



HEN STABLAU MACHYNLLETH OLD STABLES PHASE ONE REPORT Communication, Community and Engagement November-December 2024

Since Planning Permission has been granted and the various conditions fulfilled, some significant actions have been taken connected with communication about Phase One the Old Stables programme and starting to engage with the public.

Building work has commenced and there have been **positive press stories** including one in the Cambrian News about the start on building work and the work with the local school. More recently, an online article included an interview with the project managers and a short video showing interior features, such as the old horse stalls

COMMUNICATION

A **bilingual A1 poster** is in the Plas foyer together with a **table-top display** with pictures, information, and plans. The poster has attracted quite a lot of attention. It is planned to renew/update the display and poster at intervals throughout the project.





In addition, an **A5 bilingual leaflet** has been designed. This has been used at three Machynlleth Market Stall events and is being placed in key places around Machynlleth.



There is a **Stables Facebook** page. It will have regular new information plus images of the leaflet. There will eventually be a link to a U-Tube version of the Stables video.

A Stables website that can carry documents that need to be available to the public will also be set up during winter 2024-25.

Members of the local press were invited to a site visit and briefing in November 2024.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A meeting for community groups was held at the Plas at which representatives of various community groups/interest were informed about the project and invited to get involved. The purpose of the meeting was to inform people who are active in the Machynlleth community about the Old Stables project. The work in Phase One was outlined and ways in which people who attended or the groups that they represent might become involved were discussed. Some of these ideas have already been followed up and it is planned to work on interpretive mural panels with members of these groups in Spring 2025.

The 18 attendees included representatives from:

- Machynlleth Merched y Wawr
- Machynlleth WI
- Crafted Space
- Gerddi Bro Ddyfi
- Machynlleth Biodiversity Group
- Glasprint Design

Funding Adviser
Machynlleth Scouts
Machynlleth Youth Club
Stables CIC
Machynlleth Town Council
Filmmaker
Charlie Falzon Associates

There have been **3 Market Stalls** at which the display/poster/leaflet have been shown. They have attracted quite a lot of interest and 23 new names were added to the existing contact list.



Stables stall at Machynlleth Market

THE VIDEO

Anne Marie Carty, a local filmmaker, has made a start on collecting video interviews with key people. One of these is Bill Roberts, son of Harry Roberts, the last Londonderry huntsman, who was brought up in the Stables. She has also interviewed Simon Morpeth, instigator of the Stables project.

Interviews are planned with architectural heritage experts Geraint Roberts, Judith Alfrey and Adam Coward. She has also met with Ivan Warren Kyle, a local resident and Rab Jones, researcher into people connected with the town and the Stables.

As part of the work with Ysgol Gynradd Bro Hyddgen, Anne Marie is teaching some of the children to use the camera and contribute to the video footage.

COLLECTING AN ARCHIVE

- Liz Fenwick has taken a series of detailed photographs of the interior of the Stables
- Rab Jones, local historian, has made a start on collecting information about people associated with the Stables/Kennels
- Adam Coward, architectural historian, has some archive material about the Londonderry activities in breeding horses and hounds. He is also researching the history of the Stables building
- Anne Marie Carty is making a video record of the interior of the building when she is allowed access.

SCHOOL PROJECT

Following a meeting with Nia Wyn, headmistress of Ysgol Gynradd Machynlleth, it was arranged to work with Year Five children to create ideas for large banners that will publicise the Stables project. During the project the children learned about the architecture and heritage value of the Stables, its connection with the Londonderry family, the importance of hounds and horses and the significance of the bat colony.

An introduction and site visit took place with about 25 children and two members of staff. After learning about the Stables from a PowerPoint presented by Liz Fenwick and Shelagh Hourahane, everyone went on site. The children were excited by seeing the building for the first time. They noted details such as patterns, shapes, and colours. They explored the Stables yard and found some interesting objects, such as several old keys and pieces of ironwork. There was great excitement when a stone was uncovered that appeared to mark the 1938 grave of a fox hound called Jim. The children also visited the sculpture of Mary Cornelia, an important figure in the history of the Plas and of the town.

During the visit Anne Marie Carty started to teach pupils how to use a video camera.



Learning about the Stables story



Exploring the Stables yard



A dog called Jim

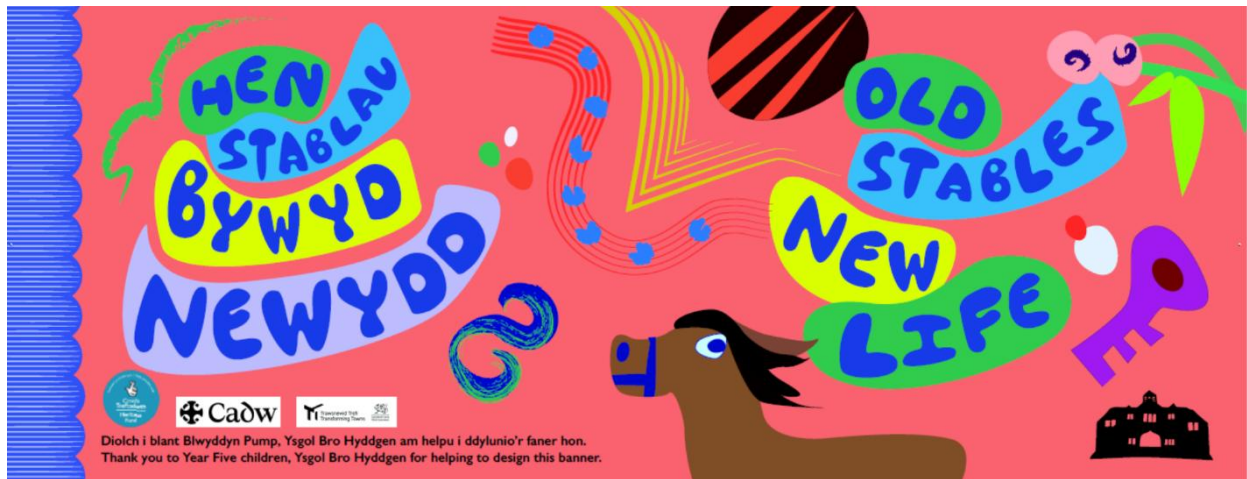


How to use a video camera

During the follow up workshop at the school with Liz Fenwick and Anne Marie Carty, pupils produced a lot of exciting and creative material that has contributed to the design of banners. A long hanging banner (picture below) was designed by Liz Fenwick, using ideas from the children's work.



Work by Year Five pupils



Design for Stables banner (designer Liz Fenwick)

TELLING THE STORY WITH MURALS



block. The result will be in a prominent place near to the Stables and will provide an eye catching, informative, and colourful focus.

It is planned to invite Ysgol Bro Hyddgen and other community groups to participate in creating murals to tell the story of the Stables/Kennels. This part of the engagement process will be planned for spring into summer 2025. An ideal site has been identified, namely the old toilet block in the Plas grounds. It is suggested that panels for painting the murals on can be fixed temporarily to the outside walls of the

ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE STABLES

There is a requirement to have a professional archaeologist in attendance at the Old Stables site. ArcheoDomus Heritage Services Lampeter has been commissioned to do this work. Initially they will survey and record the exterior of the building and any material evidence inside. However, at a later stage of the project they will turn attention to the exterior yard. At this stage it might be possible to involve some members of the public in excavations.



The school children have already shown an enthusiasm for this side of the project. During the school PowerPoint presentation, they were shown a button dated from the early 10th century that was found in the yard by a local metal detectorist and a scent bottle nearby. These could form the basis for a collection of artefacts related to the Stables.



A DAY TO CELEBRATE AND INFORM

As well as the work currently going on at the Stables, a new and striking entrance is being built to access the Plas Community Hall. This work is also part of the push to bring new life to the town and has funding from Transforming Towns. The entrance will be completed early in 2025.

It is proposed that a joint **open day to celebrate and inform** the wider public, should be held later in 2025, once the building is secure and safe, bearing in mind that the Stables will technically still be a building site and there will be health and safety considerations.

