Is anything missing?

A general failure to provide explanatory information about the walls, castle, town or any of its features, or very much historical background.

Wayfinding aids

Interpretation of views including historic links with places like Conwy Castle, Deganwy



CONWY | VISITOR CENTRE

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Exhibition that (if open/ reinstated) would tell the whole story of the origins of the town of Conwy in one central location

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Although not signed it is near the station, castle and the adjacent car parks.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Not applicable. The ground floor consists of one large shop. The heritage exhibition is on the first floor and currently closed to the public (due largely to loss of schools market).

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Relatively. The exhibition consists of an illustrated timeline on the walls supported by lots of large graphics with images. Lots of floor space probably intended for supervised school groups.

Is the site comfortable?

No. There is just a shop although close to facilities within the town

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Exhibition. Graphic panels consisting of photojet prints mounted onto foamboard, 3 x figures (costumed shop dummies), scenic archway and a tabletop backlit graphic.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Sufficient in quantity (but not necessarily in content).

How legible is the interpretation?

Good. Clear and legible graphics with plenty of enlarged illustrations.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Relatively minimal. Captions to images and maps, a sort of illustrated timeline describing the building of the castle and the walled town, in English only.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Fairly poor, despite some good ideas and intentions it is let down by poor execution and lots of photocopies stuck everywhere, degrading through age/ lack of maintenance

In what condition is it?

Very poor. Panels warped with prints peeling away from foamboard, discoloration, and damage from damp conditions.

How robust is it?

Not at all.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Aberconwy Abbey and sites and features within the town of Conwy.

Is it physically accessible?

No. Previously accessed by visitors by staircase from ground floor, but now closed (for the foreseeable future?) Exhibition did not have any non graphic content

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Poor execution, probably due to very minimal budget. This misleading identity for the shop is potentially confusing for visitors, since it is no longer a 'Visitor Centre'

Most liked: The use of some of the enlarged images of the castle e.g. the reconstruction illustration by Alan Sorrell.

Is anything missing?

An equivalent exhibition to introduce people to the town and disperse them to key attractions. There is a need to tell the story of town in one central location in Conwy, preferably near the main visitor arrival point. This role has not been taken on by the new TIC and visitor centre at the Castle



CONWY | ST MARYS CHURCH

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Association with Aberconwy Abbey and the full history of the town. Close link with Princes of Gwynedd

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. Although not directly signed, it is a prominent building in the heart of the town.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. There is a leaflet which points out key features in the church interior.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

Relatively. There is only seating, facilities (toilets, cafes etc) available in the town.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Leaflet titled 'Visitors Guide' provided for 20 pence to buy or free to borrow within the building

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

1 x leaflet. Sufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Although rather text-heavy and largely a gazetteer of architectural features.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Replaced regularly.

How robust is it?

Not very.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?



Yes. All on one level.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Not much to see (or do). Site not open - had to get the key from the nearby vicarage – assumes you know which building that is!

Most liked: 15th century carved rood screen, Church contains some interesting historic artefacts including medieval processional cross

Is anything missing?

Potential to provide more information about the Abbey and the Princes' relationship with this place (former burial site of Llewelyn Fawr, mausoleum for the Princes; depository for Welsh national records, library.)

Potential to provide more information about the removal of the abbey to Maenan, then to Llanrwst Church and what happened next

Link with Edwardian Castles and Town Walls – Edward I relocated the abbey to Maen

Opportunities to tell town history, including connections with the Wynns of Plas Mawr (now a Cadw run visitor attraction)



MAENAN ABBEY (former site of)

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Links with the monks of Aberconwy Abbey and Maenan Abbey and the later burial place of Llywelyn Fawr

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Not really. It exists largely in name only. A cedar tree and arched gateway in the grounds of the hotel there.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

No. There is so little surviving of the former abbey.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

No. Only for hotel residents.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Noticeboard. The only form of information available are plans of the site in the hotel foyer (not seen). There is no interpretation anywhere bearing any reference to the former monastic site

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

None.

How legible is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Not applicable.

In what condition is it?

Not applicable.

How robust is it?

Not applicable.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?

Not applicable.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: So little of the former abbey left (and what remains is on private land).

Most liked: The studded gates/ archway is all that remains

Is anything missing?

Interpretation of the abbey – landscaping/ public realm could refer to the story/ add sense of place. However, site is not a visitor attraction – it is a privately run hotel, so may be able to generate enhanced business opportunities through its relationship with the abbey



LLANRWST ST GRWST CHURCH AND GWYDIR CHAPEL | LLANRWST

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Sarcophagus of Llewelyn Fawr in the carved oak chapel (Gwydir Chapel) adjoining St Grwst Church

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. LLanrwst Church is easy to see from a distance although tucked away at the far end of town down a short alley - access is not obvious. The chapel is adjacent to the Church – but this is not obvious either. Both buildings were open on the day of visiting.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Reasonably. There is a dedicated display area although appears as a bit of a jumble of features.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

No. Nearest facilities are in the town

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Notices and framed postcards. The only form of interpretation in the Chapel consists largely of captions for the sculpted pieces and objects on display. A4 folder of bilingual typed notes in the main Church building.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Minimal.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Very poor.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable.

How robust is it?

Fragile.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Bangor Cathedral and Abergwyngregyn.

Is it physically accessible?

Reasonably. All on one level.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Poor quality of the interpretive notices.

Most liked: Panelled interior and collection of statuary, tombs and lectern etc in the Chapel. Sarcophagus of Llywelyn Fawr. Peaceful riverside setting in centre of town. Carved choir stalls with a variety of different characters

Is anything missing?

Links to Maenan Abbey and other sites connected with the Princes Story in the Conwy Valley. Story of the Princes of Gwynedd. Links to the wider town heritage offer (although town interpretation boards do reference the Church)

Opportunity to use sculptured pieces from the Church to support interpretation of the Welsh story



CHURCH OF ST MARY, TREFRIW

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Small historic Church close to the site of a Llys of the Princes of Gwynedd

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Sits above the main street in Trfriw although not signed.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes and no. It would have been if we had been able to gain access.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

No although there are facilities further down the street adjacent to the main car parking area

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panel. Twin timber post & panel. Located in the town car park (nowhere near the church).

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

1 x panel. Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Poor. Text very small, not helped by the dirt and lichen on its surface.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Generally poor.

In what condition is it?

Relatively poor. Although a deep and thorough clean would help.

How robust is it?

Relatively vandal resistant.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes.

Is it physically accessible?

Relatively. The panel would be a bit high for some. The keys and keyholder could not be located to gain access to the church itself.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Lack of access to the church interior and not being able to see the stained glass

windows.

Most liked: Stained glass window featuring Llywelyn Fawr and his wife Joan.

Is anything missing?

Interpretation in the churchyard to describe church's origins and point out the stained glass, reputedly depicting Prince Llywelyn and Joan, his wife (daughter of King John).

Potential to make links to other sites with links to the Princes in the area, and other

Churches such as Llanrhychwyn

Potential to provide alternative means of enabling people to see the stained glass windows



LLANRHYCHWYN CHURCH

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP: Isolated and simple very early stone church high above the Conwy valley - historians say it may be the oldest Church in Wales

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. Although signposted from the village signposting thereafter is erratic and the roads become increasingly narrow, single lanes with passing places. The church is largely hidden from view from the road which does not help.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. Once found, the church is open and a simple building to explore.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Relatively. Interpretation is minimal but explains key significance as one of Wales' oldest churches (perhaps the oldest?).

Is the site comfortable?

Relatively. There is only seating, nearest facilities are in Trefriw.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Leaflets. Multilingual. A4 folded down (15p). Available in a variety of languages – highlights the atmosphere of the old church, useful introduction on Christianity in Wales and links to the Celtic Church. Interpretation not very family friendly

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Minimal.

How legible is the interpretation?

Relatively.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Restrained.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. (And replaceable).

How robust is it?

Fragile.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes(?).

Is it physically accessible?

Poor. The broken-down kissing gate is not easy to negotiate and there is little car parking

space (lots of farm machinery littering the adjacent site). The church and churchyard are on relatively even ground although visitors have to cross a corner of a field.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The access is not great, signposting poor and the clutter of tractors and dumped farming equipment nearby looks incongruous.

Most liked: The simplicity of the church interior and special atmosphere. There is no electricity, so all evening services are held by candlelight. Reading visitors' reactions to 'finding' the Church in the visitor comments book

Is anything missing?

Better car parking and a more accessible approach route

Connection with the Princes of Gwynedd not clearly apparent even though building contemporary with the age of the Princes

Potential to link to other ecclesiastical sites via Church Trails etc



DINAS EMRYS, CRAFTLYWYN

Owner: the National Trust

Local Authority: Gwynedd Council,
Snowdonia NPA

USP: Hill-top fortress remains commanding a scenic mountain pass

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. There are CADW signs from the road which direct you to the car park at Craflwyn Hall, the National Trust basecamp, and a waymarked trail (the King's Walk) leads from there up to Dinas Emrys.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. The waymarked trail is relatively easy to follow with posts marking key points along the trail although there is no interpretation on the castle itself.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. The only interpretation is located some distance away in the Craflwyn car park. This does not dwell on any connection with castles of the Princes of Wales. The remains of the castle are fragmentary with no on site interpretation.

Is the site comfortable?

No. The nearest facilities are at Craflwyn basecamp (WCs).

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Wall-mounted panels with timber frames. Also walks leaflet to guide you along the trail.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

2 x panels. Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Good. Relatively recent, bilingual, good use of maps and illustrations.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. Mainly refers to work of NT at Craflwyn Hall and waymarked trails in the area. The castle is referred to as the 'land of the Welsh dragon'.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Okay.

In what condition is it?

Good. Probably produced recently.

How robust is it?

Reasonably vandal resistant.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?

No, due to rural nature of trail. However, the interpretive panels are easily accessible at the car park. Getting to the site involves some steep sections over uneven ground.

NT keen to manage volume of people using the site so the leaflet does not even direct you to Dinas Emerys

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Lack of any background information to Dinas Emerys specifically. Also that this walk did not offer a circular route option, so you have to retrace your steps along the same path.

Most liked: Great walk to the site, climbing up to the hill fort; scenery including waterfall
Views of the pass and fantastic views from the top.

Is anything missing?

Relevant information about the castle and its origins. No apparent connection with the Welsh Princes is implied through the interpretation. Rectangular tower you can see the remains of is thought to have been built in the 11th century, associated with Owain Gwynedd and his efforts to assert his supremacy and resolve local conflicts. Potential to theme the trail 'Dragons and Princes' building on carved benches approach already evident at Crafwynlyn Opportunities to build link to legends and associations between the Welsh Princes and King Arthur



BEDDGELERT CHURCH

Local Authority: Gwynedd Council

USP: 14th century church in historic tourism honeypot village on former Priory site sponsored by the Princes

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes.

Located at the end of a lane from the main street in the town.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. A leaflet is available to guide you around key features.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Relatively.

Is the site comfortable?

No. Nearest facilities are in the town.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Leaflets. A4 photocopied sheets offer a basic written guide to the Church's history

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Sufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Text a bit small, Multilingual.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. Deals mainly with architectural features pointing out the earliest parts of the fabric: the rood screen, tall lancet windows, simple arches etc.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Okay.

How robust is it?

Fragile. (But easily replaceable).

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes. The church interior is largely on one level apart from the steps near the rood screen.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?



Least liked: Sombre interior, minimal interpretation.

Most liked: The lancet windows, the quirky font, views from the churchyard. Effigy of Gruffudd ap Dafydd Goch, great great grandson of Llewelyn Fawr

Is anything missing?

Any in-depth interpretation about the Welsh princes (largely architectural content at present).



CYMER ABBEY

Local Authority: Gwynedd Council

USP: Peaceful river valley C12th abbey ruin

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. Although there is a confusion about where to park. There is a caravan park next to the site and the approach road to the abbey looks like a private road for the caravan park.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. Although there are few helpful plaques and signs to make sense of what you are seeing.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities here. Poor sense of arrival/ welcome

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. One lectern-mounted on a wooden frame and one CADW wall-mounted panel

A written guide by David Robinson is available from Cadw – technical, architecturally led.

Unsure where you can get this in the locality e.g. in Dolgellau

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

2 x panels. Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Okay.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Minimal. One panel (part of the St John Roberts trail) has almost zero content, the CADW panel is a generic panel used elsewhere to describe the Cistercians in Wales.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. The CADW panel is recent, the St John Roberts trail panel is tired and worn.

How robust is it?

Reasonably vandal-resistant.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. In fact it is mostly other abbey sites e.g. Strata Florida which are mentioned rather than Cymer Abbey.

Is it physically accessible?

Reasonably. It is all on one level although some of the ground is uneven.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The complete lack of any useful information and poor car park signing.

Most liked: The ruins themselves are quite evocative.

Is anything missing?

Interpretation, including site specific information – why the abbey was here, the impact it had, what the monks did. Interpret connection with what else was going on in Wales at the time e.g. the arrival of the abbeys, the activities of the Princes

Site lacks a 'Hook', reason to visit

Interpretation of the impact the C13th wars had on the abbey's development

What the monks brought to the area e.g. stud horses, farming, trading

Links with the Princes including patronage - Lords of Meirionydd and Llywelyn ab Iorwerth.

Llywelyn ap Gruffudd appears to have used one of the Granges to transact business



CASTELL Y BERE

Local Authority: Gwynedd County Council

USP: Classic fortress of the Welsh Princes in remote, mountainous location

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. There were CADW signs to follow from the nearest village, Abergynolwyn.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. The castle ruins are spread out across the whole hilltop on different levels but there are some descriptive plaques and a plan on the interpretive panel.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Not really.

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities here other than a small bothy to shelter from the weather (opportunity for interpretation?). Café, toilets etc in nearest settlement some miles distant: Abergynolwyn

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. One non-standard CADW lectern-mounted panel and cast-iron guardianship panels at the site entrance.

Shared Cadw guidebook (with Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan Castles) – not clear where this may be available to buy in the nearby area

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

1 x panel, 2 x guardianship panels (English & Welsh). Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Although largely monochrome the English text and images are mostly clear and legible the Welsh text is white against a green background which is not. The plan is correctly orientated.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Good. About the right level of information for most visitors. Tells the visitor that Llywelyn the Great built the castle and why, and that it was taken by the English in 1283. Edward I founded a new town borough to the east of the castle but both were abandoned after the Madog revolt in 1294 when the garrison was withdrawn. The emphasis of the panel is not wholly architectural, reflecting an earlier phase of interpretation.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Not bad. It's an older style than the prevalent CADW panels and largely monochrome (black



& white with one spot colour – green) but is graphically appealing making the most of the linework images.

In what condition is it?

Poor. The panel has survived reasonably well given its age but the tubular steel frame is rusting badly and the powder-coated finish is in very poor condition.

How robust is it?

Reasonably vandal-resistant.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Other castles of the Welsh princes are shown on a map of N Wales. Could also reference other castles linked with the story of the Conquest

Is it physically accessible?

Reasonably. Although the castle is accessed from the road via a steep path and the site itself is on several levels with steps.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Minimal interpretation, not enough made of the site.

Most liked: It's a good example of the 'organic' nature of the Welsh castles – it responds to the shape and size of the hill it sits on and the views are breathtaking. Also the experience of exploring the castle, seeing the birds of prey in the area.

Is anything missing?

More of a story needed. Also what are we looking at, what are the views, is there anything of the 13th-century town/borough surviving? More on how the castle would have looked/ functioned would have helped. Potential to add some external interpretation in the bothy. Where are the collections associated with this important site? No signposting for these on site

Interpretation that exists is a tantalising taster of the story of the Princes – needs more e.g. its strategic importance, the 'style' of castle, the characters associated with this place, such as Dafydd ap Gruffudd.

Potential to build site interpretation into trail literature for cyclists/ walkers



DOLFORWYN

Local Authority: Powys County Council

USP: Strategic borderland castle closely linked with Llywelyn ap Gruffudd and his war with the Marcher Lords

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. There were brown & white signs directing you to the castle from the A483 between Newtown and Welshpool and a dedicated car parking area below the castle at the bottom of the hill. (Note: the site is currently undergoing consolidation works).



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. Unlike many other (comparable) sites this one had quite a number of interpretive panels and cast-iron plaques identifying all the key features, recently installed alongside improved landscaping features such as flooring

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Relatively. Due to the quantity of information available on the site via graphic panel

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities here (nearest in Newtown).

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Combination of CADW lectern-mounted and wall-mounted panels. Cadw guidebook available, partnered with Montgomery. Not sure where you can buy this in the locality (e.g. Newtown?)

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

7 x panels. Sufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Okay. Usual text-rich content (bilingual) but including lots of plans and colour images.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Reasonable. There are 7 x panels (more than most other sites and considerably more than Castell y Bere, a comparable site) covering The Welsh Town, The Keep, Layout & Development, Hall & North Tower, North Range, The Round Tower as well as a general panel at the car park.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Mostly good. All panels in good condition with the exception of the car park panel which is faded and stained/blistered near the base of the panel.

How robust is it?

Reasonably vandal-resistant.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Nearby Montgomery and Powis Castle, and Newtown (which replaced the borough established by Edward I in 1277). Also, comparisons made with similar Keeps at Dolwyddelan and Castell Dinas Brân, and Round Towers compared with Dolbadarn and Ewloe castles.

Is it physically accessible?

No. It is accessed from the road via a steeply-graded path, the site is uneven with stairs and steps connecting each level. A couple of the interpretive panels are positioned on low walls which requires the visitor to crouch down in order to read them.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The mix of building materials used in the current ongoing consolidation works: 'crazy' paving, reconstructed walls in garden centre-type stonework, heavy use of mortar etc.

Most liked: The ruins have some intriguing features including a stone-cut well and a set of ovens and there are extensive views of the surrounding area and Severn Valley

Is anything missing?

Unlike most other sites there is a better balance of interpretation here, but nothing is made of what can be seen from the castle (it would be useful to know the direction of Montgomery Castle and Powis Castle, Newtown etc).

Need for explanation of the role of the castles in attempting to stamp dominance over the area: Marcher Lords versus Princes. Introduce the key characters e.g. Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, Roger de Mortimer, Princes of Southern Powys

Emphasise the importance of this area as historic meeting place/ convergence point/ border flashpoint between England and Wales

Explain that the castle was established with borough outside – Mortimer relocates this down into the valley to Newtown

Story of the castle's takeover by Mortimer – Welsh defenders ran out of water as they had no well! Mortimer repairs Dolforwyn as well as Montgomery.

Interpretation of the archaeological finds associated with Dolforwyn - hint at realities of domestic life in a baronial castle

Explain castle's abandonment



MONTGOMERY CASTLE

Local Authority: Powys County Council

USP: Impressive border castle ruin on a crag dominating an attractive historic town

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively. Although it is not clear where to park, despite there being a car park right at the top of the hill adjacent to the castle.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. There is a clear set of castle Wards along the approach and a good path that follows a circuit round the walls.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No.

Is the site comfortable?

No. The nearest facilities are in the town below. There is seating available in the 'pagoda'.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panels. Combination of Cadw lectern-mounted and wall-mounted panels. One panel in a Cadw tubular frame but produced by the Cromwell Association in 1995. Guidebook shared with Dolforwyn – unsure if this is available in the town?

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

5 x panels. Insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Okay.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Relatively minimal. The general panel on the castle was missing but there were 3 on the structure of the castle: Middle Ward, Gate Passage and Inner Ward. Also a panel below the castle on the Battle of Montgomery in 1644.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Good and bad. All the panels appeared to be fairly recent and in good condition except for one missing panel and a minor defacement of one of the illustrations on the civil war panel (John Meldrum's face).

How robust is it?

Reasonable. Although the general panel was missing (being replaced?) with only the lectern



remaining.

Are other sites referred to?

No. (Even though Dolforwyn castle can be seen from here). Should also link to:

- Other Marcher strongholds
- Offa's Dyke
- The ford (historic meeting place where The Treaty of Montgomery was signed 1267 in which Henry III had to recognise Llewelyn ap Gruffudd as Prince of Wales)
- Hen Domen motte and bailey, 1 mile distant
- Montgomery's importance declines as Edward builds new castles in Gwynedd

Is it physically accessible?

Reasonably. The castle interior is on a different level to the circuit walk and the paths are steep in places but well consolidated. A bridge provides access across a ditch.

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Poor car park signing.

Most liked: The ruins themselves are in an evocative setting with commanding views and the town is very attractive.

Is anything missing?

Interpretation and connection with other castles in the area. There is no mention of the threat posed by the Welsh princes.

Need to convey the importance of this area as historic meeting place/ convergence point/ border flashpoint between England and Wales

Until Edward's new castles were built in N Wales, Montgomery was the only major Royal base in northern and central Wales – crucial in 1277 – this is not made clear in the interpretation

Links with Princes of Southern Powys, Gruffudd ap Gwenwynwyn

Explaining the role of the castles in attempting to stamp dominance over the area – by Henry III in this case. Foundation of town and castle together in 1223 by the King

Castle garrisoned for the King against the Owain Glyn dwr revolt

Interpretation of later refurbishments of the castle and civil war story needs improving

Opportunities:

Tell the story of the role of towns in colonising Wales, exploiting surrounding territory for market

Interpret finds associated with excavations of the site e.g. the Welsh bowed lyre

Understanding that this was an English Royal castle is crucial – hard to convey what this means



CONWY CASTLE

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP:

Stunning setting above the town and estuary: physical presence of the town

Completeness of the castle

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Very obvious location off the A55 and roads lead you right up to it. Two car parks, one below the castle, reached via a subway below the railway, and a short-stay/ disabled car park at the high level entrance.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Relatively. There are signs dotted around that name the key features. Although can be disorientating with so many similar-looking towers. Scale of castle means you are not sure of where you should go or orientation. Possible to miss key displays/ exhibitions

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. It's an immense site. The exhibition explaining Edward's campaigns, the layout of the castle and its construction, Savoyan comparisons etc is too easy to miss in the Visitor Centre and there is little to back this up in the castle itself. Cases of archaeological finds from the Conwy Visitor Centre and Llwelyn's Hall excavations, and graphic panel on Plas Mawr greet you upon entry – the relevance of which is not clear.

Is the site comfortable?

Yes. Shop, WCs and seating dotted around the site. Large car park on the other side of the railway line, with facilities and clear orientation. Multi lingual provision

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Exhibition. Edward I's Castles (Visitor Centre), cased model of Conwy Castle in one of the towers.

Time Detectives. Trail with portable 'crime file' and clue panels dotted around the site

External panels. Wall-mounted tubular frame variety

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

5 x interpretive panels plus 4/5 Time detective panels. Still lots of empty rooms and spaces. Without the detective trail it would certainly be insufficient.

How legible is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Although usual poor typography (long line lengths, bad spacing).

To what depth/level is the interpretation?



Relatively limited. Aside from the text-heavy exhibition in the Visitor Centre and one external panel introducing the castle, the few remaining on-site panels deal largely with architectural features: Outer Gate, West Barbican and Walkways. The Time Detective trail is great fun and very engaging but only deals with one documented story relating to the taking of the Castle by Owain Glyn Dwr. The cased model is beautifully displayed but there is no accompanying interpretation.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Good and bad. The exhibition in the Visitor Centre is clean and presentable (although text-heavy) and the cased model is very good, but the external panels and Time Detective panels are not particularly elegant.



In what condition is it?

Good. Well looked after.

How robust is it?

Reasonable. External panels in better condition than at previous sites. Benefits from being a supervised site.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes and no. Other castles built by Edward I are referred to in Visitor Centre exhibition but sites associated with the Princes are not.

Is it physically accessible?

In parts.

Spiral stairs to negotiate.

Physical access restraints as soon as you leave the visitor centre regarding steps although some surfacing improvements

Poor colour contrasts for steps

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Too many empty rooms. Unclear as to function of different parts of castle.

Most liked: A great castle with plenty to see. Liked the Time Detective trail. Also fantastic views of the mountains in the distance, the Menai Straits, marinas and in particular the town and its enclosing walls. The approach from the lower car park is good fun too, due to the murals in the subway and the impressive town walls



Is anything missing?

Interpretation of the views, more scope for exhibitions, even some period recreations? An audio tour would be a useful accompaniment.

Links to Deganwy Castle, Llewellyn ab Iorwerth's fort across the water.

Interpretation of the town of Conwy and its earlier resonance as Aberconwy Abbey and key residence of the Princes of Gwynedd

DOLBADARN CASTLE

Local Authority: Gwynedd County Council

USP:

Dramatic mountain pass setting

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

No. Very easy to miss it from the main road as hidden from view. Poor signage. Also signs in the nearest car park direct you towards other leisure facilities including Snowdon Mountain Railway, the Slate Museum, Llanberis Lake Railway and Padarn Country Park.



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. Because it's very small.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. Minimal on-site information or interpretation.

Is the site comfortable?

No. Nearest facilities in Llanberis. (Although there was a small, shuttered building which may offer facilities in the summer months?)

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

External panel. Wall-mounted with tubular frame

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

One panel. Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Ok. Just a bit wordy.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Limited. Bi-lingual, so quantity of information restricted. Just refers to the Keep, its role and what the spaces in the Keep may have looked like. No mention of other buildings and structures on site although the remains can be clearly seen.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Negligible.

In what condition is it?

Reasonable. Just a bit bleached by UV.

How robust is it?

Good. Because it is relatively new.

Are other sites referred to?

No.

Is it physically accessible?

No. The interpretation (just one panel) can only be accessed by going up a flight of steps. The castle itself is up a short, rough and steep path beyond a road crossing

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The protective cage at the top of the spiral stairs, presumably to stop people from falling from the top.

Most liked: A very attractive-looking site. Can appreciate its strategic location. Views of the Llanberis Pass and mountains.

Is anything missing?

Interpretation, directions to other sites (and nearest facilities).

Interpretation of wider buildings complex

Context for castle, events, *raison d'être*, strategic significance, including links to the Princes of Gwynedd, landscape relationship

Design significance of the building: features a Welsh Round Towner characteristic of castles of the Welsh Princes



of Gwynedd
For Cadw
5523/AP/EK
May 2010

DOLWYDDELAN CASTLE

Local Authority: Conwy County Borough Council

USP:

Dramatic mountain setting

Views, romance

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Yes. Easy to get to by car and easy to see where it is. However, from the car park it gets more difficult. The entrance path to the castle is via the farm and it's a long way round when closed. (Alternatively there is the steep, uneven track up the side of the hill).



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. As at Dolbadarn it is a relatively small site.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

Yes. There is a reasonably comprehensive exhibition inside the Keep which although it largely covers the Welsh Princes of Gwynedd, also provides site-specific information about Dolwyddelan including reconstruction illustrations showing how it might have appeared.

Is the site comfortable?

No. There are no facilities, just shelter from weather and picnic tables at car park (it's a little remote).

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Exhibition. Graphic panels with wooden frames.

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

5 x exhibition panels (plus one external panel in car park). Reasonably sufficient, although no interpretation on the roof about the views, or any external interpretation.

How legible is the interpretation?



Good. Well-designed and clear.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Reasonable. Bi-lingual, so a little text-rich. Each of the five panels covers a different theme: Early Wales, The Norman Threat, The Rise of Gwynedd, The Castles of the Princes of Gwynedd and Dolwyddelan. Each panel includes 6-7 images: maps, plans including illustrations and reconstructions.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Good. Well-designed

In what condition is it?

Very good. Must be fairly recent.

How robust is it?

Reasonable. Would not stand up to a determined attack but this is not in an urban environment.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. Refers to all the other sites and castles associated with the Welsh Princes, including Dolbadarn.

Is it physically accessible?

Yes and no. Accessible by long, gently winding path up from the road or steep, climb up side of hill from farm. External staircase to get into keep then an internal staircase up to the roof. Timber walkway around ramparts.



What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: Approach from farm (although our route on the day was not typical since the farm reception for the site was closed).

Most liked: Stunning location, superb views from roof. Nicely designed exhibition with about the right amount of information.

Is anything missing?

External interpretation at the castle (the Keep is locked up on occasion so there would then be no interpretation at all). Interpretation of the views from the roof.

Contextual interpretation e.g. strategic importance, role of castle, relative location

Information on how the building functioned day to day

Model of the castle?



CRICCIETH CASTLE

Local Authority: Gwynedd County Council

USP:

Commanding rocky promontory by the sea. Views

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is the site easy to find?

Relatively easy. There are signs directing you in places (although you mainly follow your nose as you can see the castle towering over the town).



Is it easy to orientate yourself around the site?

Yes. Although there are relatively few explanatory panels and signs.

Is the site and its story easy to understand?

No. This is mainly due to the nature of the exhibitions in the Visitor Centre which feature Welsh castles and Gerald of Wales and therefore distracts you from Criccieth Castle's own story. The exhibitions seem to have little specific relevance to Criccieth.

Is the site comfortable?

Reasonably. There is a shop, WCs and seating around the site.

INTERPRETATION

What form of interpretation?

Exhibitions. 'Castles of the Welsh Princes' and 'Gerald and the Welsh Princes'.

External panels. Wall-mounted with a tubular frame

In what quantity (is it sufficient?)

Outside: 2 x external panels plus one cast metal plaque. Insufficient

How legible is the interpretation?

Not very. Poor typography (long line lengths, bad spacing). A little faded in places.

To what depth/level is the interpretation?

Reasonably good. Bi-lingual content handled sensitively. Two exhibitions and external interpretation. Internal panels describe all the stone-built castles and sculpture from the time of the Welsh Princes. Also use of collection items and objects found during archaeological excavations. The Gerald of Wales exhibition describes Gerald's journey through Wales using setwork, back-lit graphics and an audio visual presentation. One external panel describes the castle in general terms; the other explains the Inner Ward.

How elegant/aesthetic is the interpretation?

Good in places. The Castles of the Welsh Princes exhibition is nicely produced and presented with good lighting. The Gerald of Wales exhibition looks a little dated and appears overly dark (due to the use of back-lit transparencies and audio visual environment).



In what condition is it?



Mainly good. The exhibitions are in good condition, the external panels are a little faded in places.



How robust is it?

Reasonably. No signs of damage or obvious wear & tear.

Are other sites referred to?

Yes. All the other sites of castles associated with the Welsh princes including: Castell y

Bere, Castell Dinas Bran, Caergwrle Castle, Dolforwyn Castle, Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan.

Is it physically accessible?

Reasonably. Sloping walkway to the top, some uneven surfaces around the castle. steps, gradients, climb up to remains of castle. No designated parking

What are the least liked/ most liked aspects of it?

Least liked: The Gerald of Wales exhibition. Although the animated AV presentation was amusing it seemed an odd place to get this story. Little explanation of features on site e.g. The Engine Tower

Most liked: The exhibition on the Welsh Castles including the repro sculptures which were very convincing. The telescope allowing views across to Harlech.



Is anything missing?

Not enough on-site interpretation. Specific exhibition on Criccieth itself and its relationship with the Princes of Gwynedd. The exhibitions also lack a clear introduction to explain their relevance to the site.





Appendix A

Achieving our Potential: the Tourism Strategy for Wales (2000) by the Welsh Tourism Board highlights that:

- the main market for Welsh tourism is the UK holiday market – a declining long holiday market (trips of 4+ nights)
- Wales needs to increase market share of short breakers (1-3 nights) and higher spending overseas markets
- tourism in Wales is highly seasonal and therefore needs to look at broadening visits in the shoulder months

The Strategy is focused on:

- creating a positive, distinctive and motivating identity for Wales as a destination amongst target markets
- developing opportunities for partnership working
- ensuring the industry can capitalise on developments in ICT
- supporting sustainable growth of tourism in Wales by:
 - extending the season
 - spreading the benefits of tourism across Wales
 - improving business yield
 - effective visitor management
- providing better access to tourism and opportunities in tourism for all groups in society

Achieving Our Potential 2006-2013, Mid Term Review, reviews the above Strategy and identifies five challenges for tourism in Wales:

1. Branding – improving brand positioning at all levels of the industry
2. Quality – accommodation and attractions
3. Accessibility – including being able to research holidays online
4. Skills levels – amongst employees in the sector
5. Partnership – especially collaboration between the public and private sectors

The Cultural Tourism Strategy for Wales (2003) highlights that whilst pursuing a cultural tourism activity may not be the main motivation for a holiday to Wales, most visitors undertake such activities as part of their overall holiday experience. The most popular cultural tourism activity is to visit a heritage site, followed by visiting artistic or heritage exhibits. The most popular sites in 2000-2001 for visitors to heritage attractions were Caernarfon, Cardiff and Conwy.

Currently there are few opportunities for visitors to learn about the important complex interrelationship between landscape and culture to paint the 'big picture'.

The strategy recommends:

“To develop the tourism potential of this rich heritage requires effective interpretation which helps bring history to life through use of visual images, where appropriate audio-guides and living history demonstrations. Greater use of multi-lingual interpretation at our major heritage sites is required. There is a need for the visitor to be able to get an overview of Welsh history to better understand the context of the individual heritage sites that they visit.”



Also, more should be done to provide opportunities for visitors to access and experience the indigenous Welsh culture, as this differentiates Wales from the rest of the UK. Wales needs to create a greater sense of place in its towns and villages.

The strategy suggests that cultural tourism visitors are:

- More likely to be ABC1s
- 55+ empty nesters (except for heritage sites where 35-44s with children were the primary audiences)
- more likely to be female if watching performing arts or visiting artistic/ heritage exhibits
- more likely to be locals if attending festivals

86% of Overseas Visitors surveyed in 2000 had visited a heritage site, which was for a majority the main activity of the holiday.

The following primary and secondary target markets have been identified for Wales:

UK markets:

affluent early retired
affluence empty nesters
better-off families

Overseas markets:

USA 'boomers' (seniors and empty nesters)
Germany – dual income, no kids, empty nesters
Holland – seniors, empty nesters

Branding

Whilst the Welsh Tourist Board had promoted Wales as “land of song, music and poetry” and “land of legend and mystery” overseas visitors felt this had not been delivered.

Wales has been branded “the big country” to help increase perceptions of Wales as being an antidote to urban life with great natural beauty. Wales is being marketed as a country of discovery, passion, creativity and inspiration.

Key positive attributes for Wales are:

- the natural environment
- unique culture and heritage – Welsh language, Celtic connection
- the Welsh people themselves
- legends and myths

Actions

The Strategy introduces the following programmes to deliver the vision for a Wales that is an internationally recognised tourist destination:

1. improving visitor access to culture

- Including creating a distinctively Welsh experience
- Developing sense of place e.g. in towns and villages through the public realm and the Welsh language
- Signposting visitors to other cultural tourist venues

2. improving the quality of the experience



- including providing cultural gateways at key sites the provide a comprehensive overview of Welsh culture and history
- meeting foreign language needs
- meeting Welsh language needs
- creation of trails and information
- capitalise on music, storytelling, poetry and Welsh tradition
- develop niche markets for cultural tourism

3. raising the profile of Wales as a cultural tourism destination

- marketing emphasis

4. understanding the characteristics and needs of the cultural tourist

- understanding market need

Review of Cultural Tourism in Wales (2008)

The Strategy highlights:

- The increasingly competitive market place for tourism in Europe and Wales' relatively weak offer at present
- The importance of using cultural distinctiveness to help destinations stand out
- The demand for cultural tourism is fast growing
- Delivery at destination management level is crucial
- Tourism has also been defined as an important part of sustaining an area's cultural assets
- Funding from the WAG for cultural projects has generated significant investment, although this is likely to decline in coming years
- Lack of cohesive marketing is a problem and visitors are often bombarded (through leaflets and online) with information which dilutes destination impact
- Improved interpretation is key to developing and marketing the Welsh cultural tourism product, alongside providing appealing cultural activities and recognising the links between tourism and culture in Wales

Recommendations:

- Future investments should bring a return on investment and add value to other investments, add to a coherent international image of Wales and have a clear fit with the WAG strategic objectives
- Welsh culture should be a fundamental part of the experience for every visitor to Wales
- Destination distinctiveness is key – Wales must celebrate its cultural differences to stand out as a Challenger Brand, since people are seeking places and experiences that are different when they look for holiday or visit experiences

Tourism Strategy for North Wales 2010-2015

- Tourism generates £1.8bn for the North Wales economy each year and supports 37,500 jobs
- N Wales accounts for a third of Welsh tourism
- The majority of tourists are on holiday from the UK – heavy dependence on the domestic tourism market which is highly seasonal
- 70% visits take place in the summer months (May-Sept)
- The NW (Anglesey, Conwy, Gwynedd) gets 75% of the region's staying visits and 60% day visits, compared to the NE (Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham)



- Visitor numbers are static over recent years with some tendency to drop, in common with the rest of the UK
- High proportion of return visiting but possible failure to attract new markets
- Landscapes of countryside, mountains and coast are key natural assets, alongside heritage product and attractions, range of activities on offer. There is a need to capitalise on these aspects that make the area so special

Key areas for action:

1. **Projecting distinctive strengths**, by being market driven (UK family holidays, short breakers and activities holidays); by having stronger impact (more coherent message, focusing on high profile projects, emphasis on PR and marketing); providing inspiring information (including through the TIC and signage network)
2. **Investing in product excellence**, through providing quality accommodation, diverse attractions and excellent activities
3. **Providing an outstanding experience** – through well managed places and destination management; enriching experiences including events and festivals, arts, food and shopping; efficient transport and skilled people
4. **Working together in partnership** – through effective organisation; recognition of tourism and sound evidence.

Tourism Strategy for North Wales – Action Plan 2010-2013

Key actions under **Projecting distinctive strengths**:

- Primary marketing aimed at UK leisure tourism: family holidays, short breaks and activity tourism
- Secondary marketing aimed at overseas tourists, cruises, conference market, group travel, VFR, day visits, niche markets
- Rationalise websites and print publications
- Use regional brand values to convey coherent message
- Stronger emphasis on publicising N Wales icons: 'The big tickets' e.g. Snowdon, castles/ walled towns, narrow gauge trains, Slate Heritage
- Strengthen presentation of destinations such as Llyn, Anglesey, Llandudno, Conwy Valley, Hiraethog
- Create single N Wales portal as taster site and gateway, supporting Visit Wales influence
- Review TIC provision, service and locations
- Review brown signing visitor signage
- Frontline staff to act as tourist ambassadors
- Make use of digital delivery

Key actions under **Investing in product excellence**:

- Develop routes, themes and clusters to raise visibility of smaller attractions e.g. Cultural Gateway Project in Caernarfon
- Support investment in attractions that will grow visitor appeal
- Grow the activity tourism sector e.g. mountain biking in the Rural Conwy Valley
- Implement Coastal Action Plans in Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire

Key actions under **Providing an outstanding experience**:

- Destination Management Plans e.g. for towns, villages, sense of place



- Identify tourism hubs e.g. Amlwch, Mowlfre, Beaumaris, Holyhead, Llanfairpwll, Rhosneigr, Bangor, Barmouth, Bala, Betws y Coed, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Trawsfynydd, Caernarfon, Conwy, Dolgellau, Harlech, Llanberis, Llandudno, Llyn, Porthmadog, Snowdon
- Deliver the Gwynedd Coastal Package along the Gwynedd/ Conwy Coast
- Reinvest in Country Parks
- Develop a major events strategy, promote local and distinctive events to visitors
- Strengthen the local food offer
- Clusters of speciality retail
- Strengthen the heritage and cultural offer, establishing cultural trails/ network e.g. Mona Antiqua, Conwy Churches Trail
- Promote railway network

Key actions under **Working in partnership**:

- Secure effective destination management and marketing at sub-regional level
- Establish county-wide tourist associations to improve destination partnership

Mona Antiqua – a Regional Interpretive Strategy for Anglesey (Volume II) Executive Summary and Action Plan (January 2003)

Menter Mon are the community based economic regeneration agency who work with Anglesey County Council on tourism development and marketing.

The aims and objectives of the strategy broadly correlate with those of the Heritage Tourism Project, including:

- Broadening and adding value to visitor experiences
- Creating a distinct and well integrated heritage product
- Attracting, orientating and managing new visitors
- Supporting conservation
- Involving local people in the delivery of the strategy

The strategy also aims to target 'the discerning visitor' for visits to the island.

Amongst the themes, sub themes and topics proposed for Anglesey, is the key theme:

Anglesey has a unique culture based on Celtic traditions and influenced by invaders and incomers

This includes a sub theme directly relevant to the interpretation of the Princes of Gwynedd on Anglesey:

Anglesey has been a stage for the 'Story of Wales', a stronghold of the Princes of Gwynedd, the birthplace of the Tudors, a strategic outpost of Edward I and gift to the Marquess of Anglesey.

Four key clusters of visitor activity across the island have been established, including Newborough and Beaumaris which will include gateways to orientate visitors within that cluster. In addition, all villages on the island will have village information points.

Specific recommendations of the action plan also included:

- Contextual, explanatory panels for the entrance to Llys Rhosyr



- Investigation of potential for audio point installation at Llys Rhosyr
- Promotion of access to the Pritchard Jones Institute for the exhibition and AV as visitor centre for the Newborough cluster
- Develop events on site at Llys Rhosyr
- Convert Llys Llywelyn, Aberffraw into a multi use facility, including gateway to SW cluster, interpretation of the Princes of Gwynedd and environmental education centre
- Build a Churches of Angelsey leaflet by developing a series of Church and chapel trails supported by panels at each site and an audio version
- Develop events and tour guides for Angelsey
- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a town visitor centre for Beaumaris
- Develop an audio guide for the castle with interpretation of the castle being more relevant to the town of Beaumaris and the story of Angelsey
- Maximise the potential of the Llanfaes corn hoard



Appendix B

Monument custodian comments, as gathered for the Atkins report (2009) suggest that:

- Family groups formed a higher proportion of visitors at larger monuments, with the castles proving especially popular
- The profile of visitors changed in the summer months, with more families at this time and more older couples in the shoulder months
- There are fewer overseas visitors from the US than there used to be and more from Eastern Europe
- School visits made up a high proportion of total visitor numbers

Beaufort Research undertook surveys for a number of Cadw monuments in the summer of 2007 which revealed that the majority of summer visitors were:

- white
- English speaking
- aged 34-65
- ABC1 social grade
- resident outside Wales

Family groups were a particularly important group (in this report classed as adults with children under 16 years old). The report notes that despite making up the largest proportion of visitors, this group is the least well catered for at Cadw sites

Less well represented were:

- Welsh speaking visitors and people resident in Wales
- 16-34 year olds,
- C2DE socio economic groups,
- BME groups.

The report indicated that **core audiences** for interpretation are:

- family groups,
- school groups,
- adult visitors,
- overseas visitors
- travel trade visitors

Beaufort's 2008 visitor surveys for Cadw sites indicate that peak visiting months were May, July and August, with one third of all visits occurring in the latter two months. Paid attractions were more seasonally dependent than free attractions.

Beaufort's 2008-9 visitor surveys for Cadw sites compared peak and non peak visitors and found that **off-peak visitors** were more likely to be:

- local (from Wales)
- higher social grades
- on day trips
- repeat visitors



For all sites, in both peak and off peak times c. one quarter were from Wales, two thirds from the rest of the UK, 6% from the rest of the EU and 7% from the rest of the world.

Visitors staying with friends and relatives were low in number (5% or less), particularly for the World Heritage Site castles compared to other sites including those in S Wales.

Group sizes were usually **3-4 people**, with most groups composed of **family groups**.

Factors influencing the decision to visit were for nearly two thirds **an interest in castles/ historic buildings**. An interest in Welsh culture/ history influenced c. one third.

Comments about what visitors enjoyed about the Cadw sites included:

- the scenery/ views
- the completeness of the historic structure
- exploring (that the site was good for kids to explore)
- walking the walls and climbing the towers

The weather was a key factor affecting visitor patterns, driving people inside when bad.

This research also suggests that the main improvements visitors wanted to see were:

- more information conveyed in a variety of media
- more for children
- more events

Tourism Strategies suggested that key markets for Welsh tourism are:

- UK holiday makers
- ABC1s
- 55+ years old, empty nesters
- families and children for heritage sites
- locals for festivals
- overseas audiences for heritage sites

For North Wales, the primary market was seen as:

- UK family holiday makers
- Short breakers
- Those on activity holidays

The secondary markets were:

- Overseas visitors
- Cruise markets
- Conference markets
- Group travel
- VFR
- Day visitors
- Niche markets

Research on visitor attractions in Wales suggests:



- Audiences for historic visitor attractions have decreased in number
- Audiences for Cadw and National Trust attractions have decreased between 2006-2008
- Historic attractions have the highest proportion of schools and foreign visitors
- Of the top ten paid for attractions in Wales, in 2008, from North Wales Electric Mountain was 4th, Penhryn (NT) 7th, Caernarfon Castle 8th and Conwy Castle 9th
- One third of visits to attractions were made in May, July and August with seasonality even more enhanced for rural attractions
- Weather was a key factor affecting visitor patterns

STEAM reports for Wales (2008) suggest that Conwy and Gwynedd attract the greatest tourist numbers out of the six counties of north Wales. Anglesey and Wrexham attract the smallest numbers, with Anglesey also having the smallest numbers of day visitors out of the North Wales counties.

Research on visitors to Conwy County

- Visitors were less likely to be on day trips
- Visitors were more likely to be overseas
- Visitors were more likely to be ABC1s, except for those visiting Llandudno Junction who were more likely to be C2DEs
- Visitors were more likely to be older
- Visitors said the main reasons given to visit Wales were the scenery, landscape and countryside (62%) and a previous leisure visit (47%), the coast (41%)

These figures were comparable with a survey of Conwy town itself, except that these visitors were less likely to be from Wales itself and more likely to be on longer holidays.

Research on visitors to Gwynedd

- Visitors were less likely to be on day trips
- Visitors were more likely to be on short breaks or longer holidays
- Visitors tend to be older, although Gwynedd does get slightly more 35-44 year olds than the North Wales average
- Visitors were more likely to be ABC1s
- Visitors said the main reasons to visit given were for the scenery/ landscape/ countryside (54%). Coast, leisure, peace and quiet and sightseeing were also cited as popular reasons to visit

Community Profile Reports (2007-8)

A set of reports on the community profiles for key Cadw sites were undertaken for Cadw in 2007. These included audience and community research including consultations for Criccieth Castle, Dolbadarn, Denbigh, Conwy and Castell y Bere.

The research showed that at the time of the surveys:

- Criccieth castle was getting c. 35,000 visitors per year, one third of which were in August
- Dolbadarn receives 'purposeful' visits from people who know it's there
- Denbigh has declining visitor numbers – around 10,000 a year, mainly in the summer
- Conwy receives 170,000 visitors per year, supported by a strong events season
- It is thought that Castell y Bere is overlooked as a place to visit due to its remote location. However it does attract walkers and cyclists



Appendix C

Consultees

We are grateful to the ongoing expert advice given in the course of the study from Professor Huw Pryce, The University of Bangor.

One to one consultations were conducted either in person or by phone with the following:

- Dewi Davies, Regional Strategy Director, Tourism Partnership North Wales
- David Longley, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
- Roy Williams, Head Custodian, Conwy Castle
- Mairwen Evans, Site Custodian, Criccieth Castle
- Sian Shakespear, Sian Shakespear Associates
- Esther Roberts, Gwynedd Museum and Art Gallery
- Julie Perkins, Events, Cadw
- Adrienne Goodenough, Lifelong Learning Manager, Cadw
- Dee Reynolds, Tourism Partnership Mid Wales
- Neil Johnstone, Menter Mon
- Professor Ashenden, Beaumaris Town Council

A stakeholder workshop with representatives of various partner agencies and organisations was also conducted in March 2010 to test early ideas for the study. The results can be found in Appendix D.



Appendix D

Castles and Town Walls of Edward I & Princes of Gwynedd Interpretation Plans

Consultation Workshop: 30th March 2010 | Notes from group sessions

1 Introduction

A consultation event was set up at Llandudno Junction Community Club to capture the views of consultees and stakeholders from a variety of agencies across North Wales on early ideas for interpreting the Princes of Gwynedd and the Edwardian Castles and Town Walls of North Wales.

The event was used to inform attendees about the plans and the wider Pan Wales Interpretation Plan, and to present and discuss the consultant's early ideas for interpretation, bringing together people that would be interested in delivering future interpretation programmes.

The objectives for the day were to give attendees:

- An overview of the work the consultants are doing for the Edwardian Castles and Town Walls and Princes of Gwynedd plans
- An opportunity to review and have your say on our early assumptions and ideas for the two plans
- A chance to add your ideas for the sorts of interpretation initiatives to be taken by delivery agents across the region in the future, based on your perspectives, knowledge and experience of heritage interpretation initiatives and tourism in the area

2 Method

Short presentations were given on the two plans outlining Cadw's brief for the consultants, the background to the plans and the findings of the consultants to date, in particular:

- A summary review of the target audiences for interpretation
- A summary review of key sites, places and venues for interpretation
- A summary review of the key messages for each plan

Attendees were then asked to divide into two mixed agency groups to review and discuss each of the above categories and to add their own comments and ideas for the plans. The groups came together to discuss their findings for the two plans at the conclusion of the day.

A total of 14 consultees attended the workshop. Attendees for the two groups were comprised as follows:

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caernarfon Royal Town Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Management, the National Trust



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edwardian Castles World Heritage Site Steering Group • Conwy County Borough • Conwy Town Council • Denbigh Town Council • Cadw • Mentor Mon • Tourism Denbighshire County Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Trust • Tourism, Denbighshire County Council • Isle of Angelsey County Council • Conwy County Borough Council • Consultant for the Owain Glyndwr Interpretation Plan • Gwynedd Council • Tourism, Conwy County Borough Council
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3 Comments on the Castles and Town Walls of Edward I

Following a presentation by PLB, invitees were divided into two groups and asked to comment on the suggested audiences, sites and key messages for interpretation. They were also asked to add their own ideas and comments regarding opportunities or initiatives they felt were relevant to the plan. The following notes are extracted from flip-charts written during the sessions reflecting contributions from the groups.

3.1 Audiences

The two groups broadly accepted the identified audience groups listed in the presentation (see below) and their additions have been added as follows:

Suggested audiences	Additions by the group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family group visitors • Older couples: visitors • Group travel markets • Overseas visitors • Schools and education groups • People visiting friends and relatives • Multilingual 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schools/ Educational groups (within 1 hours drivetime) 2. American visitors as a separate audience within 'Overseas Visitors' (lots of interest and enquiries received from the US) 3. High-spend visitors. Aimed at wealthy visitors (e.g. from the US) who have disposable income and are happy to spend money on a bespoke tour or package 4. Emphasis on local visitors as there are carbon footprint issues with audiences attracted from further a field. (Reference made to the Tourism Satellite Council). Group felt that this was not just about interpretation: also marketing and outreach. If Cadw market these sites locally this will help increase ownership of these monuments for local communities. Also if the interpretation hits the right note with locals it will hit the right note with all visitors 5. Could introduce visitor passes for people staying and visiting with friends and relatives local to the area?



	6. Multi-lingual provision must include English, German and Dutch 7. Don't forget to cater for the existing audiences 8. Cruise ship audiences
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When discussing audiences for this interpretation, the second group arrived at an agreement that marketing and signage are also important to ensuring that the right audiences are included. It was felt that marketing for the castles and town walls should include consideration of the group travel market and people coming into the region by coach, train and bus. Castle/ wall visits could be encouraged as part of packages taking in other linked attractions, such as ascending Snowdon on the narrow gauge railway.

3.2 Sites/ Venues

The groups were presented with a map of sites proposed for interpreting the castles and town walls of Edward I in North Wales. These sites comprised:

- Flint Castle
- Denbigh Castle and town walls
- Rhuddlan Castle
- Conwy Castle and town walls
- Beaumaris Castle
- Caernarfon Castle and town walls
- Dolbadarn
- Dolwyddelan Castle
- Criccieth Castle
- Harlech Castle
- Aberystwyth Castle (although it was acknowledged that this is not a Cadw site)

Although a few in the first group questioned the presence of Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan on the map, during the discussion the first group were generally happy with those identified, agreeing that many of the sites should appear in both plans.

The second group questioned whether Criccieth, Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan should be classed as a castle of Edward I, due to their historic associations with the Princes of Gwynedd. A general debate occurred amongst the group about whether the story of the castles and town walls of Edward I would be overcomplicated by adding these sites. The question appears to be over what constitutes Edward I castles and town walls e.g. were these monuments entirely the work of Edward? It was suggested that Cadw adopt a more general 'Castles of Wales' approach to remove the artificial 'English' division.

The group also discussed the merits of comparing 'English' castles such as Flint and Conwy with 'Welsh' castles such as Dolbadarn and Dolwyddelan since less remains of the Welsh castles physically, as it was thought that they were more likely to have been attacked and raised to the ground than the 'English' castles. The group also discussed the pitfalls of comparing castle design structures through interpretation, as this is hard to make legible to all audiences. Consultees did however comment that the relationships between these castles should be covered.



Caernarfon. This was listed but a consultee wanted to make the point that all phases of occupation for this town should be interpreted: Roman fort, Welsh Llys, Norman stronghold, Edwardian castle and walled town etc

Denbigh was felt to be an important inclusion, since the town walls survive and it was an important stronghold for Edward I.

It was felt that highlighting the castles and town walls of the Edward I era leaves an unhelpful void in the interpretive provision for earlier castles that we know less about, either those established by the Welsh Princes or by Anglo Normans. Similarly the group felt that the Welsh equivalent of these Edwardian castles, the court Llysoed and commotal system, were similarly in danger of not being interpreted alongside the Edwardian Castles story, as these do not exist as impressive physical structures to this day and were in fact very different to the stone castles.

Falling out of these discussions, the group felt that each castle and wall complex should be interpreted on its own individual merits, rather than trying to apply a 'one size fits all' approach. The World Heritage Site status of four of the sites, despite being highlighted on the map, was not discussed.

3.3 Key Messages

The group were presented with the following proposed key messages:

- The Edwardian Castles' arrival marked a major turning point in the history of Welsh independence
- The castles are as much a symbol of Welsh independence as they are of English conquest
- The Edwardian castles and town walls are a tangible feature of Edward I's conquest of Wales
- Life for people in the castles followed a hierarchy and this can still be seen in the architecture today
- The castles represent the pinnacle of castle building skills and development in Western Europe, completed in a remarkably short timescale and on a hugely ambitious scale
- The castles provide a means to keep some communities 'within' and others 'out'
- The castles have a compelling legacy which influences our ideas and identity today

One group were in general agreement with these messages. However, there was confusion about how the castles could be "*...a symbol of Welsh independence*". The other group also disliked the second key message and felt that that word 'independence' should be replaced by the word 'resilience'. Also in relation to message 2, it was suggested that the messages should emphasise the symbolic importance of the castles, and the cost of their production, in that they say more about Edward I than the Welsh!

In addition, the groups commented on a need to include:

- 'people's stories'
- the impact of Edward's castles on Welsh culture – how it affected their daily lives, also laws, penalties/ punishments, administration
- Daily life – what was it like to live in these castles?
- What were the spaces like back then? (Reference made to recent interpretation of spaces at Dover Castle by English Heritage)



- Castle-building: people brought to Wales for the building works from all over Britain and Europe
- The wider history of the towns the castles are in and their development
- Links with the town and its businesses (like the linkages made between Hadrian's Wall and the local businesses in the surrounding villages)
- What does it mean to be Welsh today?

One group discussed the physical survival of some of these monuments, and the point was made that stone was quarried for other uses from these sites and that others have been subject to significant restoration e.g. Dolwyddelan.

Members of the group commented that focusing interpretation on life in the castles, as in the fourth message, would not be appropriate, since the castles only had a short life span before falling into disrepair and becoming 'shells'. It would be inaccurate to tell a story of 'happy families' in these castles as this was really not how they were used. Also this message is very site dependent, due to the particular architectural features of each site, and as stated above under audiences, the group suggested that each castle should be interpreted on its own merits. This point was reiterated when the group discussed the widely differing legacies of these sites and their different uses in history.

It was suggested that making the message 'life in the shadow of the castles' would be more appropriate. This would enable the interpretation to focus more on the impact of the towns that went with the castles as these had more 'conquering' impact in terms of their social/ economic/ administrative impacts e.g. the monopoly they had on trade. Again this links back to the sites chosen for interpretation, in that those on the coast that encircled Gwynedd are best able to demonstrate this impact. This message also opens up the possibility of interpreting English influences on the design of the town buildings.

There was also some talk on trends in castle building amongst various groups, including Marcher Lords, European influences, as well as more generally the English and the Welsh dynasties.

It was also suggested that it was the town walls, more than the castles, that were to keep some communities within and some out. The curfew bell at Caernarfon was cited because it tolled for the opening and the closing of the gates.

The facilitator challenged the group to discuss whether there was any point in interpreting the castles as a group. One person commented that the proliferation of castles in North Wales was a Unique Selling Point, but problems occur in the contested and less known histories of some of these sites, as discussed in 'sites/ venues', above. The group felt group interpretation would be possible, providing the messages focus on what gave rise to the castles – for example, the Edward I connection, the costs of the build and ongoing maintenance, the coastal access.

3.4 Ideas & Opportunities

The groups suggested the following:

- More living history throughout the year (e.g. the interpreter who plays 'Master James of St George' at Caernarfon Castle)



- Events hosted by local communities to draw local attention to the castles, and encourage a sense of ownership
- Better (and even some) facilities
- Improved signage to help visitors find the less well-known sites
- Computer reconstructions
- ICT/ web/ virtual reality
- Storytellers and guides
- Smart phone resources (in the future with younger audiences in mind)
- Downloadable mobile phone tours
- Local people should be the interpreters
- Local people to act as ambassadors for these sites and also have greater access to using the sites for a community venue/ for hire etc
- Interpret the local use of these historic places today e.g. the walls and quayside at Conwy
- Re-enact historic events
- Signage for these attractions from the A55 is poor but getting this reviewed is a headache
- Cadw should focus on the wider landscape beyond the monuments such as the towns associated with the castles and walls. In particular looking at the logistics of moving people about/ visitor management and using the towers of the castles to interpret the towns and landscape around and their evolution
- Provide timelines for the history of these sites – that show the basics of what you need to know to understand them
- Could a castle tour by boat be offered to emphasize the coastal nature of Edward's sites and offer visitors something different?
- Opportunity to signpost other town attractions from the castles linked to exhibitions on development and evolution and townscape/ landscape

4 The Princes of Gwynedd

Following a presentation by PLB, as before, the group was asked to comment on our suggested audiences, sites and key messages for interpretation. They were also asked to add their own ideas and comments regarding opportunities or initiatives they felt were relevant to the plan.

4.1 Audiences

The groups discussed the identified audience groups (see below) and made additions and some changes of emphasis:

Audiences suggested by PLB	Additions by the group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family group visitors • Older couples: visitors • Overseas visitors • Schools and education groups • Local people and people visiting friends and relatives • Multilingual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors to local sites and features including walkers following trails (not just those intending to visit the listed sites) • Group travel markets (as other plan) • Local visitors to include regional and national visitors (due to curriculum relevance etc) • More emphasis on schools and educational groups • Include 'incidental' visitors – for example



	<p>those in Wales for other purposes such as walking holidays who may come across one of these sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group travel market are less likely to be a key audience for this group • Audiences with educational motivations might have a stronger likelihood to engage with this story • Overseas visitors will be less significant to this group. Maybe independently minded European visitors • Young professionals in Wales perhaps for activity holidays might be a key audiences, especially as some of the Princes sites are less accessible to coach tours, for example
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One group also had some wider discussions around the subject of audiences for interpretation. This included the need to tailor interpretive messages to the different markets, with careful consideration for the nature of that market's visit, as the Princes of Gwynedd offers such as diversity of heritage experiences or 'product'. It was, for example, suggested that the Princes of Gwynedd product could be sold to touring coastal cyclists, for example. Walkers, walking groups, educational groups and caravan holiday markets were also mentioned as distinct groups who could be catered for.

It was acknowledged that often sites associated with the Princes could be classed as 'hidden gems' in nature, often less accessible or in private ownership, and able to offer fantastic opportunities for landscape appreciation, which may appeal to some groups more than others. Again this was an area where the interpretation and the marketing need to work closely together.

4.2 Sites/ Venues

There was general agreement with the sites presented on the map, as follows:

- Valle Crucis Abbey
- Ewloe Castle
- Basingwerk Abbey
- Montgomery Castle
- Dolforwyn Castle
- Church of St Marys, Conwy
- Conwy Castle
- Conwy Town Walls
- Degnwy Castle
- Maenan Priory
- St Grwst Parish Church
- Church of St Mary, Trefriw
- Llanrhywychn Church
- Dolbadarn
- Dolwyddelan Castle
- Tomen Castle
- Cwm Prysor
- Cymer Abbey



- Castell y Bere
 - Dinas Emerys
 - St Marys, Beddgelert
 - Criccieth
 - Caernarfon
 - Llys Rhosyr and the Pritchard Jones Institute, Newborough
 - Aberffraw
 - St Marys and St Nicholas's Church, Beaumaris
 - Penmon Priory
 - Llanfaes
 - Bangor Museum and Art Gallery
 - Abergwyngregyn
-
- Abergwyngregyn was mentioned as being important to the story of the Princes (although it was also acknowledged that there is no access to the existing 'motte' and the village and its infrastructure were not suitable for large quantities of visitors)
 - Both Nefyn and Pwllheli (on either side of the Llyn peninsula) were former sites of a Llys. It was felt that they were important and there might be potential for links to them in the future and that they should be referenced.
 - One consultee asked if Builth Wells was to be included, as a site with some associations with the Princes of Gwynedd. Similarly Cilmeri was referenced as a site that could be included due to its association with the monument to Llewelyn ap Gruffudd. Others commented that abbey sites had previously been overlooked in terms of their importance to the Princes story
 - Focus on key successful individuals to make it easier for people to take in, e.g. Llewelyn ap Iorweth and Llewelyn ap Gruffudd. Davydd ap Gruffudd is another interesting character to help provide focus
 - The key sites have really got to be worth the visitor's while in terms of making the effort to get to these less accessible places. The consultees felt that there should be a 'wow factor' for visitors to experience. The facilitator challenged the group to nominate potential 'wow factor' sites – Castell y Bere and Dolforwyn Castles were both mentioned as places where people could have a good experience
 - Does the interpretation need to provide an overall 'scene setter' for the Princes of Gwynedd, since this is a less known story for many Welsh as well as those visitors from outside. Intellectual access was felt to be a major issue for this plan.
 - The visitor centre in Conwy could be redeveloped
 - Interpret Welsh people and society at Aber and Llys Rhosyr

It was also noted that the map shows geographical 'gaps', particularly in North East Wales, which was historically Powys and would therefore be associated with the Princes of Deheubarth. It was suggested that these two groups of Princes could be made a single category for interpretation. St Asaphs was suggested as an important omitted site. The group also felt that there were more local sites in these areas that could be interpreted at local level, for example in education packs for schools.

One person also suggested clustering sites, due to the natural clusters occurring on the map e.g. in the Conwy area. However, the group seemed to regard specific sites as less important to telling the story across Wales as a whole.



Consultees also arrived at the conclusion that, having reviewed the sites for the Edwardian castles and town walls, there was a strong link between these and the Princes sites. Therefore the castles and town walls could be interpreted to include information about the Princes and where to find their key sites, e.g. the Llys, Churches and abbey sites. One consultee warned not to overload people with information however!

4.3 Key Messages

The group considered the following messages:

- The Princes of Gwynedd were the first Princes of all Wales
- Amongst all the groups of Princes in Wales, the Princes of Gwynedd had a long and successful dynasty
- The heartland of the Princes of Gwynedd was in the North West of Wales including Snowdonia and Anglesey
- Today archaeology, castles and religious sites provide the only tangible links with the lives of the Princes
- The dramatic stories associated with the Princes of Gwynedd connects us to them as people
- The Princes of Gwynedd are part of Wales's identity and sense of independence today

The following comments were made by the group:

- The first key message was accepted as important but felt the statement needed refinement to make it clear
- Important to link the interpretation more with people than places as this was more important to the Welsh generally
- Emphasis on the Welsh oral tradition: links with the Eisteddfod, poetry, songs, music
- In response to the first message, consultees were not sure what 'Wales' was meant here and that the message should be that the Princes were the first to claim that they were Princes of all Wales.
- One group were unhappy with the wording for the fifth message and were unsure about what this meant. The facilitator then brokered a discussion about how best to convey 'people stories' relating to the Princes that audiences could relate to. Suggestions included interpreting that the Princes were fighting for their land as it was this that gave them power. It was suggested that the messages should convey that people were not free and that life in medieval times was different to today
- One group wanted a key message to explain the Llys: itinerant courts of the Princes, and how these worked. The Princes were not an occupying force so had no need to live in fortified sites like castles. This was considered very important by the consultees

The response included a discussion regarding the need to strike a balance between those who will have some knowledge of the Princes of Gwynedd and those who have very little, including amongst Welsh audiences.

4.4 Ideas & Opportunities

The groups suggested the following:



- Exhibition at Caernarfon to tell the story of the Princes. In fact it was felt by some consultees that the existing exhibition which focuses on Prince Charles's 1969 investiture should be completely overhauled to tell the broader story of the Princes of Gwynedd with the investiture story as a later chapter. One consultee suggested that the Princes of Gwynedd story should be given much more space in a separate exhibition with clear links maintained between the two exhibitions.
- 'Mabinogion'-related events and living history
- Walking, cycling, car-based tours
- Themed geo-caching tours
- Experimental archaeology, reconstructed buildings
- Referral from and to museums and WHS venues
- Signage
- Identity/ brand (for trails, like the coastal path etc) which could feature the Princes' coat-of-arms
- The use of a 'Claude glass'
- Incorporate as much unique, site-specific interpretation as possible
- Opportunities to tell the stories of the Princes in trails around the sites, perhaps linking other local features
- Need tour guides for the group visit market
- Use of flags at sites such as castles to make links with Princes/ rival forces e.g. the flag of Owain Glyndwr
- Use existing visitor infrastructure and gateways rather than creating new ones
- Dolbadarn is crying out for interpretive development
- Introduce the story of the Princes at the sites of the castles and town walls of Edward I
- Don't put too much physical media in countryside sites and locations: avoid clutter
- Caernarfon could benefit from a new visitor centre that interprets the story of the town, (which at time of writing is still a proposal)
- Information needs refreshing at some sites – need to provide a consistent brand for the Princes
- Link to Medieval Denbighshire's children's initiative: 'Time Travel Wales'
- Utilise new media such as google earth to signpost key sites and show interactive web content
- Provide audio tours in the countryside, for example as in the Clwydian Range where the tours interpret elements like hill fort archaeology

5 Conclusions

Despite initial concerns about the 'artificial' divide between the two interpretive plans, strong links between the two schemes emerged from the discussions and it was clear that many sites overlap in a way that could potentially be complementary to target audiences. There was also a consensus from both groups that interpretation is needed at many of the sites mentioned.

Edwardian Castles and Town Walls

For the castles and town walls of Edward I, the groups emphasised the importance of providing for local audiences. Marketing was also an important factor that kept cropping up and will be needed alongside the new interpretation.

Consultees were unsure about interpreting the castles of Edward I at castle sites that were not purely the constructs of Edward I. However, this became less of an issue when the overlaps with the Princes of Gwynedd Plan became clearer.



Consultees felt that messages for target audiences should not include saying that the castles are symbols of Welsh independence. However more emphasis is needed on the impact of these castles and towns on people's lives: 'Life in the shadow of the castles'. Consultees wanted the messages to include that the castles and towns were symbols, and the background that gave rise to them. This should include that, if there had not been a spirit of Welsh independence/ resilience, there would not have been a need to build the castles in the first place.

"Many people consider Cearnarfon Castle to be a symbol of Welsh resilience in that the Welsh, and the Welsh language, are still here in spite of the conqueror's castle and the following centuries of conqueror's rule."

Key opportunities identified for the castles and town walls of Edward I include interpreting the Prince of Gwynedd at these sites, using local ambassadors/ interpreters, using new media, events and providing a means of accessing the 'bigger picture' i.e. of Welsh history.

Princes of Gwynedd

For the Princes of Gwynedd, key audiences suggested included walking audiences/ incidental visitors, young professionals/ active holidaymakers, 'motivated' visitors, but less emphasis on overseas visitors and organised tours. Local and national Welsh visitors were felt to be a target audience group.

The ongoing discoveries of former Llys sites and the abbey sites were considered important, and other sites mentioned that had not been on the list included Builth, and St Asaphs. Consultees wanted a greater emphasis on people than places/ sites: including through use of the Welsh oral tradition. However it was also felt that there should be places that provide a 'wow factor' and overall scene setter, as for the castles.

In terms of key messages, the wider townscape/ landscape story was felt to be important and a focus on people and Welsh life, including the Llys.

Opportunities mentioned included the use of tours/ trails, new exhibitions for Caernarfon Castle and Conwy Visitor Centres. Reconstructions were seen as a potentially important element and there is potential for signposting between sites, including the Edwardian castles and walls. Branding was seen as an opportunity, alongside careful marketing of specific elements of the product, such as the 'hidden gem' sites. Education packs also received many mentions.



Appendix E

Princes of Gwynedd		Version 2.0	
Outline Costings		May 2010	
Interpretation Proposals		Estimated Budget Costs	
Ref No.	Exhibit/Item	Item totals	Subtotals
Individual Castle Sites			
EC 1	Ewloe Castle		
EC 1.1	Welcome panels (x2) @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	4,200.00
EC 1.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00
EC 1.3	Interpretive panels (x2) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	3,600.00
EC 1.4	Metal plaques/ icons (x6) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,380.00
EC 1.5	Hidden Wales' trail beyond ruins, allowance for setting up, design & implementation	£	15,000.00
EC 1.6	Interpretive 'audio panel', inc design, hardware and housing with photovoltaic cell & battery	£	8,500.00
EC 1.7	Themed trail packs for families, allowance inc design and production	£	10,000.00
EC 1.8	Repair/upgrade kissing-gate entrance, allow:	£	3,500.00
EC 1.9	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
EC 1.10	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
EC 1.11	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
EC 1.12	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	11,600.00
			£ 102,780.00
BA 2	Basingwerk Abbey		
BA 2.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
BA 2.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00
BA 2.3	Interpretive panels (x3) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	5,400.00
BA 2.4	Metal plaques/ icons (x8) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,840.00
BA 2.5	Interpretive benches (x2) @ £2,000 ea	£	4,000.00
BA 2.6	Themed trail packs for families, allowance inc design and production	£	10,000.00
BA 2.7	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
BA 2.8	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
BA 2.9	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
BA 2.10	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	8,600.00
			£ 76,940.00
VCA 3	Valle Crucis Abbey		
VCA 3.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
VCA 3.2	New exhibition in Victorian summer house, interactive displays & role-playing	£	35,000.00
VCA 3.3	Interpretive panels (x2) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	3,600.00
VCA 3.4	Metal plaques/ icons (x8) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,840.00
VCA 3.5	Interpretive benches with replicas (x3) @ £2,500 ea	£	7,500.00
VCA 3.6	Themed trail packs for families, allowance inc design and production	£	10,000.00
VCA 3.7	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
VCA 3.8	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
VCA 3.9	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
VCA 3.10	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	9,500.00
			£ 105,040.00
LR 4	Liys Rhosyr		
LR 4.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
LR 4.2	Experimental archaeology/ small-scale reconstructions on site, allowance	£	35,000.00
LR 4.3	Role-playing and dressing-up activities, resources based at Pritchard Jones Institute (PJI)	£	15,000.00
LR 4.4	New exhibition at PJI, museum-standard cases, replicas and hands-on interactives	£	60,000.00
LR 4.5	Development of oral history archive at the PJI, a collection of "Whispers, Shouts & Screams"	£	20,000.00
LR 4.6	Metal plaques/ icons (x2) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	460.00
LR 4.7	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00
LR 4.8	Provision of 'download centre' in PJI, allowing visitors to load resources on mobiles	£	15,000.00
LR 4.9	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
LR 4.10	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
LR 4.11	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
LR 4.12	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	18,000.00
			£ 213,060.00
AG 5	Abergwyngregyn		
AG 5.1	Simple graphic-based display at Information Centre	£	15,000.00
AG 5.2	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	900.00
			£ 15,900.00
DGC 6	Deganwy Castle		
DGC 6.1	Welcome panels (x6) @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	12,600.00
DGC 6.2	More expansive interpretive panel, inc design, artwork & plinth support	£	6,500.00
DGC 6.3	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00
DGC 6.4	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
DGC 6.5	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
DGC 6.6	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
DGC 6.7	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	3,300.00
			£ 69,900.00
CC 7	Conwy Castle & Town Walls		
CC 7.1	New exhibition and oral history archive in the Visitor Centre & TIC	£	50,000.00
CC 7.2	Provision of 'download centre' in Visitor Centre, allowing visitors to load resources on mobiles*	£	15,000.00
CC 7.3	Hidden Wales' self-guided trail with supporting plaques and leaflet	£	35,000.00
CC 7.4	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
CC 7.5	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
CC 7.6	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, "Whispers, Shouts and Screams"	£	15,000.00
CC 7.7	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	13,500.00

		£	149,000.00
DE 8	Dinas Emrys		
DE 8.1	Welcome panel in car park @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
DE 8.2	Provision of 'download centre' at nearest TIC, allowing visitors to load resources on mobiles	£	15,000.00
DE 8.3	Interpretive benches (x4) @ £2,000 ea	£	8,000.00
DE 8.4	Provision of 'download centre' at local TIC, allowing visitors to load resources on mobiles	£	15,000.00
DE 8.5	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
DE 8.6	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
DE 8.7	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i>	£	15,000.00
DE 8.8	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	3,000.00
		£	78,600.00
AC 9	Cymer Abbey		
AC 9.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
AC 9.2	Metal plaques/ icons (x8) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,840.00
AC 9.3	Interpretive panels (x2) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	3,600.00
AC 9.4	3D tactile sculpture themed on horses, allowance for design & manufacture	£	12,000.00
AC 9.5	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	10,000.00
AC 9.6	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
AC 9.7	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
AC 9.8	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i>	£	15,000.00
AC 9.9	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	6,700.00
		£	71,740.00
CB 10	Castell y Bere		
CB 10.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
CB 10.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00
CB 10.3	Metal plaques/ icons (x7) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,610.00
CB 10.4	Interpretive panels (x3) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	5,400.00
CB 10.5	Interpretive 'audio panel', inc design, hardware and housing with photovoltaic cell & battery	£	8,500.00
CB 10.6	Themed trail packs for families, allowance inc design and production	£	7,500.00
CB 10.7	Interpretive graphics and simple tactile display in existing shelter	£	10,000.00
CB 10.8	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
CB 10.9	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
CB 10.10	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i>	£	15,000.00
CB 10.11	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	6,000.00
		£	86,110.00
DFC 11	Dolforwyn Castle		
DFC 11.1	Welcome panels (x2) @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	4,200.00
DFC 11.2	Interpretive panels (x2) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	3,600.00
DFC 11.3	Interpretive 'audio panel', inc design, hardware and housing with photovoltaic cell & battery	£	8,500.00
DFC 11.4	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00
DFC 11.5	Themed trail packs for families, allowance inc design and production	£	7,500.00
DFC 11.6	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
DFC 11.7	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
DFC 11.8	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i>	£	15,000.00
DFC 11.9	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	3,800.00
		£	75,100.00
MC 12	Montgomery Castle		
MC 12.1	New interpretive panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
MC 12.2	Sound installation inside 'gazebo', inc design, hardware, photovoltaic cell & battery	£	9,500.00
MC 12.3	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
MC 12.4	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs*	£	12,500.00
MC 12.5	Downloadable bilingual audio tour, allowance inc production, <i>"Whispers, Shouts and Screams"</i>	£	15,000.00
MC 12.6	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	2,200.00
		£	49,300.00
CRC 13	Criccieth Castle*		
CRC 13.1	Welcome panel @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	2,100.00
CRC 13.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00
CRC 13.3	Development of map guide/ leaflet, allowance for design and 10,000 print-run	£	15,000.00
CRC 13.4	Interpretive panels (x4) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	7,200.00
CRC 13.5	New exhibition on medieval Wales & Welsh life, allowance for design & fabrication	£	75,000.00
CRC 13.6	Story of Criccieth* audio visual programme	£	25,000.00
CRC 13.7	Metal plaques/ icons (x5) @ £230 ea inc design & manufacture	£	1,150.00
CRC 13.8	Interpretive benches (x2) @ £2,000 ea	£	4,000.00
CRC 13.9	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00
CRC 13.10	Upgrade telescope to 'speaking' variety	£	3,000.00
CRC 13.11	Provision of 'download centre' in Visitor Centre, allowing visitors to load resources on mobiles*	£	15,000.00
CRC 13.12	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
CRC 13.13	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs†	£	12,500.00
CRC 13.14	Downloadable multilingual audio tour, allowance inc production in 2 languages: Welsh & Eng	£	15,000.00
CRC 13.15	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	19,000.00
		£	223,450.00
DW 14	Dolwyddelan Castle*		
DW 14.1	Welcome panels (x2) @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	4,200.00
DW 14.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00
DW 14.3	New displays to accompany existing Princes of Gwynedd exhibition, allowance	£	75,000.00
DW 14.4	Interpretive panels (x4) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	7,200.00
DW 14.5	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00
DW 14.6	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00
DW 14.7	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs†	£	12,500.00
DW 14.8	Downloadable multilingual audio tour, allowance inc production in 2 languages: Welsh & Eng	£	15,000.00
DW 14.9	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	13,000.00

				£	156,400.00
DB 15	Dolbadarn Castle*				
DB 15.1	Welcome panels (x2) @ £2,100 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	4,200.00		
DB 15.2	Cast-metal tactile model, in bronze mounted on steel lectern	£	9,500.00		
DB 15.3	Re-design/modify 'cage' at top of Keep	£	4,000.00		
DB 15.4	Interpretive panels (x2) @ £1,800 ea inc design, artwork & support/frame	£	3,600.00		
DB 15.5	Self-guided trail, allowance for production of trail guide	£	12,000.00		
DB 15.6	Dedicated website portal	£	8,000.00		
DB 15.7	Downloadable resources inc reconstruction drawings, leaflets, guides, themed trail packs†	£	12,500.00		
DB 15.8	Downloadable multilingual audio tour, allowance inc production in 2 languages: Welsh & Eng	£	15,000.00		
DB 15.9	Delivery, installation & fixing sundries	£	6,900.00		
				£	75,700.00
Estimated Grand Total				£	1,549,020.00

Notes:

*These costs are duplicated in the Castles of Edward I Interpretation Plan as the proposals are interlinked

We would recommend a contingency amount of between 5-10% be set aside to cover any unforeseen project costs at this stage

Estimates do not include for applying for planning permissions or scheduled monument consents