

St George

SH 9737 7577
105517

Introduction

St George lies just to the south of the A55, two miles south-east of Abergele. The small village is situated on a steep north-facing slope at the edge of the limestone hills which lie to the south of the low-lying marshy area of Morfa Rhuddlan. Most of the houses lie on St George's Road, which follows the contour of the slope. From the village centre, Primrose Hill Road runs steeply downhill to the north-east.

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

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

We have not referenced the sources that have been examined to produce this report, but that information will be available in the Historic Environment Record (HER) maintained by the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. The HER can be accessed on-line through the Archwilio website (www.archwilio.org.uk).

History of development

Known also as Llan Sain Siôr, St George is first recorded as *Lan S. George* in the years between 1536 and 1539 and refers to the church dedication. In 1566 it appears as *ll. sain sior* and in 1607 as *St Georhe al's Llansansior*. Around about 1700 the name of the township, Cegidog, was added as *kegidog* and it is this name that appears in medieval records, even being applied to the church that was here as in the Norwich Taxation of 1254 which referred to *Kegidauc*.

Claims locally that the church or at least its site as an ecclesiastical foundation go back over 800 years and have yet to be substantiated. There is nothing as yet to signal an early medieval origin, and the most that can be said is that there was a church here in the late Middle Ages (see below). Whether a settlement had developed around the church by this time is not clear but Edward Lhuyd's respondent at the very end of the 17th century reported that there were seven houses around the church.

The Tithe map of 1839 shows a small village with houses spread out along the lane with Bryn Iolo at the eastern end and the Dinorben Arms at the eastern. Primrose Hill rather than adopting its present line ran almost due south and joined the main street east of the inn. This provides a slightly different perspective on maps of the village, offering greater coherency to the settlement.

St George was the Kinmel estate village and its origins and development may therefore be closely linked to those of the estate. Old Kinmel, dating to the 17th century and now in ruins,

is the earliest known residence of the owners of the Kinmel estate, although the estate itself could be earlier.

The heritage to 1750

St George's church (105553) was rebuilt in 1887-94. Its predecessor was reportedly a Perpendicular double-naved church, as noted by Richard Fenton amongst others. The present building has a south transept and a big south porch with bellcote. Some of the furnishings from the earlier church were transferred: a Royal Arms in plaster from 1618, several hatchments from 1815 onwards, and a number of monuments, the earliest from 1699.

The site of the earlier church (102011), lies about 40m west of the present church, and is shown on modern maps, though there are now no obvious visible remains other than a level area with scarped sides and stone blocks at the angles, and a font, presumably positioned as it was formerly. Beside it is a fine mausoleum built in the late 19th century for the family of Lord Dinorben.

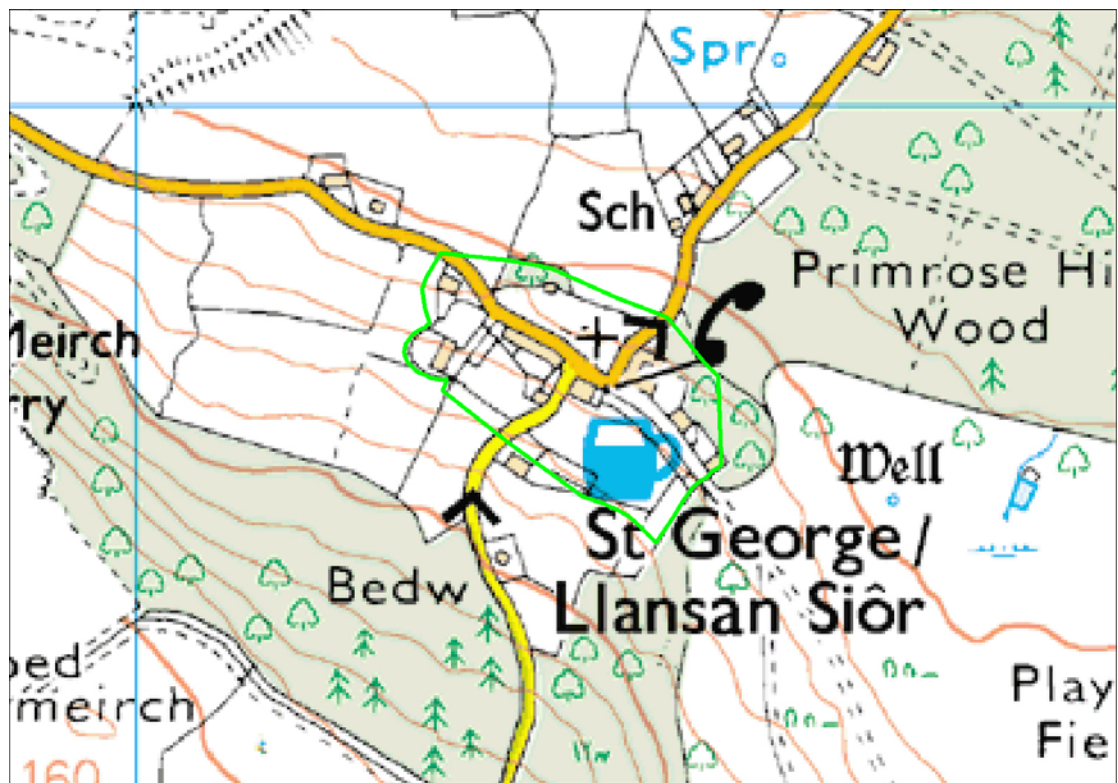
The churchyard is rectilinear and elongated, an original and irregular core at the west end with a more regular extension containing the newer church to the east.

Church Street has a row of cottages which are probably of 18th-century origin, though they were altered considerably in 1857 when they became estate dwellings for the Kinmel Estate.

The sloping field south of the Kinmel Arms appears to have two terraces (105552) at its eastern end. It is not clear whether these are natural or man-made, but the possibility remains that they were building platforms.

St George's Well, also known as Ffynnon Gegidog, lies 300m to the south-east of the church, in Kinmel Park. The spring fed into two basins one irregular in shape containing the spring itself, and a rectangular pool with masonry walls, both now enclosed within iron railings. How long it has been in existence is unknown though it was mentioned by Edward Lhuyd in his *Parochialia* in 1698.

Kinmel Manor (105554) lies south-east of the village. The Estate was bought in 1786 by Rev. Edward Hughes, and a new house built 1791-1802. There was much rebuilding in the 19th century, partly as a result of fires. A quarter of a mile south-east of the mansion, in the kitchen garden are the ruins of the previous house, Old Kinmel (105555), dating to the 17th century, with mullioned and transomed windows, storeyed porch and lateral chimney.



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