

A Guide to the Churchyard



The nature of this site, situated as it is on a natural promontory, suggests that it has probably been respected as a special place of worship for over 2,000 years. The circular shape of the original churchyard indicates that it was a place adopted by early Christians. Many of those laid to rest here no longer have gravestones to mark where they lie. The memorials dedicated to those who do reflect the wishes of their nearest and dearest.

Special features to note as you explore should include the sundial. This was the top of the spire until 1956 when it was replaced after safety concerns arose. There are also one or two unusual memorials (marked on the plan). The cigar-shaped gravestone depicts a hedgehog, the ancient symbol representing Archenfield (land of urchins aka hedgehogs, or in Old English, igils). It was possibly a boundary marker or cross shaft. There is also some mystery surrounding the ledger stone which only has one word inscribed on it, 'entrance,' yet it is too heavy for this to be the case.

In the early 1970s, the churchyard was extended, marking the passing of time and the need for more space. Likewise, the advent of the motor car eventually led to the demolition of Church Cottage in 1968 so that a car park could be provided for those attending services.

The benches, thoughtfully positioned around the churchyard, are an invitation to pause for a while, to take in the beautiful views, and to reflect on the centuries of worship that have taken place here.

NATURE



A haven for wildlife, this churchyard is managed in an environmentally friendly way. Bat boxes have been placed on some trees, wood piles have been incorporated, and grass is allowed to grow longer in some areas; all to encourage wildlife to thrive. Depending upon the season and time of day, you may well see, hear or admire the following: -

Birds - Common chiffchaff, greenfinch, goldcrest, dunnock, tawny owl. Garron is a Middle English name for a heron, hence the depiction of one on the main church gates.

Butterflies - Orange-tip, common blue, red admiral

Bats - Long-eared, common pipistrelle, lesser horseshoe

Animals - Hedgehogs, moles, grey squirrels

Flowers - Snowdrops, primroses, daffodils, lesser celandines

The daffodils were planted to mark the Golden Jubilee of Llangarron's Women's Institute in 1974.

Trees - yew, conifer, holly, wild cherry, silver birch

The yew tree adjacent to the car park was a sapling in c.1448 and is now classed as a veteran. The other two yews, planted in Elizabethan times, also acted as boundary markers. The silver birches were planted to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee in 1977.



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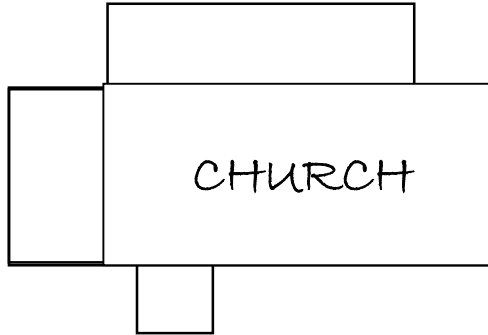
3. *Recycled octagonal spire.* In 1956, the top third of the current spire was replaced. The old spire was dismantled and rebuilt on top of what is thought to be the foundations of the preaching cross. The finishing touch was to place a sundial where the coping stone had been.

leaving a widow and two small daughters at Llangrove.

4. *Archaeology.* In 2014, the conversion of the north transept into the Garron Centre necessitated an archaeological watching brief. A rare c.14th century ivory figurine of the Madonna & Child (now at the National Museum of Wales), 13th century sherds of green glazed roof ridge tiles, and an 1823 Irish halfpenny were amongst the finds.



2. *Oldest memorial.* There are several 17th century gravestones (three beside the main gate), and many later ones that have been listed by Historic England. The burial register was kept from 1569 onwards but there is a gap between 1633 and 1681, that register being lost.



5. *Entrance.* A ledger stone to nowhere! It's thought that these heavy slabs of stone were quarried locally and rolled into place. There are approximately 45 in this churchyard dating from 1717 to 1851.



6. *Repurposed memorial.* Originally a pillar or cross shaft, this cigar-shaped stone has been repurposed as a memorial. The hedgehog (urchin aka igil) depicted reflects the ancient link to the parish of Archenfield, 'land of urchins.' It appears on the Coats of Arms relating to the Abrahall and Haris families.

Information boxes placed approximately where you will find the memorial.