

Visit
Pembrokeshire.com

Pembrokeshire Castles and Historic Buildings



Pembrokeshire County Council Tourism Team
Wales, United Kingdom

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Introduction

Because of its strategic position, Pembrokeshire has more than its fair share of castles and strongholds.

Whether they mounted their attacks from the north or the south, when Norman barons invaded Wales after the Norman Conquest of 1066, they almost invariably ended up in West Wales and consolidated their position by building fortresses.

Initially, these were simple “motte and bailey” constructions, typically built on a mound with ditches and/or wooden barricades for protection. As these were obviously susceptible to fire, they were gradually replaced by stone structures, the typical castle that we think of today.

From the late 11th century, many of the castles and fortifications were built as part of the so called “Landsker Line”, which separated the Welsh population from the Norman and Flemish settlers in the south of the county.

Later on, when England’s rule of Wales had been consolidated by alliances with the most powerful Welsh landowners, attention turned outwards, and many castles were improved and re-fortified to ward off possible attacks from overseas. In this, what we know today as Pembrokeshire, with its extensive coastline, played a key role. In the Civil War of the 1640s, Pembrokeshire’s castles were called into service on both sides, and many changed hands several times.

In visiting the castles and ancient sites of Pembrokeshire, you experience many of the key periods of Welsh history, including

the Celtic and Romano-British, upon whose original fortresses many of today's castles were built.

This guide is not an extensive history lesson; many of the sites mentioned will be able to provide their own, more comprehensive publications. It aims instead to provide a taste of Pembrokeshire's unique heritage, and practical information to help you get the best from your visit.

SECTION 1 – CASTLES & FORTS

Carew Castle & Tidal Mill



History

Built on the site of an Iron Age Romano-British fortress with 5 ditches, Carew Castle was originally a Norman stronghold, built by Gerald de Windsor in around 1100, probably of largely wooden construction. He was given the site of Carew Castle in a dowry when he married Nest, reputedly the most beautiful woman in Wales.

Owain ap Cadwgan, son of a Welsh Prince, was so overwhelmed by Nest's beauty that one night in 1109 he is said to have scaled the walls of Carew Castle and captured her. Six

years later, Gerald killed Owain in battle and retrieved his wife, along with two new children. When Gerald died the following year, Nest then married Stephen, Castellan of Cardigan, and had yet more children by him.

Gerald's descendent Nicholas de Carew built much of the stone construction we see today. In 1212, for reasons unknown, King John seized it for a short time when passing through Pembrokeshire on his Irish expedition.

The castle was mortgaged by Sir Edmund Carew to Rhys ap Thomas in 1480, a powerful Welsh lord who was loyal to, and much decorated by, the English king. He improved and extended the castle, and in 1507 staged at Carew the last great tournament to be held in Wales, with over 600 knights feasting and jousting for five days.

Rhys' grandson was executed for treason, and the castle was forfeit to the Crown. In 1558, Queen Mary granted the governorship of the castle to Sir John Perrot, who built the great northern range, transforming the castle into a luxurious Elizabethan mansion. Sir John was himself convicted of treason in 1592 and died (of natural causes) in the Tower.

Sir John's son, Sir Thomas Perrot (d.1594) and Lady Dorothy (1564-1619), younger daughter of the deceased Sir Walter Devereux, 1st Earl of Essex, were secretly married in July 1583 at Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. For eloping with Dorothy, Sir Thomas was imprisoned in the Fleet prison; Dorothy's guardian William Cecil, Lord Burghley, arranged his release.

For all its colourful history, Carew Castle has seen little military action, the only real activity being during the Civil War, when it was garrisoned by the Royalists; captured by the Parliamentarians; subsequently surrendered; and finally re-captured during a fierce assault in 1645, during which many buildings within the courtyard were destroyed. The castle was finally abandoned in about 1686.

Today

Carew is one of Pembrokeshire's finest castles, with a wealth of detail and atmosphere. It is now owned and run by the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

Take a self-guided tour leaflet and walk your way through time as the castle develops from medieval fortress to Elizabethan manor house. The castle is said to be haunted, including by a ghostly ape!

Make sure you also see the fine early Christian Celtic Cross outside the main entrance, and the Tidal Mill and its Museum. A mill of some kind existed here as early as 1542, although the present building probably dates from the early 19th century. The mill pond is also a lovely spot for a picnic.

Take a walk to Carew Cheriton parish church, where Sir Nicholas de Carew is buried.

Facilities

Gift shop, toilets, daily guided tours, ample parking, pub & cafe nearby, regular re-enactments, entertainment and concerts.

Contact Details & Further Information

Carew, Nr Tenby SA70 8SL

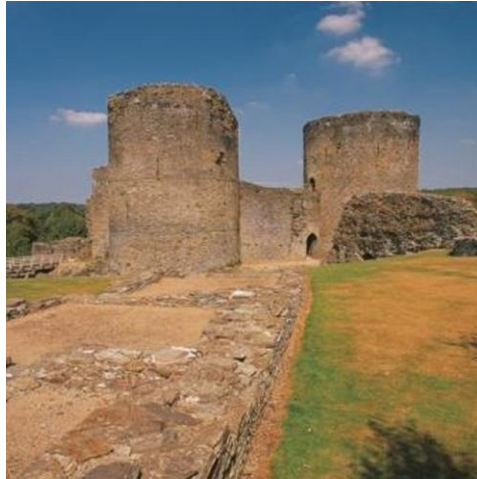
Tel: 01646 651782

Fax: 01646 651782

Email: enquiries@carewcastle.com

Website: www.carewcastle.com

Cilgerran Castle



A small castle that is approximately triangular in shape, built in a commanding position, perched on a craggy promontory high above the River Teifi.

History

Cilgerran Castle played host to many of the key figures in Pembrokeshire's military history. Founded by Roger de Montgomery as a motte and bailey castle, it was granted by Henry I to Gerald de Windsor. It was later taken by the Welsh lord Rhys ap Gruffydd, and then changed hands several times between successive Norman Earls of Pembroke and the Welsh.

The current stone structure was probably built by William Marshall, son of the Earl of Pembroke in about 1223. The castle changed hands first to the de Cantelupes and then to the

Hastings family during the 14th century. It fell into disrepair in the middle of the 13th century, and remained so until it was fortified against possible French attack in 1377, on the orders of Edward III.

After 1389, when the Hastings family died out, the castle passed to the Crown. In 1405, it was briefly held by Owain Glyndŵr, and was then held by various nobles loyal to the crown. In the Tudor period, the Vaughan family were granted the castle by Henry VII, and they continued to occupy it until the early 17th century, when it once again fell into disrepair.

Cilgerran became a popular spot with Georgian tourists, including the artist Turner, who sketched and painted the ruined castle several times.

The castle is now managed by Cadw. The castle's position is stunning; with cliffs on 2 sides, it is a natural site for a fortification. Its imposing twin round towers, and the sense of the great figures who marched through it, make Cilgerran well worth a visit.

Facilities

Toilets, guidebook, gift shop

Contact Details & Further Information

Cilgerran SA43 2SS

Tel: 01239 621339

Email: cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk or
www.castlewales.com/cliger

Haverfordwest Castle



The shell of the castle dominates the riverside town, which huddles around its base. Although it's impressive from the riverside, very little remains other than the outside wall. It's probably more interesting as an example of the importance of strategic fortification in withstanding repeated assaults! Although little remains today, this is the result of neglect in the 15th and 16th centuries, rather than any successful attacks.

History

The castle construction probably began in around 1120, although there are no masonry remains before the late 12th century. It is first mentioned by Giraldus Cambrensis ("Gerald of Wales") as one of the places he visited in 1188 with Archbishop Baldwin. At that time, the castle was only an earth and timber construction.

The majority of the defences were completed by a succession of Earls of Pembroke over the course of the 13th century. It was attacked by Llywelyn the Great in 1220 but held firm, although the town was razed to the ground. It was acquired by Queen Eleanor (wife of Edward I) in 1289, who immediately began building on a large scale.

In the 14th century the castle was held by a series of owners, including Edward, the Black Prince, from 1359-67. In the hands of the crown from 1381-85, the castle was repaired. It was strong enough to repulse an attack in 1405 during Owain Glyndŵr's war of independence, although once again the town was largely destroyed.

By the 16th century, however, the castle was derelict, but was hastily re-fortified during the Civil War. It was occupied successively by Royalists and Parliamentarians, changing hands four times. In 1648, Cromwell ordered the remains to be destroyed; copies of his letters are on display in the county records office and town museum. Cromwell's orders were not carried out fully due to a lack of gunpowder!

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the castle was used as a prison, and more recently as a police station. It now houses the county records office and the town museum.

Facilities

There is a small car park inside the outer ward, access via Barn Street and Church Street. Shops, cafes and restaurants are available in the town below the castle.

Further Information

Haverfordwest SA61 2EF

Website: www.castlewales.com/haver

Llawhaden Castle



Llawhaden is one of the Landsker Line fortifications, although it differs slightly in that it was a fortified bishop's palace. Although it was heavily fortified against the Welsh to the north, and impressively located on high ground overlooking the vale of the Eastern Cleddau river, it was largely free from attack, presumably because of reluctance to attack a symbol of the church.

The castle took shape from an earth and timber, motte and bailey in the early 12th century, awarded to the Norman bishop Bernard. The defences were refortified with stone, in response to a siege led by Lord Rhys in the late 12th century.

In the 13th century, Bishop Thomas Bek (1280-93) established and expanded the village, added the hall block, with its kitchen

and stone-vaulted undercrofts, and the bishop's elaborately adorned chambers above.

During the next century, the bishops added the twin-towered gatehouse, the most impressive structure at Llawhaden Castle. At the same time, a fine range of domestic buildings was added on the southern side of the castle including apartments and a chapel.

Llawhaden was used as a bishop's residence until the mid 16th century, when it was allowed to fall into disrepair after the Reformation. Although it is in ruins today, there is still much to see. It is interesting to compare the layout of what was essentially a fortified grand hotel, with many guest apartments and private rooms for the bishop, with the more spartan arrangements in many of Pembrokeshire's other castles. It is now managed by Cadw, the Welsh historic buildings agency.

Facilities

There is a small free parking area near the castle.

Contact Details & Further Information

Llawhaden SA67 8HL

Tel: 01443 336000

Fax: 01443 336001

Email: cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk or www.castlewales.com/lahw

Manorbier Castle



The castle's basic plan is almost rectangular, and consists of a sturdy battlemented curtain wall with niches and powerful corner towers, impressive gatehouse, a complex hall-range, and a huge barn.

The Norman knight Odo de Barri was granted the lands of Manorbier, Penally and Begelly in gratitude for his military help in conquering Pembrokeshire after 1003. He built an earth and timber fortification, which was gradually replaced with a stone structure; the great hall and old tower are probably the oldest surviving stonework in Pembrokeshire.

De Barri's fourth son was Gerald de Barri, known commonly as Gerald Cambrensis ("Gerald of Wales"), the great twelfth

century scholar, who was born at the castle and renowned today for his chronicles and descriptions of life at that time.

The de Barris owned the castle until 1359, after which time ownership changed hands on several occasions, becoming property of the monarchy in the late 15th century.

By 1630 Queen Elizabeth sold the castle, described at the time as "ruinous ... quite decayed", to the Bowen family of Trefloyne. The Philipps of Picton Castle who bought the castle in 1670 leased it to J.R. Cobb in the late 19th century. It was Cobb who undertook much of the restoration work.

Manorbier Castle has been put on alert against attack many times; against Gruffydd ap Rhys in 1153; against Owain Glyndŵr in 1405; and against the Royalists in the Civil War. But it only ever suffered two minor assaults: the first in 1327, when Richard de Barri stormed Manorbier to claim what was rightfully his, and then in 1645 during the Civil War, when the castle was seized and slighted by Cromwell's Roundheads. Perhaps that is why the inner ward is still so well preserved today.

Today

Manorbier's coastal setting is stunning, and much of its masonry is still well preserved, particularly the chapel, round tower and gatehouse. It is well worth a visit for the beautiful gardens within the inner wall. Although there are Elizabethan and later additions and repairs, Manorbier has a real medieval atmosphere, and provides a fine example of Norman military architecture.

Facilities

Gift shop & toilets, self catering cottage inside the castle. Dogs are admitted only on a lead. Picnics welcome. Parking is limited; park next to the beach and walk back up the hill.

Contact Details & Further Information

Manorbier Castle, Manorbier SA70 7SY

Tel: 01834 871394 (seasonal)

Website: www.manorbiercastle.co.uk

Narberth Castle



The castle's exact origin lies back in the mists of time but it is believed the site may once have been occupied by a palace spoken of in the Mabinogion, a collection of ancient Welsh legends and myths. One of the central characters is Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed, who was said to have held his court in the castle. His adventures make up one of the four branches of the book.

The first recorded Norman castle is mentioned in 1116, and the current structure was built by Andrew Perrot in the 13th century. Thomas Carrewe was rewarded with the lordship in 1404, after defending the Castle during the Glyndŵr rebellion.

It was forfeited by Sir Edmund Mortimer, when he made common cause with Glyndŵr after his capture in June of that

year. By courtesy of Henry V, the lordship of Narberth reverted to Edmund Mortimer but he died childless in 1425. Narberth then reverted to royal possession.

Its most notable castellan was Sir Rhys ap Thomas, who was given the castle by Henry VIII but, by the 17th century, the castle had fallen into ruin. The ruins were renovated and opened to the public in 2006.

Facilities

Interesting craft shops, cafes and toilets in the nearby town.

Further Information

Website: www.castlewales.com/narberth

Nevern Castle

Very little remains of this castle, but it provides an interesting view on the siting and layout of early medieval fortifications.

Nevern Castle was built at the beginning of the 12th century by Robert Fitzmartin, one of the first Norman lords to rule in the area. The castle was later taken by Rhys ap Gruffydd, who himself was imprisoned there by two of his own sons. It was taken by the Welsh the following year, and then fell into disuse.

Today, this is a motte (tower) and bailey (courtyard) castle which well demonstrates the importance of position; it has excellent natural defences on the east, with ditches and banks forming the remainder of the barricades. The motte would have been small and to the north west, whilst remains of a stone tower, probably added by Rhys ap Gruffydd, have been found in the east corner.

Whilst in Nevern, don't forget to see the impressive early Christian stone cross in Nevern Churchyard.

Further Information

Follow the Cardigan road (A487) from Fishguard. Once beyond Newport, follow the signs to Nevern.

Website: www.castlewales.com/nevern

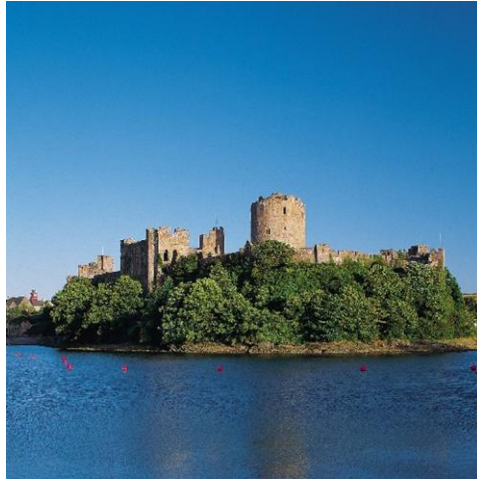
Newport Castle

Founded by the grandson of Robert Fitzmartin, who abandoned Nevern Castle, the original wooden fortification was attacked and destroyed twice, and it is probable that it was rebuilt in stone in the mid 13th century. Through the years, much of the original stone building has been destroyed and rebuilt, although one gatehouse tower remains.

Today

Newport Castle is a private residence, so it can only be viewed from a distance.

Pembroke Castle



Pembroke grew up around its castle as an important strategic medieval, Norman and subsequently Elizabethan town. Like Tenby, its fortification encompassed the whole town, and the remains of its old walls can be seen today, particularly at The Commons and by the Mill Pond. In the 18th century, Pembroke was an important sea port, and the quays can still be seen under the castle walls by the Mill Bridge.

Roger Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, was one of the most powerful Norman “Marcher lords”, who ruled almost autonomously along the Anglo-Welsh border. At the end of the 11th century, he marched across Wales and established his stronghold at Pembroke, building a timber structure on the site of the present castle in 1093.

In the late 12th century, William Marshall became Earl of Pembroke and from 1189 built in stone the Great Tower or Keep, the Norman Hall and inner defences. His third son, Gilbert, was responsible for enlarging and strengthening the castle between 1234 and 1241.

The castle then passed into the hands of William de Valence, a half-brother of Henry III through his marriage to Joan, granddaughter of William Marshall. The de Valence family held the castle for 70 years, strengthening it by building the walls and towers around the outer ward. They also fortified the town, creating a ring of walls with three main gates and a postern.

On the death of Aymer, William de Valence's son, the castle passed through marriage into the hands of the Hastings family. In 1389, the castle reverted to Richard II. It was granted out in a series of short tenancies and began to fall into disrepair. In 1400, the castle was attacked by Owain Glyndŵr, but escaped a siege because the Constable at the time, Francis a Court, bought off Glyndŵr with the Welsh equivalent of danegeld.

Eventually, in 1445, Pembroke Castle passed into the hands of a new Earl, Henry VI's half-brother Jasper Tewdwr. He was the first to make it more of a home than a fortress. His nephew – the future King Henry VII – was born in the castle in 1457.

The castle was prominent in the Civil War, declaring for Parliament but in 1648 changed sides. Cromwell himself directed the siege which led to its final surrender.

Pembroke Castle remained an ivy-covered ruin until 1880 when a Mr J.R. Cobb of Brecon spent three years restoring what he could. Nothing further was done until Major-General Sir Ivor Phillips of Cosheston Hall acquired the ruins in 1928 and started an extensive restoration of the castle, restoring the walls and towers as nearly as possible to their original appearance.

Today

The castle today is owned and maintained by the Pembroke Castle Trust. It has several particularly fine features, including:

An impressive 5-storey central keep with intact domed roof; a complex gatehouse that dominates Pembroke's Main Street; Historical displays in the gatehouse rooms; Wogan's Cavern, a large subterranean cave under the castle, accessed by a tight spiral staircase; a maze of tunnels, stairs, towers and battlements; and a circular path around inside and outside of the mill pond.

Pembroke is a lively, visitor-orientated town, with two 13th century churches at either end of Main Street.

Facilities

Shop, a brass rubbing centre and café. Parking opposite the Tourist Information Centre on The Commons. There is a train station in Pembroke at the far end of Main Street.

Contact Details & Further Information

Pembroke Castle, Pembroke SA71 4LA

Tel: 01646 681510 / 684585

Fax: 01646 622260 Email: info@pembrokecastle.co.uk

Web: www.pembrokecastle.co.uk

Picton Castle & Woodland Gardens



Until the late 11th century, South-west Wales formed part of the Welsh kingdom of Deheubarth, which was ruled by Rhys ap Tewdwr. Around Easter 1093, Rhys was killed in battle near Brecon by the Normans, who then undertook a general invasion of South Wales.

In 1108 Henry I attempted to bolster his position by introducing Flemish settlers in the area around Picton. It is likely that the first Picton castle was built around this time. The current Picton Castle was built between 1295 and 1308 by Sir John Wogan, baron of Wiston, and passed into the hands of the Philipps family in the late 15th century, who have lived there ever since.

The Wogan line of Picton ended in an heiress who married Owain Dwnn, and the Dwnns in turn ended in an heiress, Jane,

who in the late 15th century married Sir Thomas Philipps of Cilsant, esquire to the body of Henry VII. The Philipps have held Picton Castle since then.

The castle was a Parliamentary garrison during the Civil War but captured and looted by the Royalists. In 1697 Sir John Philipps made extensive alterations, as did Sir John Philipps between 1749 and 1752, when he remodelled the interior of the castle.

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries the Philipps of Picton Castle were the most powerful family in Pembrokeshire and their country seat reflects their status.

Features

40 acres of woodland gardens including a maze; walled courtyard; collections of rhododendrons and azaleas, mature trees, unusual shrubs and wild flowers; a fern walk and fernery; restored dew pond; herb collection, labelled with medicinal remedies; children's nature trail.

Facilities

Toilets, shop, art gallery, restaurant

Contact Details & Further Information

Picton Castle & Woodland Gardens, Rhos, near Haverfordwest
SA62 4AS

Tel: 01437 751326

Email: info@pictoncastle.co.uk

Website: www.pictoncastle.co.uk

Roch Castle



A simple but impressive stone tower in a D-shape was built here in the 13th century, with a further top storey being added later. Each level of the tower contained a main room with fireplace, and a smaller room. The tower was surrounded by a bailey and defended by a double ditch and bank.

Roch Castle was renovated and extended in the early 20th century as a private residence. It is currently undergoing conversion as an exclusive accommodation retreat.

Contact Details & Further Information

The Retreats Group

Email: enquiry@retreatsgroup.com

Website: www.RetreatsGroup.com

Tenby Castle



Tenby's coastal position, mild climate and ample shelter meant that it was settled from earliest times. But, as with so much of Pembrokeshire, the infrastructure really began to take shape after the Norman invasion.

In the 12th century, a castle was built overlooking Tenby on Castle Hill, which essentially was allowed to decay because Tenby has such good town walls, being completely enclosed by walls on three sides and by sea for the remainder. The castle was captured by the Welsh in 1153, and subsequently in 1187 and again in 1260, when Llewellyn the Last sacked the town during his campaigns.

Most of the town walls were built in the 13th century. In 1328, the D-shaped barbican was added to defend the gate. D-shaped

towers north and south of the gate were also added at this time. In 1457, the moat, which ran outside the walls where St. Florence Parade is now, was widened to 30ft, the walls were heightened and a second, higher series of arrow slits was built, reached by a new parapet walk.

In 1648, a unit of Royalists held the castle for 10 weeks, but were starved into surrendering.

Today

The remains of the castle's gateway cross the path as you climb up Castle Hill from the harbour. Only one of the castle's small towers remain, perched on top of Castle Hill, which is almost completely surrounded by the sea. Tenby Museum & Art Gallery is built on to a medieval domestic building, which was probably the castle's hall.

The old town walls are remarkably complete, containing a maze of narrow streets that make up the picturesque old town of Tenby. The town walls on the north side are partially complete, although the north gate has gone. The walls on the east side, however, run uninterrupted all the way to The Esplanade. Be sure to visit the South Gate, the Five Arches and the inner main gate, in which the slots for the massive iron portcullis can still be seen.

Further Information

Website: www.castlewales.com/tenby

Wiston Castle

Wiston is another of the castles which formed the “Landsker Line”, which aimed to separate the indigenous Welsh to the north from the Norman French and Flemish settlers to the south.

The original motte and bailey on this site was built by the rather wonderfully-named Wizo the Fleming. The Flemings were given some border territories, to provide a buffer between the Normans and the Welsh; consequently the family were unpopular with both sides!

Wizo’s sons built a stone keep and modified his early castle, but repeated attacks by the Welsh eventually raised the castle almost to the ground.

Although very little remains, Wiston today is worth a visit to see the remains of the shell keep built by Wizo’s sons to surround the motte, the only one of its kind in Pembrokeshire.

Also, visit Wiston’s parish church, which still has its medieval tower with battlements; in those times, holy buildings often had to double as fortresses.

Further Information

From Haverfordwest, take the A40 towards Carmarthen, and then follow the signs to Wiston.

Website: www.castlewales.com/wiston

SECTION 2 - MUSEUMS

Carew Cheriton Control Tower



A unique World War II RAF control tower (Watch Office) a 1940's Avro Anson aircraft and nearby air raid shelter; all refurbished by the community as a living memorial to those who served at Carew. Numerous squadrons were based at Carew guarding the Western Approaches. The airfield was also used in World War I by airships patrolling the Atlantic shipping lanes.

Contact Details & Further Information

Tel: 01646 651754

Email: enquiries@carewcheritoncontroltower.co.uk

Website: www.carewcheritoncontroltower.co.uk

Castell Henllys



Castell Henllys is the site of an Iron Age fortification, a fenced village sited on a strategic location high on a hill. Ongoing excavations have enabled archaeologists to develop a good picture of this settlement, with a small village within the barricades and farm land serving the villagers without.

Today

The Iron Age Village has been sensitively and accurately recreated, using authentic materials and techniques. Access is through a woodland walkway, with reconstructions of a herb garden, sacred site and working farm en route. There are also excellent views of the ongoing excavations.

Once inside the village, there are several reconstructed roundhouses, with a real atmosphere of Celtic life just before the time of the Roman occupation. Each roundhouse has different details, such as sleeping quarters, cooking fires, a bakery and forge, and there are often demonstrations of original skills such as wattling and daubing, weaving and “living history”.

Castell Henllys staff go out of their way to explain the site and bring it to life, and it is particularly fascinating to children.

Contact Details & Further Information

Meline, near Newport, Pembrokeshire SA41 3UT

Tel: 01239 891319

Fax: 01239 891319

Email: rhonweno@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

Website: www.castellhenllys.com

Flying Boat Centre



Unique to the UK, that's Pembroke Dock's Flying Boat Centre. Learn about RAF Pembroke Dock, the world's largest flying boat station, the famous Sunderland and the battle of the Atlantic. Location: Fort Road, near South Pembrokeshire Hospital via Gate 4, Port of Pembroke.

Contact Details & Further Information

The Pembroke Dock Sunderland Trust, Sunderland House,
Admiralty Way, The Royal Dockyard, Pembroke Dock SA72 6TD
Tel: 01646 623425

Email: enquiries@sunderlandtrust.org.uk

Website: www.sunderlandtrust.org.uk

Gun Tower Museum



Pembroke Dock's gun tower museum celebrates the town's unique link to the three armed services; it was Wales' only Royal dockyard launched 250 ships and five Royal yachts. The museum is situated in an 1851 Cambridge gun tower on the town's waterfront.

Disabled access to ground floor only.

Contact Details & Further Information

Front Street, Pembroke Dock SA72 6JZ

Tel: 01646 622246

Email: info@guntowermuseum.org.uk

Website: www.guntowermuseum.org.uk

Haverfordwest Museum



Located in the old prison governor's house, the museum has a fascinating variety of artefacts, prints and painting which illustrate the history of Haverfordwest over the past 900 years.

Recent displays on the Augustinian Priory; Music and Music Makers of Haverfordwest; the Prendergast Paper Mill and A Glimpse of Haroldston House.

Contact Details & Further Information

Tel: 01437 763087

Email: simon615@btinternet.com

Website: www.haverfordwest-town-museum.org.uk

Milford Haven Heritage & Maritime Museum

The museum is housed in the old customhouse in the dock area, one of the oldest buildings in the town. The museum illustrates the history of the major industries of the town.

Groups and schools welcome.

Contact Details & Further Information

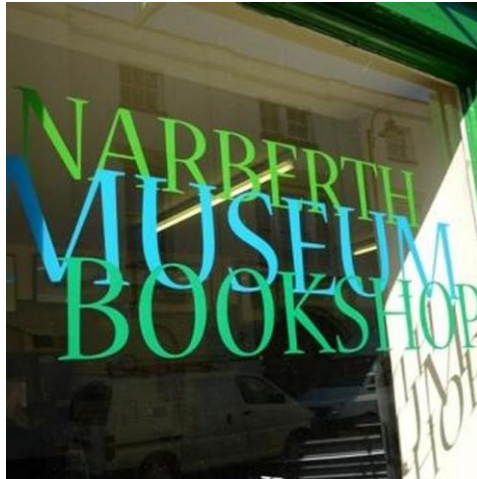
The Old Custom House, The Docks, Milford Haven SA73 3AF

Tel: 01646 694496

Website:

www.milfordhavetowncouncil.org.uk/Milford%20Musuem/index.htm

Narberth Museum



The Museum collection reflects a broad view of the social history of Narberth. The Narberth Museum Bookshop contains local history books and pamphlets, many of which are now out of print; a large collection of photographs of local places, people and events, such as carnivals and markets, from the early 20th century onwards.

The collection of artefacts includes displays from old local shops and businesses, a range of items connected to brewing and bottling from James Williams, as well as a substantial collection of costumes, mainly from the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and the early 20th century, together with a number of military uniforms and related paraphernalia.

Special items and collections donated to the Museum include a geared facile high bicycle (penny-farthing), one of only six such machines in the world, and a collection of more than 100 fans from all over the world.

Contact Details & Further Information

11 Market Street, Narberth SA67 7UW

Tel: 01834 861719

Website:

www.pembrokeshirevirtualmuseum.co.uk/main_menu/places_to_visit/museums/narberth/index.html

Scolton Manor Museum & Country Park



Victorian manor house, museum and award winning visitor centre set in 60 acres of country park and woodland. Period rooms, railway displays, farming exhibition, World War II home front exhibition. Picnic and play areas, shop and tearoom. Special events throughout the season, guided tours available. A great day out for all the family - whatever the weather. Dogs welcome on a lead in the country park only.

Contact Details & Further Information

Bethlehem, Haverfordwest SA62 5QL

Tel: 01437 731328

Email: scoltonenq@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Website: www.pembrokeshirevirtualmuseum.co.uk

Tenby Museum & Art Gallery



Tenby Museum and Art Gallery is constantly fascinating and is one of the finest independent museums in the country.

There are two art galleries, one containing the works by artists such as Gwen and Augustus John, John Piper and David Jones. Other galleries include the Story of Tenby, a recreated Victorian shop, geology and archaeology, RNLI, piracy and many other displays.

Facilities

Numerous activities for children. Refreshments. Audio tour available.

Contact Details & Further Information

Castle Hill, Tenby SA70 7BP

Tel: 01834 842809

Fax: 01834 842809

Email: info@tenbymuseum.org.uk

Website: www.tenbymuseum.org.uk

SECTION 3 – ANCIENT SITES AND STANDING STONES

The most puzzling prehistoric monuments in Pembrokeshire are the “menhir”, or standing stones. The great Welsh historian Geraldus Cambrensis (“Gerald of Wales”) believed that they were erected to mark the victories of King Harold over the Welsh in 1063. There are dozens of standing stones around the county, but the area in and around the Preseli Hills have the most interesting and complete examples.

Carreg Samson

A fine example of a cromlech, an exposed Neolithic burial chamber. Legend has it that St. Samson placed the capstone in position using only his little finger

Further Information

West of Abercastle – SA62 5AN

Follow the St. Davids Road (A487) from Fishguard. Follow the signs to Abercastle. Park in Abercastle, then follow the coast path to Carreg Sampson (OS 848335).

Gors Fawr standing stones



There is only one free standing, egg-shaped ring, comprising of 16 stones, existing in North Pembrokeshire today. Gors Fawr can be found on moorland north of Mynachlog-Ddu. The outer stone on the eastern side is shaped like a seat, and has a magnetic force that will make your compass swing 3-0 degrees out of true.

Further Information

Heading from Narberth on the A478 to Cardigan. At Glandy Cross, bear left and head for Mynachlog-Ddu, after 1.3 miles turn left for Allt-y-Gog. Less than 1 mile on, turn left near a phone box and then the stones can be found ½ mile on the left (SN 134294).

Parcymeirw standing stones

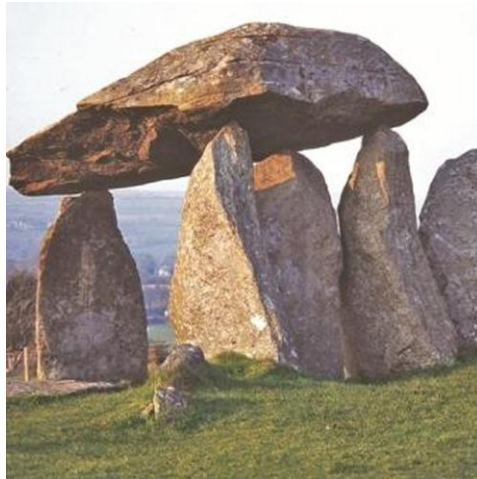
Parcymeirw, or “field of the dead”, is an alignment of eight stones near Llanychaer, and one of only eight in Wales. The stones range from 5 to 12 feet, and span some 40 metres in distance. Their purpose remains a mystery, but there are many theories as to why they are there, ranging from a lunar observatory to commemoration stones to lives lost in battle.

Local legend has it that a lady dressed in white, “Ladi wen”, haunts the stones and threatens to kill anyone who ventures near the stone. So not a trip for a dark night!

Further Information

From Fishguard, take the B4313 to Llanychaer. In the village, turn left by the post office up a very steep hill. The road splits either straight on or right; bear right and the stones can be found along this road, incorporated in the grass bank at the edge of the road (OS 998359).

Pentre Ifan



Pentre Ifan is a magnificent Neolithic burial chamber, dating from around 3000 BC. The chambers, or cromlechs, were made by placing a huge capstone as a roof on top of upright stone columns, and then covering the whole stones with earth to form a huge mound.

Set in the heart of Bluestone Country, where the 'Spotted Dolerite' came from which made the inner sanctum of Stonehenge. A fine example of a cromlech, with its 15-ton capstone intact. Dramatic against sunrise or sunset!

Further Information

Preseli Hills, near Newport, Pembrokeshire SA41 3TZ (OS 099370)

Follow the A487 from Newport and follow the signs for Pentre Ifan, which overlooks Newport itself.

SECTION 4 – HISTORIC CATHEDRALS & CHURCHES

Caldey Island



Caldey Abbey is the home of Cistercian Monks who farm this tiny island off the coast of Tenby and make the famous Caldey Island perfume and chocolate. Regular boat trips leave from Tenby harbour. There is also a medieval priory, lighthouse, post office/museum, gift shop and tea garden - as well as a glorious sandy beach, pleasant walks and spectacular views.

Further Information

Off Tenby SA70 7UH

Tel: 01834 844453

Email: inquiries@caldey-island.co.uk

Website: www.caldey-island.co.uk

Haverfordwest Priory



13th century Augustinian priory with 15th century additions. Extensive excavations of the priory revealed that it had gardens in the cloister and in the area between the buildings and the river. The latter, added in the mid 15th century, is significant as a rare example of the kind of garden often shown in medieval manuscripts, laid out in a grid of narrow raised beds with narrow paths between. The beds have been replanted with simple plants appropriate to the period.

Further Information

From A40 follow signs to town centre. After river bridge, first left is Quay Street, Priory is 1/2 mile down on the left. No parking at site.

Website: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

Lamphey Bishop's Palace



This was in essence a very grand medieval holiday home! It was one of the seven palaces of the Bishop of St. Davids, with herds of deer, fish ponds, dovecotes and extensive gardens.

The chronicler Geraldus Cambrensis ("Gerald of Wales") implied that the last of the Welsh, pre-Norman bishops had a seat at Lamphey, but subsequent Norman bishops embellished and extended the site considerably with many elegant features, adding in turn the Old Hall, West Hall and Great Hall.

At the time of the Reformation, Lamphey Palace passed into secular hands, and was acquired by the Earl of Essex and his descendents, but fell into ruin fairly quickly.

Today

The site is now managed by Cadw, the Welsh historic buildings agency.

Features

Partially complete outer wall, central area pleasantly grassed, central bell tower, numerous halls, chapels and other buildings.

It is said to be haunted by numerous spectres, including singing nuns and a headless Earl of Essex!

Facilities

Adjacent parking, visitor centre, toilets, regular guided talks.

Contact Details & Further Information

Lamphey Bishops Palace, Lamphey, near Pembroke SA71 5PE

Tel: 01443 336000, Fax: 01443 336001

Email: cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk

St. Davids Bishop's Palace



The remains of the Bishop's Palace are located alongside St. Davids Cathedral in the tranquil valley of the river Alun. These were the finest collection of buildings in Wales during the medieval period.

St David, patron saint of Wales, established his monastery on the banks of the River Alun in the 6th century, and it was on this site that the cathedral was built. It was extremely vulnerable to attack, and was pillaged at least 10 times by Norse raiders over the next 400 years.

The Normans arrived at the end of the 11th century, took over the cathedral and appointed a Norman bishop. The Normans realised the need to fortify the area, but an early motte and bailey proved ineffectual, so the solution arrived at was to

enclose all the cathedral buildings, including the Bishop's Palace, within walls.

Thomas Bek (1280-93) began a program of new building. He was responsible for the chapel in the southwest corner, the hall and the private apartments, and the gate.

The walls were repaired and extended by Bishop Gower between 1327 and 1347. Bishop Gower, recognised as the greatest of medieval builders, also much improved and extended the Bishop's Palace into a magnificent structure, and embellished the cathedral. In addition to major works in the cathedral itself, he also built the palace's Great Hall, complete with wheel window in the east gable, the distinctive arcaded parapet and the majestic porch.

Later bishops made further additions and alterations to the palace, but after the Reformation they fell into disrepair and ruin.

Today

Much of the walls remain today, although only one of the four original gates is still in existence, the Tower Gate, which houses a small historical exhibition. St. Davids Cathedral is a magnificent and imposing building and, although the Bishop's Palace was destroyed during the 16th century, much of the structure remains, albeit roofless. The main features are the arcaded parapets, great hall and wheel window.

Facilities

Pay-and-display parking nearby, toilets, guidebook, gift shop, displays in the undercrofts detailing the power and wealth of the medieval bishops.

Contact Details & Further Information

St. Davids Bishops Palace, St. Davids SA62 6PX

Tel: 01437 720517

Email: cadw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Websites: www.cadw.wales.gov.uk or
www.castlewales.com/sdbishop

St. Davids Cathedral



St. Davids Cathedral is a remarkable place. Built in 1181 on the site reputed to be that of St. David's 6th century monastic settlement, with beautiful oak and painted ceilings, its extraordinary sloping floors and wonderful restored cloisters contribute to its special character. The new refectory enhances any visit, giving rest, refreshment and time to reflect on the unique site.

Contact Details & Further Information

St. Davids SA62 6RH

Tel: 01437 720202

Fax: 01437 721885

Email: info@stdavidscathedral.org.uk

Website: www.stdavidscathedral.org.uk

St. Dogmaels Abbey



Founded in around 1115 by Tironian monks. The extensive remains date from between the 12th and 16th centuries. Exhibits about the abbey can also be seen in the Coach House Heritage Centre next door.

Contact Details & Further Information

St. Dogmaels, near Cardigan SA43 3EB

Tel: 01239 615389

Email: coach.house@welshabbey.org.uk

Website: www.welshabbey.org.uk

St. Govan's Chapel



Of all the religious buildings in Pembrokeshire, or indeed anywhere in the United Kingdom, the most unusually-sited must be that of St. Govan. You will find the chapel huddled against the cliffs mid-way between Huntsman's Leap and St. Govan's Head (there is car parking available at the Head), about a mile-and-a-half from the village of Bosherton. St. Govan's Head marks the most southerly point of Pembrokeshire.

You do not have to follow the example of the Huntsman - he is said to have died of fright after leaping the ravine named after him at full gallop and then looking back to see what he had done - but take care when descending the narrow stone steps. Sometimes, too, the roads and paths will be closed by use of

the military range at short notice but these times are usually announced in the local press.

It is well-worth making the descent. There is a legend about the number of steps: that they cannot be counted by a mortal being. Most of us will realise that this story probably has its origins in the irregularity of the steps' carving, and be happy with the approximation of 'about 74 or 75'. It is much more rewarding to enjoy the spectacular views from this part of the Coastal Path than to bother with counting.

The Chapel itself is tiny - less than eighteen feet by thirteen. It is also simply constructed - nothing much more than a nave, an altar at the eastern end of the building, a door and window and a few recesses. Most will not take too much notice of this. It is remarkable enough that any structure at all should have been erected on this windswept beach. Much of the building dates from the thirteenth century, but it is said to be built on the site of a sixth-century hermitage built by St. Govan himself. Located near to the chapel is a holy well.

So who was this man? Like the stories of many of the Celtic Saints, his origins are bound up with legend. But it is generally thought that St. Govan (or Gobhan, Gobban or Coven) was Irish, the son of a metal-worker of the Hy Cinnsealach Clan in what is now County Wexford. As a boy he was attracted by the teachings of St. Ailbe, originally from Solva, North Pembrokeshire, and joined the monastery at Dairanis. Apparently he was originally a cook for the community. He must have risen in importance, for he was one of three

brothers sent to Rome on a mission to see the Latin form of the mass.

After a short time as a pupil of St. Senan in the monastery of Inniscathy he was elected Abbot of Dairanis to succeed St. Ailbe. He was already an old man when he came to Pembrokeshire, and we do not know why he came. Perhaps he was trying to find the homeland of St. Ailbe. At all events he stayed in the County until his death, and when he died in 527 is said to have been buried underneath the place where the altar of his chapel stands now. The Celtic Church designated 26 March as his Saint's Day.

The most enduring legend associated with St. Govan concerns his hiding place in the fissure of rock still to be seen in the chapel. Marauding pirates from Lundy Island tried to capture him - they could have demanded a good ransom for the abbot of a monastery - but he hid in the cleft in the rocks. This is said to have opened to allow him to enter, and then closed over his head until his would-be captors had gone.

Pirates figure in another legend at this site. Outside the chapel there is a large boulder called 'The Bell Rock'. The sea-raiders were said to have stolen the silver bell from St. Govan's original building, but in answer to his prayer angels retrieved it and placed it inside the boulder for safety. Thereafter, instead of ringing the bell St. Govan used to tap the rock, which gave out a note a thousand times stronger than had the original bell.

One old story which is unlikely to have any foundation is the association of St. Govan with Sir Gawain, one of King Arthur's knights. According to this story Gawain turned to the church in

later years and built the original chapel. This contradicts other Arthurian legends, which have recorded Gawain's death taking place before Arthur's last battle. The association probably only came about in later years because of the vague similarity between the names Govan and Gawain.

But the chapel is certainly there today, and it's worth making the climb down the steps. If you do that, you'll be following in the footsteps of the then newly crowned King Edward VII, who made the journey in August, 1902. He must have thought that the trip merited Royal effort and time.

Caution: Very steep steps down to chapel.

Location

St. Govan's Head, near Bosherton SA71 5DR

St. Mary's Church

The Church of St. Mary, a Grade 1 listed building containing much early 13th Century work, overlooks the High Street and is a large parish church of one of the smallest parishes in Wales. A major restoration programme costing £650,000 was completed in November 2005. It is normally open to visitors every day.

Described in Pevsner Architectural Guides, Pembrokeshire 2004, pp210-214.

Contact Details & Further Information

High Street, Haverfordwest

Website: www.stmaryshaverfordwest.org.uk

St. Nons

A holy well, retreat and shrine dedicated to the mother of St David, situated on the coast just south of St Davids.

Location

St Davids SA62 6BN

SECTION 5 – OTHER HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Cilwendeg Shell House Hermitage



The Cilwendeg Shell House Hermitage is a most remarkable ornamental grotto, and a rare survival in West Wales. It was built in the late 1820s for Morgan Jones the Younger (1787-1840), who inherited the Cilwendeg estate upon the death of his uncle -- along with the huge income produced by the privately owned Skerries Lighthouse (located off the coast of Anglesey).

In 1764 he completely rebuilt the long neglected medieval chapel called Capel Colman at the western perimeter of Cilwendeg Park – a church so remote and forgotten that in

1721 it was singled out as being fit 'only for the solitary habitations of Owles and Jackdaws'.

Seeking to reverse the trend, this man's quiet generosity gave rise to the later legend that he had 'tamed a wilderness' at Cilwendeg. In the old Bardic tradition, he was one of the few Teifiside squires to merit an elegy many years after his death: Hen Gymro trwyadl oedd efe (he was a thorough Welshman) – 'of ancient lineage and charitable works'. He was known locally for his distinctly 'rustic disposition, reclusive habits, and exemplary piety' and his nephew, Morgan Jones the Younger, subsequently created the Shell House in his uncle's honour.

This extraordinary woodland retreat was conceived in the picturesque taste of the era, and in addition to serving as a grateful tribute to the elder Jones, it was used by his family as a cool amusement in the summer months and a contemplative reading room in the depths of the winter.

Constructed with grey Cilgerran stone and faced with large roughly hewn white quartz from local sources, the building emerges out of the romantic gloom of its surroundings a glittering pavilion – full of Gothic detailing and rustic ornament. Moreover, it appears to embody the historical name of 'Cilwendeg', derived from cily wann (or wern) deg, meaning 'the fair white, or light, nook'.

The decorative scheme of the interior walls consists of a profusion of native seashells, minerals and coloured glass fragments arranged in primitive patterns and impressed into lime mortar panels. The only exotics are the large Queen Conch shells that form a centre-piece in each wall panel. A number of

these had to be replaced during the restoration in 2004 and were donated to the project by local residents (each conch arrived with its own highly interesting anecdote or family history).

Both the ceiling and the external slate and timber verandah have been re-created based on archaeological findings. The preserved floor is laid out in a delicate design using the knucklebones of sheep and oxen, the useful by-product of a once thriving estate farm. It is believed the ladies of Cilwendeg Mansion devised the original patterns for the interior decoration.

Contact Details & Further Information

c/o Mrs Patricia Ford, Dol-y-Frenni, Boncath, Pembrokeshire
SA37 0JS

Email: lestricia@aol.com

Website: www.thetempletrust.org.uk/#projects

Penrhos Cottage



A carefully preserved thatched cottage or 'Ty Unos', unique in Pembrokeshire, of the kind which could be built overnight on land claimed "as far as a stone could be thrown".

NB Open by prior appointment only, via Scolton Manor

Contact Details & Further Information

Tel: 01437 731457

Website:

www.pembrokeshirevirtualmuseum.co.uk/main_menu/places_to_visit/museums/penrhos/index.html

Tudor Merchant's House



Step inside Tenby's oldest house and discover the new and richly coloured merchant's shop. See for yourself the goods he would have traded in 1500. The shop also has unique gifts for you to buy.

The kitchen was newly presented for 2011, and upstairs there's more to learn about daily life for the merchant and his family. Children can try on costumes and play with replica toys.

Contact Details & Further Information

Quay Hill, off Tudor Square, Tenby SA70 7BX

Tel: 01834 842279

Email: tudormerchantshouse@nationaltrust.org.uk

Website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-vh/w-visits/w-findaplace/w-tudormerchantshouse.htm

Stepaside Ironworks

Coal has been mined in Pleasant Valley since the 14th century and by the early 19th century there were over 12 collieries around Stepside; the ironworks was constructed nearby in 1848. A railway was built to link these industrial activities with Saundersfoot Harbour.

The former ironworks and colliery site has been recently consolidated, with improved public footpaths and rights of way; a beautiful setting for these remarkable remains. Guides are available at local tourist information centres.

The pleasant, interesting walk starts and finishes in the Ironworks car park at Stepside. The route mixes scenic coastal walking with an enclosed inland woodland walk in a quiet valley. The route follows the old railway line. The walk is quite short and flat and therefore suitable for walkers of all ages and abilities.

Further Information

Website:

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?id=16961&nav=107,1180&parent_directory_id=646

Acknowledgements

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This guide was written by Pembrokeshire County Council's Tourism Team. For more information:

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[www.Facebook.com/VisitPembrokeshire](https://www.facebook.com/VisitPembrokeshire)
Email tourism@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
Tel 01437 775629

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