

Bettws Clyro

SO 227473
16115

Introduction

The small isolated chapel looks over the Wye Valley two kilometres away, the level ground on which it sits immediately beginning to fall away to the north-east and south-east where a tributary of the river has cut a sharp-sided dingle. Clyro itself lies almost 4km to the south-south-west with Hay-on-Wye about 5km away.

This brief report assesses Bettws Clyro up to 1750. For its more recent history, it will be necessary to look at other sources of information.

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

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

History of development

Bettws Clyro, also known as Capel-Bettws was, prior to the 20th century, a chapelry in the parish of Clyro. The 'Bettws' element is conventionally interpreted as a chapel or 'prayer house', the term coming from Old English *bed-hūs*. The first documented reference to it is as *y bettws* in about 1566, but the prefix almost certainly reveals a medieval foundation.

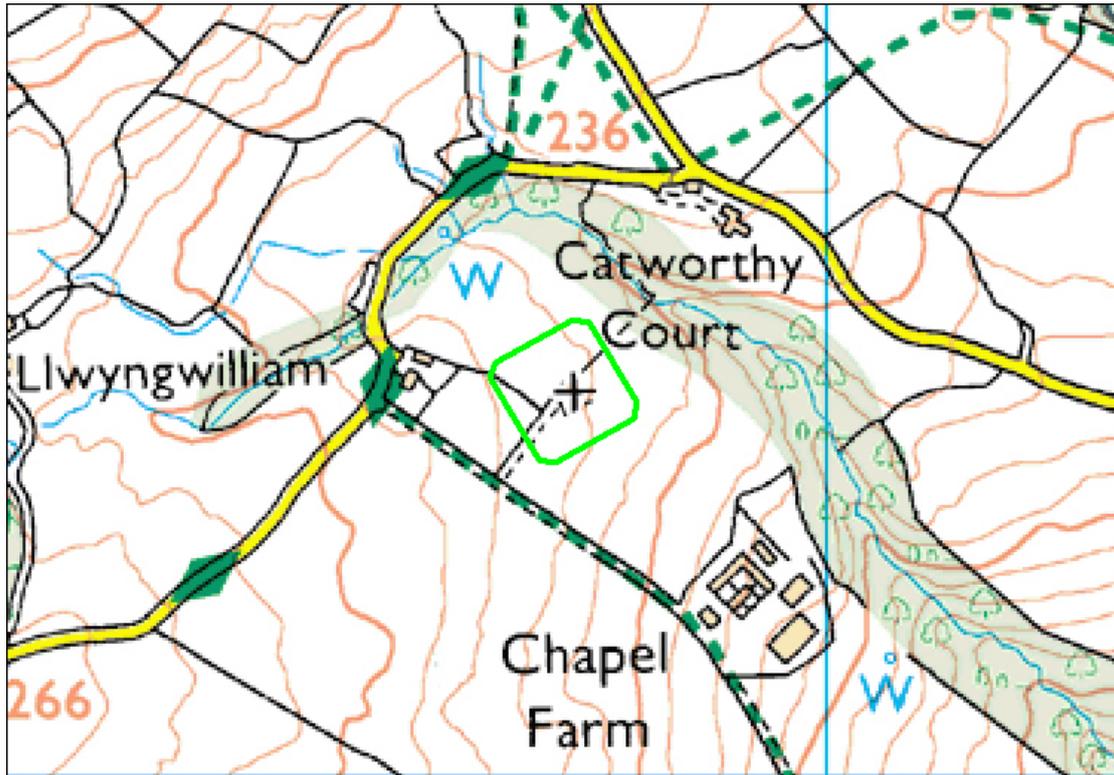
The chapel's isolated location was a feature in the middle of the 19th century just as it is today, though both Chapel House to the west and Chapel Farm (then known as Upper House) to the south-east were in existence.

The heritage to 1750

The chapel of the Holy Trinity (16004; Grade II* listed) is single-celled and was rebuilt entirely in 1878, though the roof timbers of 14th-century date were re-used. There is a 13th-century font brought from St Michael's church at Clyro, and portions of the rood loft, perhaps of the late 14th or early 15th century. Little is known about the earlier church though it is recorded that the chancel had been rebuilt in 1823.

The chapel is fenced around and contains a few burials, the earliest from the late 18th century, but there is no indication of an earlier, formal churchyard.

There is no visible evidence in the surrounding fields of any abandoned house sites, and until it is demonstrated otherwise this should be considered as an isolated chapel without an accompanying settlement.



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