



# Llefydd Llonydd Peaceful Places

Crwydro Tiroedd Sanctaidd Gogledd Ceredigion  
Exploring the Sacred Landscapes of North Ceredigion

## Peaceful Places Review

### Final Report

November 2017



Cyngor Sir  
CEREDIGION  
County Council



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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
1. Background .....	4
2. The aims of Peaceful Places .....	5
3. Building stories.....	7
4. Tourism .....	9
5. Complementary Tourist and Business Activities .....	11
6. Threats and opportunities .....	13
7. Governance .....	15
8. Resourcing.....	16
9. Recommendations .....	17
Appendix – Project Worker Job Description.....	18

## Executive Summary

Peaceful Places is a heritage tourism trail ([www.peaceful-places.com](http://www.peaceful-places.com)) that was launched in 2014. The trail is a collection of 17 churches and chapels across the north of Ceredigion each of which has its own story to tell. The 17 locations are set in some of the most stunning landscapes of Ceredigion from the coast to the uplands and take visitors on a journey where they can discover wildlife, natural beauty, family history and even human events and achievements. The trail points visitors to examples of wonderful architecture, art and craftsmanship and in some locations, such as St Michael's Church, Llandre offers short walks along poetry/nature trails.

Consultancy.coop LLP were commissioned to conduct a study on the following:

- To review the current situation with regards to the set up and day to day operational activities of 'Peaceful Places'.
- To review the current position and assess future needs of Peaceful Places representatives to maximise the potential of the project.
- To identify suitable models for the ongoing management of the 'Peaceful Places' project to ensure its long-term sustainability.
- Consider general approaches for succession planning and share best practice methods identified through the study.

We believe the focus for the future Peaceful Places should be based around two aims:

- Developing the churches and chapels as community assets and, ideally, as places of worship
- Promoting Tourism with consequential economic benefits for existing and new local businesses and attractions

Peaceful Places needs a part-time Development Officer ( 0.4 FTE ) to build on what has been achieved and expand it.

It is important whatever is decided as to a host organisation that there is a strong Peaceful Places Steering Committee which is focused on a clear set of guiding principles, and can provide direction to the Development Officer

As a project, we suggest that Peaceful Places should focus on:

- Refining the tourism offer it is providing
- Working with local private tourism providers
- Working with local communities to: help local people value the asset which the church or chapel represents in their community; develop greater use of the churches for secular as well as religious purposes; prepare to take some of these assets into local community ownership

## 1. Background

Peaceful Places is a heritage tourism trail ([www.peaceful-places.com](http://www.peaceful-places.com)) that was launched in 2014. The trail is a collection of 17 churches and chapels across the north of Ceredigion each of which has its own story to tell. The 17 locations are set in some of the most stunning landscapes of Ceredigion from the coast to the uplands and take visitors on a journey where they can discover wildlife, natural beauty, family history and even human events and achievements. The trail points visitors to examples of wonderful architecture, art and craftsmanship and in some locations such as St Michael's Church, Llandre offers short walks along poetry/nature trails.

The original aim of Peaceful Places was to raise the profile of churches and chapels in the area to visitors and locals alike by keeping the churches/chapels open to the public. The development of the cluster was designed to encourage visitors to see sacred places, not only as a spiritual location but also from a different perspective; as places to spend quality time in a peaceful setting. Each of the 17 churches and chapels received a variety of interpretive material, including a welcome A- frame, an exterior interpretive sign-board and an interior panel depicting the story of the building and its people.

Consultancy.coop LLP were commissioned to conduct a study on the following:

- To review the current situation with regards to the set up and day to day operational activities of 'Peaceful Places'.
- To review the current position and assess future needs of Peaceful Places representatives to maximise the potential of the project.
- To identify suitable models for the ongoing management of the 'Peaceful Places' project to ensure its long-term sustainability.
- Consider general approaches for succession planning and share best practice methods identified through the study.

During this review, we have interviewed several local tourism related businesses and visited all the churches and chapels in the project. In addition, we have met with some of the local church activists and officials.

## 2. The aims of Peaceful Places

The original stated aim of Peaceful Places was:

*“to raise the profile of churches and chapels in the area to visitors and locals alike by keeping the churches/chapels open to the public.*

*The development of the cluster was designed to encourage visitors to see sacred places not only as a spiritual location but also from a different perspective; as places to spend quality time in a peaceful setting”.*

Our observation of Peaceful Places in practice is that there are several potentially conflicting aims:

1. Preserving buildings with interesting histories
2. Preserving worship in these buildings
3. Preserving a community asset
4. Encouraging tourism
5. Encouraging Community activity
6. Creating employment in an area

This is in a context of:

- Small aging congregations – typically 8 to 10 – in the rural areas. Congregations are larger in the more urban areas such as Aberystwyth and Llanbadarn.
- Little wider community buy-in to a church as a place of worship
- A shortage of ordained clergy who are increasingly spread thinly

Tourism in Ceredigion is largely concentrated on the coast with its beaches and caravan parks. A large proportion – over 80% is repeat business, often to the same cottage, B&B, campsite, or caravan. The project appeals to what Visit Wales refers to as Explorers, a category which they and Ceredigion Council’s tourism section wish to encourage.

The tourism offering can be:

- a. Faith-based
- b. Spiritual in the widest sense
- c. Historical
- d. Nature
- e. Outdoors – walkers / cyclists
- f. Just somewhere to go

The purpose of the project is multi-faceted, and we have tried to address some of these issues in this report:

- *To keep the church open*

- It must have sufficient parishioners to maintain services
- It must have sufficient parishioners to maintain a volunteer pool
- It must be financially sustainable
- It must be part of its community
- *To attract visitors*
  - It needs to be easy to find with clear signage
  - The information given must be comprehensive – different visitors have different interests
  - It needs to be open when they come
  - It needs to be accessible by appropriate transport, be that coach, car, cycle or walking
- *To welcome those visitors*
  - It must be able to accommodate these visitors, including the disabled
  - There must be car parking available nearby, and clearly marked, as well as somewhere to chain up a bicycle
  - It must provide some essentials; refreshment and washroom facilities onsite or nearby
  - Displays and information must be sufficient to make the visitor linger
  - Sufficient outdoor seating
- *To support the community financially*
  - It must link to local businesses, shops, pubs, hotels, cafes, restaurants
  - It must partner with other local tourist attractions
  - It must facilitate other community activities on site

## **Recommendation**

For clarity, we believe the focus for the future Peaceful Places should be based around two aims:

- Developing the churches and chapels as community assets and, ideally, as places of worship
- Promoting Tourism with consequential economic benefits for existing and new local businesses and attractions

### 3. Building stories

There is an implicit assumption in the Peaceful Places Project and in other similar trails in other parts of the UK, that churches and chapels and their individual histories and design are inherently interesting to large numbers of people who will flock to them when informed of their existence. This is, sadly, not the case in an increasingly secular society. The challenge is to make them interesting by creating exciting narratives, placing churches and chapels in a historical and cultural context, and then promoting and marketing them.

This is not as daunting as it sounds, because there is a demonstrable public capacity for these stories, as evidenced by the popularity of such TV series as Poldark and Game of Thrones, elements of both of which can be seen in North Ceredigion. It is a question of collating already available material, and developing a marketing strategy which can deliver interesting experiences for local people as well as tourists to the area.

Peaceful Places has made huge progress and energised the seventeen churches and chapels involved, but it has some inherent weaknesses:

- There are large numbers of interesting stories attached to each church, but there is no unifying story to link them together. A tourist is presented with seventeen short blurbs and a map, but no way of easily deciding which are likely to interest them.

Themes could be:

- The lead-mining story. It is by no means obvious that North Ceredigion is a post-industrial area. Half of the lead used in Victorian times was mined in mid-Wales. The churches and chapels are an integral part of the social history of this area.
- The medieval churches. This links the roles of the Welsh Princes, the Normans, the Cistercian Order and complements the proposed exciting developments at Strata Florida.
- The Uplands Churches. Perhaps this draws on the eighteenth Century picturesque, when the Grand Tour shifted to wilder parts of the UK as Napoleon prevented access to Europe.
- Spiritual Places. The holy wells and links to older pre-Christian spirituality, which is often linked to the location of the churches we see today.

It needs to be easy to access these stories:

- Simple maps with distances and times on them
- Suggested self- guided trips for half day or full day with recommended stops for coffee and lunch on the way, making sure those places are open.

- Developing a defined timetable during the key parts of the year. Say, a talk at Church A at 10.00 every second Tuesday followed by a talk at church B at 11.30 and Church C at 2.00 and Church D at 4.00. These talks to be promoted individually, and as part of the tour
- Extending the Peaceful Places spiritual theme and calling them pilgrimages might be a novel marketing tool. “Half day pilgrimage following the footsteps of Dafydd ap Gwilym.”
- Each church needs to be open and there should be sufficient accessible information to make it worth being there. This information should include stories relating to the history of the village and surrounding area the church serves, not just the church itself. The current boards have relatively little information. This can be supplemented by audio guides, smartphone apps as well as more printed information.
- Parking is key at each church, as however much green tourism is promoted, most visitors come by car. Some of the churches have very restricted parking available. A few could encourage coaches. Where parking cannot be provided on-site, there needs to be clear signposting to a suitable nearby location.

In summation: developing more tourist-friendly ways to access Peaceful Places

1. Themed short routes (pilgrimages) – 3 hour / 6 hours with clear timed directions
  - Printed material
  - Smartphone Apps
  - Improved website information
2. At each church
  - Audio installations.
  - Better written material covering a wide range.
  - More info on Smartphone Apps via beacons.
  - Long-term arrangements for opening and closing and keeping an eye on buildings.
  - A review of parking arrangements.

Much more information needed at each location. Lots of history is not promoted in the publicity (e.g. Belgian refugee screen at Llanfihangel y Creuddyn). In particular, the history in graveyards remains un-presented. This is a major opportunity for the genealogical market. Large numbers of people from Ceredigion emigrated to the United States in the nineteenth century and their descendants wish to follow their roots.

There is the opportunity to work with students at Aberystwyth University and University of Trinity St David’s. For example, each church’s history could be PhD project. Both Universities have creative writing, drama and film courses at undergraduate and post graduate level



## 4. Tourism

Promoting the tourism offering to North Ceredigion is innately difficult except for the coastal strip. It is difficult to prise the large number of repeat visitors from the beaches. If they venture out, then they will visit only one or two places each year of their stay. The number of what are termed, explorer tourists, is relatively small, and it is difficult to see how it could be expanded without greater national publicity.

One issue is the low profile of the area in Wales, let alone the rest of the UK or further afield. There is no brand recognition of the Cambrian Mountains, in a competition with the Brecon Beacons or Snowdonia.

Nevertheless, it should be possible to build the Peaceful Places brand as a Pilgrimage brand in its own right' and consideration should also be given to working with other Pilgrimage tourism organisations across the UK to promote this concept.

The Guided tour market in North Ceredigion is small, fragmented, and underdeveloped. Peaceful Places, together with other tourism attractions in North Ceredigion is well-placed to help encourage this to expand.

Different models of guided tour are possible:

- Using buses or minibuses
- Self-drive in tourists' own cars in convoy led by a guide.
- Self-drive guided by an app which provides detailed directions based on GPS
- Guides meeting at agreed points by appointment.

Possible business models might be a co-operative of private guides. Alternatively, this may be an attractive extension of the existing community bus network.

Experience in other areas ((Brittany<sup>1</sup>) has shown that a fixed programme of guided tours around small villages, almost always featuring the local church, as well as other local features such as interesting houses, wells, communal ovens, etc, can be relatively successful with limited funding from local authorities.

Developing the guided tourist market could be:

- Bringing together the private businesses to discuss opportunities
- Considering a partnership or cooperative model
- Possibly expanding the Community bus service
- In the first instance holding a meeting of interested parties to discuss possibilities may be the best option.
- It may be that a specific feasibility study on a solution covering more destinations and wider geographically may be appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.morbihan-tourism.co.uk/muzillac/visites-et-circuits-du-patrimoine-avec-jacques-hazo/tabid/8387/offreid/507ed4b4-580d-42a7-9f1c-311b5822090f>

A tourist guide Co-operative / Social Enterprise could be the way to make Peaceful Places financially sustainable.

Links are needed to local business to sell to, and provide services for tourists/pilgrims. This applies particularly to Food and Accommodation businesses. This requires a mapping process, identifying gaps and proactively working with businesses for common benefit.

In this modern, increasingly secular age, many people are looking for meaning in life, and whilst Peaceful Places is unlikely to reach such heights, there is enough interest in the pilgrims following the Camino trail, for Michelin to produce a tourist guide<sup>2</sup> for the 278,000<sup>3</sup> who followed it last year.

The project can also complement the Visit Wales themed Years – 2018 Year of the Sea and 2019 as the Year of Discovery.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Camino-Santiago-Michelin-booklet-Kaarten/dp/2067148052>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.csj.org.uk/the-present-day-pilgrimage/pilgrim-numbers/>

## 5. Complementary Tourist and Business Activities

Peaceful Places must complement and add value to the tourism, community, and economic benefit of the area. In short, it must increase the social capital.

Complementary activities include:

### **Strata Florida Trust**

There are ambitious plans for creating a large visitor attraction encompassing:

- Remains of the Abbey which is administered by Cadw
- The churchyard which is a draw for genealogists world-wide
- The farmhouse and out-buildings which are to be turned into an interpretation centre for the agricultural and cultural heritage of the area.
- The Spiritual context of the Ancient Holy Wells in the Ffrwd valley.

It will be several years before this project is realised, but it will enhance what Peaceful Places is all about.

### **Other Churches and Chapels**

It may be that working with the existing 17 churches and chapels, and restricting to north Ceredigion may not make this economically viable. Consideration should be given to expanding the number of churches to the south of the county, and incorporating other destinations, as well as the Cistercian Way and the Hinterland locations.

Several places of worship have expressed an interest in becoming part of the project, such as St Peter's in Machynlleth, and the church in Penrhyncoch.

Take-up of non-conformist chapels is not great, but could enhance the offering. An obvious candidate is the well-known Soar y Mynydd chapel, supposedly the most remote chapel in Wales.

### **Dyfi Biosphere**

Biospheres are nominated by national governments and must fulfil three aims:

- Conservation protecting, wildlife, habitats and the environment.
- Development – encouraging a sustainable economy and community;
- Education – supporting research, monitoring, and building global networks to share and learn.

UNESCO asks communities in these areas to test and demonstrate innovative approaches to maintaining livelihoods, culture and economies based on a healthy environment. Dyfi Biosphere have a Tourist Plan and a Communication Plan.

### **Borth – Libanus 1877**

A Chapel converted to cinema and restaurant/café on Borth high street, with outside courtyard tables. This could possibly be a private business partner to complement the Peaceful Places churches and chapels.

## **Holy Wells**

We spoke to Phil Cope, who has written many books on holy wells in Wales, as well as recent reports for Keep Wales Tidy's "Well-Being" project. He feels there are many opportunities to promote the wells that exist at Llandre and Eglwys Fach, as well as others (some unidentified) that exist on the paths between the churches. They would add considerable interest to any tours or pilgrimages that are developed.

## **Cistercian Way**

This is an obvious complementary initiative aimed at walkers. Strata Florida, Ysbyty Cynfyn and Cwmystwyth are on the route. Other Peaceful Places churches are not, but Hafod and Eglwys Fach are close by.

Incorporating the story of the Cistercians and their way of life would add considerably to the tourist appeal.

## **Silver Mountain - Llywernog Silver Mine Museum**

This old silver mine museum has been in operation for several years, but is now being revitalised under new management. Lucie Walford, the energetic new Attraction Team Leader is keen to develop links with tours around churches associated with lead/silver mines.

## **Peter Stevenson and Huw Davies**

Peter is a storyteller and writer specialising in local stories, history and myths. He worked on a Storybus project for Biosphere. This took a while to get going, but was ultimately successful. The bus toured the area, visiting and stopping. Participants were 50/50 locals and tourists

Huw is a Visit Wales Blue Badge Guide. Works for individuals finding him on official site, plus coach companies visiting the area. Has worked all over Wales

## **Cambrian Safaris**

Richard Smith does bespoke tours in a 7 seater Landrover Discovery, a licensed private hire vehicle and chairs Pentir Pumlumon

## **Pentir Pumlumon**

A voluntary non-profit making group whose aim is "to improve things in North Ceredigion." Pentir Pumlumon is a company limited by guarantee set up by local business people. The group employs a part time Development Officer based in Pontrhydygroes. The group has a membership of about 35 local businesses, most of whom are involved in tourism in some way.

## **Accommodation providers**

People who stay in the area are always looking for interesting places to visit. It is essential that the Peaceful Places experience is recommended by Hotels and B&Bs. More visitors will be attracted by the investment in better facilities such as the renovated Hafod Arms in Devils Bridge and Nanteos.

## 6. Threats and opportunities

The long-term future of these churches and chapels as places for worship must be a cause for concern. The Church in Wales has been refining its strategy for dealing with a dwindling ordained clergy and an aging regular-worshipping laity in this area. The reality is that this is not going to continue as it is now. What is to happen to these fascinating buildings and their history? Many non-conformist chapels have already been converted for other purposes, although fewer churches thus far.

It is clear from the recent changes in clergy in the area and trends in church-going that the Church in Wales will have difficulty maintaining all its churches in the area. Over the past ten years, more than 10 Anglican churches in Wales each year have closed - [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-41175879](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-41175879) .

Except for Aberystwyth and Llanbadarn, which have larger urban areas to draw on, numbers of worshippers are small and ageing. This is not a sustainable situation. While there is no question now of any of the Peaceful Places churches closing, we feel it is only a matter of time before this will be the case.

Peaceful Places could be the vehicle to keep these buildings in use by the community and ideally retain some level of worship provision. This could be in partnership with the National Churches Trust which is unlikely to wish to concentrate great resources in a relatively small geographical area, and the Churches Visitor and Tourism Association.

Contingency planning should start now. Should a charitable trust be set up to take them on? Is there an existing national body which would help? Is there a role here for Pentir Pumlumon which already looks after property assets in the Upland areas?

Sadly, the threat of potential closure may be the only way of engaging the wider community. Nothing provokes community action more than the potential loss of an asset even if the individuals involved have had little interest before.

Looking at the longer term for ownership or management of buildings:

1. The Church may be persuaded to lease or transfer ownership at low or no cost if arrangements for maintenance and community use can be demonstrated.
2. Several redundant buildings and disused land have been transferred from public ownership over the six years under Community Asset Transfer funding schemes funded by Welsh Government and the Big Lottery Fund. These schemes have paid for refurbishment and initial revenue costs. They have been viewed as successful in improving community life in Wales and are likely to continue in some form.

Examples include Llangefni Town Hall in Anglesey and the Ebbw Vale Institute in Blaenau Gwent

3. Preservation of buildings for community use has been very popular and successful for crowdsource fundraising on-line. A community centre in Pontypridd was funded in this way.

4. There is also the possibility of creating a Community Share issue. There are numerous community-owned village shops, pubs, and wind-farms in Wales. A particularly good example is the 4CG in Cardigan which among other things operates the car parks and public toilets, and Galeri which grew from Cwmni Tref Caernarfon, owning and developing shops and other buildings in the town centre, before building a very successful arts centre.

In several cases where churches and chapels have been converted for community purposes, it has been possible to retain use for religious purposes in. A good example of the is the Feelgood Factory run by the Bryncynon Revival Strategy in Rhondda Cynon Taf, a chapel converted into a community and conference centre in which the local congregation hold Sunday services.

## 7. Governance

What should the Governance of Peaceful Places look like in future and what organisation should carry it forward?

It is important whatever is decided as to a host organisation that there is a strong Peaceful Places Steering Committee which is focused on a clear set of guiding principles, and can provide direction to the Development Officer

- **Llandre Heritage** has hosted Peaceful Places up to now, but the Trustees are reluctant to continue to devote their limited resources in future and would prefer to hand over to another organisation. In any case the current programme has stretched the Objects of the charity to or beyond its limits.
- **Cambrian Mountains Initiative** has a wider remit to develop the Cambrian Mountains, agriculturally – lamb, wool and beef - as well as encouraging tourism and economic development. It also focuses mainly on the upland areas.
- **The Dyfi Biosphere and Ecodyfi** operate in the northern part of the area, but have focused on environmental issues. However, UNESCO's guidelines do call for recognition of culture and heritage and Peaceful Places could be a good fit.
- **Pentir Pumlumon's** remit is to improve the economic development of the Upland areas. This is only part of the area of Peaceful Places, but it could provide a good initial base for the Development Worker.

We would suggest in the longer term creating a new entity which could at the right time take on ownership / management of some of the churches. This could be a charity with objects around:

- Educating the public about the spiritual heritage of Ceredigion
- Encouraging economic development based around religious buildings and other historic buildings in Ceredigion
- Managing land and buildings for the benefit of the community of Ceredigion

Charities come in various legal forms, some being better at holding land and raising borrowings, some better at obtaining grants from other bodies, and some specifically designed for Community Shares issues. We recommend a careful consideration of the options available before proceeding with charity formation. This something we have experience in and can help with.

## 8. Resourcing

Peaceful Places is dependent on one person with huge drive who recognises he must hand this on to others. There is no obvious volunteer successor. Is there a potential source of funding which would allow for advertising for and employing a project coordinator?

The Peaceful Places project needs a Development Officer to build on what has been achieved and expand it. Potential funders are looking for specific outcomes and impact based on economic or social benefit rather than funding a post. Thus, funding applications should be about the activities proposed and their benefits, for which such a post is a prerequisite, rather than asking for money to support the post. A part-time position – say, 0.4 FTE should suffice.

A job description is attached. This based on a draft from Peter Midmore.

Potential sources of funding for developing the Pilgrim and Tourist trails are:

- For the salary and expenses of the Development Worker application should be made to Ceredigion's LEADER programme. The next deadline for expressions of interest is 11<sup>th</sup> December, so it would be possible to contemplate a worker being in place for the beginning of the financial year.
- The Sharing Heritage Fund from the Heritage Lottery Fund offers grants of up to £10,000 would be a good source for funding maps and interpretation
- For creating the stories relating to each of the Places and themes, the obvious source are the Arts Council of Wales and its partner bodies, Literature Wales, and the Welsh Book Council. This could be for a specific story-telling project or even the funding of a writer in residence.
- The James Pantyfedwen Foundation is the local charitable Trust with most relevant objects:

*“ ... the advancement, encouragement and promotion of religion, education, the Arts and agriculture and other charitable purposes for the benefit of Welsh persons primarily in Wales”.*

- The Heritage Alliance has a comprehensive Heritage Funding Directory at [www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php](http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/fundingdirectory/main/fundinghome.php).
- There are a number of Charitable Trusts which have an interest in Heritage and the Arts, for example, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

In addition, Aberystwyth University's drama and film departments could be a valuable resource, as well as the relevant departments at University of Wales Trinity St David's at Lampeter. Students could be involved, for instance by making the stories the subject of a dissertation.



## 9. Recommendations

As a project, we suggest that Peaceful Places should focus on:

- a. Refining the tourism offer it is providing
  - i. Break down the 17 churches into themed trails – Lead-mining, Medieval, Upland, Picturesque, etc.
  - ii. Create strong stories and narrative to draw them together
  - iii. Create simple maps which can be used by independent travellers on foot, bicycle, or by car to follow these stories by visiting key places, where they can find out more.
  - iv. Create short half-day or whole day experiences based on these themed stories, which should also incorporate other points of interest along the route.
  - v. All churches should be open for people to visit with strong written or audio presentation of the stories
  - vi. Supplementing this, could be defined points when an individual would be available at each church to explain the history and answer questions.
- b. Working with local private tourism providers
  - vii. Each tour will require stops for refreshments, mid-morning, lunchtime, and mid-afternoon.
  - viii. Some people will want organised tours with a knowledgeable guide. This could be by minibus or in tourists' own cars following a guide with explanations at each site.
  - ix. Works with local accommodation-providers who would see Peaceful Places tours as a useful add-on to their offering.
  - x. It is in the interest of these tourism-providers to contribute to the project in time, expertise or funds.
- c. Working with local communities to
  - xi. Help local people value the asset which the church or chapel represents in their community
  - xii. Work with the local community to develop greater use of the churches for secular as well as religious purposes.
  - xiii. Prepare to take some of these assets into local community ownership

## Appendix – Project Worker Job Description

Peaceful Places - (Part-time, 0.4 FTE)

*Peaceful Places* is a group of 17 Churches and Chapels in North Ceredigion which aim to raise their profile to visitors and locals in the area by keeping the buildings open to the public and relating stories about their place in local heritage and culture. The Management Committee wish to appoint a part-time Development Officer to take forward the recommendations of a recent interim review.

The successful applicant will contribute to the strategic management and improvement of the *Peaceful Places* initiative, in particular by extending the existing network, improving its marketing and establishing links with other compatible development initiatives and related private businesses. We aim to appoint an enthusiastic, highly motivated individual with a proven track record in community development or allied activities. She/he should have excellent advocacy, networking, communication and facilitation skills with ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders, and ideally some experience of identifying and applying for new sources of funding.

To make an informal enquiry about this position, please contact Dr Roger Hagggar at [rogerhagggar@llandre.org.uk](mailto:rogerhagggar@llandre.org.uk).

Further particulars:

*Peaceful Places* was co-funded by CADW and the ERDF to “to raise the profile of churches and chapels in the area to visitors and locals alike by keeping the churches/chapels open to the public. The development of the cluster was designed to encourage visitors to see sacred places not only as a spiritual location but also from a different perspective; as places to spend quality time in a peaceful setting”.

Many of the member churches and chapels have fragile arrangements for keeping open for visitors and further developing their role as community assets. The first main task of the appointee will be to find ways to promote engagement of surrounding communities to sustain and develop the *Peaceful Places* initiative.

Currently the stories of each member church and chapel are separate, and the second main task of the appointee will be to develop linking themes and trails that can provide an overarching narrative. This element of the job will require, in collaboration with the Management Committee, the development of applications for further funding to support additional marketing activities and infrastructure.

The initiative could benefit from better integration with other similar activities in North Ceredigion. The final main task of the appointee will be to explore opportunities to collaboration and identify strategies for action with non-profit bodies and private businesses with compatible aims.

This post will be home-based with sufficient resources being made available for travel and expenses. The appointee will report initially to the chair of the Management Committee and attend meetings of the initiative’s Council of Members.

Person Specification

Essential	Desirable
<p><b>Qualifications</b></p> <p>Education to degree level</p>	<p>Degree or other qualification in a relevant field (community development or similar)</p>
<p><b>Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of five years' experience of working with local communities</li> <li>• Experience of developing new projects and initiatives</li> <li>• Experience of working with and developing volunteers.</li> <li>• Experience of managing budgets and accounting for public funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of commissioning suppliers</li> <li>• Experience of using social media</li> <li>• Experience of building successful partnerships with voluntary and statutory agencies</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of the communities of North Ceredigion</li> <li>• Knowledge of how churches and chapels operate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High standard of organisational and administrative skills</li> <li>• The ability to communicate effectively with partners, stakeholders, and policy-makers</li> <li>• Able to use initiative and work with minimum supervision</li> <li>• Ability to adopt a flexible approach in response to new challenges</li> <li>• The ability to manage time effectively and to deliver detailed reports to strict deadlines</li> <li>• Full valid UK driving licence or equivalent right to drive in the UK</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Welsh Language</b></p> <p>Understanding of and empathy for the importance of the bilingual nature of the heritage and culture of North Ceredigion</p>	<p>Good oral and written communication skills in the Welsh language</p>