

**An Embassy Glyndŵr critique of the Cadw commissioned  
Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan.**



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**Imbolc 2011**

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## Introduction:

The fact that this document has been described in its title as a 'critique' does not mean that Embassy Glyndŵr is opposed to the Cadw commissioned plan in question in its entirety, to the contrary, having thoroughly read and scrutinized the document and its recommendations, there are elements within it that we would happily endorse but, on the other hand, we have detected many failings that, in our view, need to be addressed and the Interpretation Plan amended if it is to be of any true value to the intended objective of the initiative which is to maximize the economic value of this important aspect of our heritage as a means towards the provision of a much needed and sustained boost to the Welsh economy.

This critique will systematically deal with each of the sections in the Cadw Interpretation Plan in question in the order that they appear and will offer positive recommendations for amendment wherever possible. However, many sections within the introductory section of the Plan are repeated in the main section which starts at 1.0. 'Purpose of Plan' so, to avoid confusion, it will be from this 1.0. point that I will commence on the critique.

As the development of the critique has been carried out on a voluntary unpaid basis by myself, I cannot afford the cost of the production of hard copies for distribution. I will however be placing a pdf copy of the Critique on a word press blog on the internet so that everybody can have the opportunity to view these 'debatable parts' of the Cadw Plan along with Embassy Glyndŵr's analysis and recommendations for amendments.

Likewise, as this document is going to be lengthy, I do not have the time or the means to personally produce bilingual copies so, unfortunately, as I want it to be available for worldwide view, I have had to produce it in English but, if WAG, Cadw or the WLB want to get it translated, I would be delighted if they did so.

**Please note:** Sections of the Cadw Plan and the Consultant's recommendations when placed on the blog on the internet will be in black print and Embassy Glyndŵr's analysis and comments will be in blue.

Siân Ifan  
CEO Embassy Glyndŵr

## Uprising or War of Independence?

Before, going any further, I would like to draw attention to the title of "Owain Glyndŵr and his Uprising" which has been given to the Interpretation plan. I don't know if this title was decided on by the Cadw Project Officer in charge or whether it was chosen as a title by the commissioned Consultant but whatever, it appears on the cover page of the Plan and then, throughout the Plan, the Owain Glyndŵr Great War for Welsh Independence is either referred to as an 'uprising' or 'rebellion'.

There's a wealth of research material as well as numerous books available now on the subject of Owain Glyndŵr and his life and times and we will challenge anyone that's researched this material and this period in Wales thoroughly, and then who insists on labeling Owain Glyndŵr's Great War of Independence as an 'uprising' or a 'rebellion', to provide a logical argument for their reasoning. From the constant use of 'uprising' in the Plan, I have to assume that either, the Consultant in question or, Cadw officials, has either not carried out a necessary thorough research of the subject in question or she/they could not have fully comprehended the lengthy and 'Pan Wales' nature of the war.

In brief, what makes the Glyndŵr story really stand out over and above the story of the earlier Welsh princes and their resistance to the Anglo-Normans and the conquest of Wales, is the way that the 'Glyndŵr war', from its early beginnings in the North East in Sept 1400, had spread so quickly across Wales, from the North West to Hyddgen and through Ceredigion and then, by 2002, into Central and South Wales - into lands which had been lost to the Welsh for 200 yrs. And yet, within a period of 2 yrs of warfare, Glyndŵr was being welcomed into the aforementioned lands by the oppressed native Welsh, most, who joined his ranks – including, gradually, 141 of Lord Grey's serfs! (Davies,R.R. 1995)

After 200 yrs, where the Princes of Gwynedd had failed to unite Wales, Glyndŵr did just that in four years, He had liberated the whole of Wales, had re-established Welsh Sovereignty, had established a Welsh Parliament and had been crowned Prince of Wales by 1404 – and all this in a Wales that had a scattered population of only 500,000 whilst England had a population of 3 million and greater military resources at their disposal. And although Glyndŵr mysteriously disappears in around 1415-16, we know that his supporters kept a guerilla war on-going until at least 1421. That, at the least, is a duration of 21 yrs in all, much longer than World War 1 or World War 11 – and nobody refers to those affairs as 'uprisings' or 'rebellions' anymore than the American or later Irish Wars of Independence would be referred to as simply 'uprisings' or 'revolts and certainly, Native Americans today do not acknowledge terms such as 'Indian Revolts' or 'Indian Uprisings'; their struggles are referred to as Wars of Resistance to Colonialism – which is what they were and what the Owain Glyndŵr War of Independence was.

Uprisings and revolts are short term affairs and we, as a nation, should be proud of what Owain Glyndŵr and his followers, the people of Wales,

achieved with the Great War of Independence 1400 – 21. Had there not been this sustained War of Independence, it is very questionable if there would be a Welsh nation in existence today and even more questionable if there would be a Welsh language, a Welsh Assembly or a Labour/Plaid Coalition Government in Cardiff Bay!

Therefore, we should not shy away from referring to Owain Glyndŵr's War of Independence as such because that is exactly what it was. Other nations, such as Scotland and Lithuania, are proud to interpret the truth in regards to their national heroes and Wars of Independence, so why can't we, in Wales, be equally proud of our greatest of national heroes and the Welsh War of Independence that he led?

The Embassy Glyndŵr Critique; as corresponds to the numbered sections of the Cadw Interpretation Plan.

### **Purpose of Plan.**

Purpose of plan

This interpretation plan aims to help guide and inform Cadw's Heritage Tourism project and expenditure under the WAG SCIF programme whose objectives are to maximise the economic value of heritage by increasing the volume, length and value of heritage visits. This plan recommends actions and initiatives which make sites associated with Owain Glyndwr and his uprising more intellectually accessible and enjoyable for both tourists and residents.

Embassy Glyndwr Comments: The paragraph above outlines very well what the 'Plan' should entail – apart, of course, from the 'uprising' misconceived error which will appear throughout the document and which I have drawn attention to in the introduction to this critique, therefore, I will endeavor not to refer to it again as I have already explained why it is an error to refer to Owain Glyndŵr's War of Independence as an 'uprising'. Having drawn attention to this serious error, I would expect any rational reader to understand my reasoning and look at what is referred to as an 'uprising' in the Interpretation Plan as a 'War of Independence' from this point onwards.

Although the 'Purpose of Plan' paragraph reads well, the overall contents of the 'Plan' that follows, and its recommendations, do not (unfortunately) always reflect what is promised in the paragraph in question as will be revealed as I go through each section of the plan.

## **2.0 Background:**

### **2.1 Approach and Methodology.**

Firstly we reviewed documents and initiatives relating to tourism development and assessed research carried out into present and potential growth tourism sectors. The culmination of this exercise is section 2.3 which outlines conclusions and relevant messages which influence the interpretation plan. Our client Cadw provided us with a list of sites deemed relevant to this storyline which we used as a basis to

devise a fuller list of candidate sites based on research into the history of Owain Glyndwr's career and his uprising. We undertook research into the significance of each site from relevant source material and then an audit of these candidate sites to an agreed framework based on the following headings:

#### Site significance

How easy is it for visitors to reach the site/location?

What is the welcome like for visitors?

How inherently appealing is the site/location?

What is the geographical context or hinterland?

Orientation and how easy is it to get around the site?

#### Current interpretation provision

The findings of the audit helped us to select sites for the interpretation plan and to decide on appropriate approaches to interpretation at these sites. We assessed the

strengths and weaknesses of access to and at each site in addition to its inherent appeal in order to place any interpretation proposals within the context of the whole visitor experience.

We also worked through a series of steps with stakeholders in a workshop so that everyone contributed due to their interest and knowledge of a selected site or location, or of the Glyndwr story in general. The one full-day workshop achieved the following.

Shared information about the work.

Agreed additional aims for the interpretation plan.

Gathered views on what should be conveyed to visitors about Owain Glyndwr.

Identified hopes and concerns regarding the plan.

Agreed draft themes for the selected sites.

Although our emphasis was to work via a workshop we also had face to face discussions with several individuals and groups. All in all the following contributed during the course of the commission and this plan reflects the range of views and ideas suggested during discussions.

The Church of Pennal - Rev Geraint ap Iorwerth, Ann ap Iorwerth and church warden

Trustees of Canolfan Owain Glyndwr, Machynlleth - Wyn Thomas et al

The Friends of St Mary's Church, Pilleth – Judith Boobyer, Hilary Belden,  
Peter & Janet Hood & Joanna Griffiths

The Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales David  
Browne

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust – Jeff Spencer

Owain Glyndwr Society – John Lloyd James & Eirwyn Evans

Denbighshire Historical Society - Kevin Mathias

The Church of St Chad, Hanmer – Bill Barlow

Ancient Monuments Inspectorate, Cadw - Dr Sian Rees

Visit Wales - Dr Nigel Adams

North Wales Tourism Partnership – Dewi Davies

Mid Wales Tourism Partnership - Gwawr Roberts

Ceredigion Museum - Michael Freeman, Curator

Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust – Jeff Spencer

Harlech Castle, Cadw - Miriam Jones, Custodian

Amanda Peacock and Erich Karlow of plb consultancy

We also liaised with Prof Ralph Griffiths of Swansea University, the nominated  
expert regarding detailed aspects of the uprising.

Our research into tourism growth sectors influenced which target audiences we  
selected for each site in this plan. We attempted to outline their characteristics,  
behaviour and attitude and assessed a range of potential methods and media  
before deciding on the most appropriate ones for recommendation.

As a result we hope that this interpretation plan has broad ownership, is grounded  
in reality and is based on common understanding between sites and locations.

I, Siân Shakespear co-ordinated the team and was the contact between the team  
and Cadw, the client. I also led all meetings, discussions and workshops and devised  
the interpretation plan.

Wyn Roberts of Aqua Marketing Ltd worked on the marketing and interpretation  
aspects. He input his knowledge and expertise regarding tourism growth markets and  
target audiences and devised appropriate approaches to marketing.

Dr David Gwyn of Govannon Consultancy input his considerable knowledge of  
Welsh history and expertise in presenting heritage sites to visitors and collated

information regarding site significance.

Embassy Glyndŵr Comments: In the Introductory paragraph to this section, the consultant reveals that Cadw had initially provided a list of sites deemed “relevant” to the storyline to be interpreted. She does not, however, list what these sites ‘deemed relevant’ by Cadw were. She then goes on to state that a ‘fuller list’ of candidate sites was devised from the basic list deemed relevant by Cadw. As the ‘fuller list’ of candidate sites consists of only eight out of, at the least, a possibility of fifty five sites throughout Wales, it would be interesting to know which sites did Cadw deem relevant in the first place. Knowing this is important, as it gives us an insight into Cadw’s understanding of both Owain Glyndŵr and his Great War of Independence and of how much consideration has gone into how all sites associated with such an ‘unique’ history can be utilized for the benefit of a Pan Wales tourism economy on the one hand, and as a means of cultivating a renewed sense of Welsh identity and nationhood on the other.

I can but conclude that since only eight sites have been chosen, the Interpretation Plan, as it stands, can and will only interpret part of the story and I would suggest that all associated sites - along with explanations in regards to the course of events and military strategies applied are of crucial importance if the full and complete story of this War of Independence is to be told as the following chronology illustrates:

1400: The September Rising and Revolt in North East.

1401: The Revolt becomes a War, and following the first Victory at Hyddgen, Ceredigion rises in support of Owain Glyndŵr.

1402: The Powys Offensive and Battle of Bryn Glas and the great Southern Raid. Most surely these events just cannot be ignored. In regards to the Powys Offensive, Glyndŵr’s strategy and purpose was to move on Anglo – Norman rule in this central march, it being the land of his fore-fathers and of the Mortimers - so connected to Welsh Medieval History, whilst the great Southern Raid, apart from being a momentous military event, is the first time that the Welsh, against amazing odds, had penetrated so far South since the days of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century – and what is noteworthy is that after over 300 years of Anglo Norman rule in the South, and 100 years after the conquest of 1282, the Southern Welsh were still ready to rise as Patriots and Partisans to the Glyndŵr cause of Independence.

1403: This year again is momentous. A great National Army of Liberation moves to Liberate old Deheubarth by striking into Ystrad Tywi. There, joined by native princes and lords of the West, they take the Castle of Caerfyrddin. They then do fail in military moves into Southern Penfro, and Glyndŵr has to return to Fflintshire to rally patriots who are in retreat after the Battle of Shrewsbury, however, his great general, Rhys Gethin, and other captains continue to lead the Grand Army of National Liberation on to the South where, quickly, the castles of Abertawe and Castell-Nedd surrender to them. The Grand Army rolls on to fight and win the battle of Stalling Down near Bontfaen and then proceeds to lay waste to much of Caerdydd. All this action encourages the native Welsh of Blaenau Morgannwg to arise and lay siege to Coychurch, Llantrisant and other Castles in Morgannwg. This is the

year that brought to an end (after 300 years) Anglo – Norman Castle Rule in Wales; such, in itself, is worthy of a national commemoration - and particularly so in the West and South of our nation.

1404: Glyndŵr's launching of a border war from Fflintshire in the North to Monmouth in the South must be noted military wise. In this Border campaign, the Free Welsh Forces penetrated well over Offa's Dyke raiding deep into the English areas of the Eastern March. No doubt this campaign was also intended to secure Welsh positions and military power on the Eastern flank to secure safety in preparation of the Parliament to be held in Machynlleth to which, note, representatives from all over the land are invited to represent the Cymydau of Wales. This alone argues the case that the Glyndŵr story cannot be effectively or patriotically told properly by Cadw's curtailing of the Glyndŵr story to Gwynedd and a few other areas of the North.

1405: Is a year of defeat, and Victory in Gwent, but is also the year of the French landing in Haverfordwest and the Cambro – French march on Woodbury hill in Worcestershire. How could this story not be told and pro – actively included into the plan?

1406: The English Offensive intensifies and, after this year, the Welsh patriots are in retreat - but still, there is a story to be told and pro actively engaged in as part of a tourism plan - taking aboard the last stands made at Aberystwyth and Harlech Castles, and then the continued activity and the surrendering, captures and executions that took place right up to 1421. For instance, Owain's youngest son, Maredudd, finally accepted a pardon in 1421 (Davies, R.R. pp310) and even though the English had won back most of Wales, the 'Gwerin Owain' were still actively engaged in resistance.

The rest of this 2.1. section is very disturbing and brings up the need to ask questions about the 'fairness' and 'transparency' tactics employed to construct the Interpretation Plan in question.

It is, first of all, revealed that a full day workshop had been held with "stakeholders" and that a series of steps were worked through and, I quote:

*"so that everyone contributed due to their interest and knowledge of a selected site or location, or of the Glyndŵr story in general"*

We are then informed that the full-day workshop had achieved the following:

- *"Agreed additional aims for the interpretation plan."*
- *"Gathered views on what should be conveyed to visitors about Owain Glyndŵr."*
- *"Identified hopes and concerns regarding the plan"*.
- *"Agreed draft themes for the selected sites"*.

The first question that needs to be asked is when did this workshop take place and who were the stakeholders invited and why are they not named in this section of the plan. Also, were they paid for their participation?

Not only are Embassy Glyndŵr staff members well read on Glyndŵr but we have lived and breathed the subject for a lot longer than Cadw has existed. We have worked with Glyndŵr commemorative groups in many areas of Wales for 40 yrs and have continually and tirelessly promoted commemorations and celebrations of the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of Independence since 1998 – with the initiation of the campaign to have commemorative stamps produced. We, along with Dr Gwynfor Evans, have campaigned to have Owain Glyndŵr Day recognized since the early 1970's, and have, since the year 2000, campaigned to have the Glyndŵr Four Lion Rampant flag flown on all civic and public buildings in Wales on Dydd Glyndŵr Day. Since 2004, we, have established the 21 June as 'Parliament Day' and have ensured that there are events taking place annually on or about that date at Machynlleth and Cefn Caer in Pennal.

In 2006, we launched a campaign to establish an annual Welsh History month in September (similar to the successful annual Black History month held in England – and Wales!) and were also responsible for launching the campaign to have three important Glyndŵr associated days celebrated in Wales annually; they being, Glyndŵr's birthday (May 28) Parliament Day (June 21) and Dydd Glyndŵr Day (Sept 16) and as we feel strongly that local communities should be in charge of organizing their own events, we have, in recent years, assisted to set up a permanent Festival Committee at Machynlleth and, upon their request, have composed a constitution for them.

The above brief account of Embassy Glyndŵr activity and achievements to date is not in totality by a long stretch of the imagination, I would need to go back 10 yrs into our archives for data sheets to list everything - and to do that would mean that on-going work would come to a standstill but, the Introduction to Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndwr (Appendice1) along with the above should suffice to illustrate how active we have been – and still are - and mostly, out of our own pockets and a scattering of small donations without a penny sourced from the public purse.

So, without any doubt, Embassy Glyndŵr should have been considered to be a 'main' stakeholder but we were never informed of the aforementioned workshop and other 'meetings' – despite the fact that I was in regular contact with the Cadw Project Manager of this initiative and had made it perfectly clear that I wished to be kept informed of all developments!

I am in contact with a number of others, commemorative groups, authors, historians, Glyndŵr festival committees and medieval re-enactors that have also been actively involved in commemorating the War of Independence over the last ten years, and that, like Embassy Glyndŵr, were not approached to participate in these 'undemocratic' workshops for those 'chosen few' that are not listed in this section so, who were the chosen 'stakeholders', who chose them - and on what basis were they chosen?

Likewise in regards to the 'face to face' discussions held with the 'several individuals' and 'groups' that are listed in this section, Embassy Glyndŵr was not consulted for our input and we would like to know exactly what these groups and individuals have ever - or certainly since the year 2000, done to promote celebrations and commemorations of the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Owain Glyndŵr's War of Independence so I will hereby challenge Cadw and

any of the groups and individuals listed that were deemed worthy to invite for 'face to face' discussions, to make public their programmes of Glyndŵr associated activities and achievements since the year 1998 (in the same way that Embassy Glyndŵr has done above) so that all readers of this critique can be in a position to accurately decide if the 'individuals' and 'groups' invited to participate, were, indeed, more worthy of such an invitation to participate and contribute than Embassy Glyndŵr was.

In regards to Professor Ralph Griffiths of Swansea University being the "nominated expert" regarding detailed aspects of the War of Independence. The consultant, in another part of the document under scrutiny, agrees that R.R. Davies is the recognized academic authority so, why not source the necessary material needed for a background history of the subject from his excellent work rather than squander more of the Euro money sourced to improve the Welsh Tourism economy on another unnecessary consultation fee?

### **2.3. The Tourism Environment and Target Market:**

#### 2.3.1 Key strategic messages

Strategic tourism documents revealed several key messages and target markets which enable us to position the Owain Glyndwr interpretation plan in line with local, regional, and national priorities.

Welsh Tourism Strategy 2006 – 2013

Wales is very dependent on visitors travelling by private car

Consumers are moving away from recognised "brands" and looking for more unique experiences

Strategy looks at international tourism however since then a global recession has bitten

Wales is considered a "Challenger Brand" building a "lighthouse" identity i.e. stands out from the crowd. The challenge will be to overcome negative and outdated perceptions of Wales

Accessibility is one of 5 strategic challenges and the use of new technology is encouraged

Germany and Holland are identified as key markets; and the strong Euro should further encourage this market to visit the UK (and then Wales)

France is also considered a key market which has strong links with Owain Glyndwr

Strategies are:

Distinctive branding

Higher quality

Easier access

Better skills

Stronger partnerships

“Wales is a ‘challenger brand’ and the brand positioning of Wales should be based on assets that are best in class, distinctively and uniquely Welsh”

Cultural tourism 2006

Cultural tourism is a key component of “Wales” product

Aim to improve the quality of the tourism product and those associated with delivery of product

Public sector (Visit Wales, formerly Wales Tourist Board) act as an enabler by providing advice and market Wales as a tourism destination

A Winning Wales – Welsh Assembly Government National Economic Development Strategy recognises the need for Wales to be a country which has a distinctive and creative culture with bilingualism a growing reality. This strategy sets the target of increasing tourism expenditure by an average of at least 6% per annum over the 10-year life of the strategy

UK market is divided into those whose main motivation is cultural tourism, so called niche markets, and those who undertake cultural visits whilst on holiday

The most popular activity is visiting heritage sites (castles, churches, historic houses, ancient monuments) followed by visiting artistic or heritage exhibits (museums and galleries etc.) The least popular activity is watching the performing arts, though this may be a reflection of the lack of opportunity

Overseas market sees the heritage and cultural tourism offer within the UK as the attraction to visit the country

Cultural tourism is seen as a growth market

Tourism Partnership North Wales Business Plan 2009/10  
‘North Wales Giants’ is a key driver for cultural and heritage tourism –  
Owain Glyndwr is part of North Wales Giants promotion (currently undertaken by Cambrensis)

Key priority is strengthening the unique sense of place by celebrating the unique culture of the area, as well as the geographical features

Broadly speaking the key target segments for North Wales are Active Explorers (Young professionals), Family Explorers (Under 45 year old family orientated market) and Independent Explorers (Over 45 year old couples)

market)

Tourism Partnership Mid Wales Business Plan 2009/10

Same key messages and target markets as TPNW

Food is also a key priority in Mid Wales and could be linked to the Owain Glyndwr story

Cultural Tourism Action Plan 2008 – 2011

Croeso i Gymru – creating a “Sense of Place” in Wales with tourism businesses and communities becoming involved

Croeso Cynnes & Croeso Cynnes Cymreig training packages

Community support and involvement stressed as part of Cadw convergence bid, and community interpretation programmes in regeneration areas

Looking at online directory and information portal for Wales’ cultural heritage

Cadw to look at linking with major event organisers whilst Wales’ cultural heritage is to be promoted at cultural events with high number of visitors

Bilingual signage

Research should be undertaken on tourists perception on Wales’ cultural tourism products compared to other UK areas

Review of cultural tourism Wales – 2008

Cultural tourism experience in Wales is weak in comparison with its international competitors, even though Wales has aspirations to be internationally recognised

Wales benefits from nearly a quarter of the total UK annual spend on cultural activities (£120m / £465)

Wales has relatively few cultural icons, making it even more important to maximise the impact of those icons that do exist and harnessing the collective power of the multiplicity of other tangible and intangible aspects of the cultural heritage of Wales

Over the past five years (from 2008), there has been considerable investment in the cultural infrastructure in Wales. Funding has come from the Millennium Commission, the National Lottery and from the Welsh Assembly Government, as well as European Development Funds

Over the next ten years the availability of funding from these traditional sources to support cultural tourism initiatives is likely to decline due to the impact of the Olympics and changes in European Funding structures. Consequently the

further development of the cultural tourism product will depend upon securing funding from other sources and greater collaboration between the sectors

Resources should be found to support marketing within Visit Wales in order to identify and promote the existing cultural tourism product and to encourage the development and enhancement of other products

Training is needed to bring the culture and tourism sectors in Wales together. The lack of understanding and appreciation of each other's needs and challenges is currently contributing towards an underachievement

Promotion is confused. The lack of cohesive marketing means that visitors are bombarded with a plethora of information leaflets and information which dilutes the impact and undermines Wales' attractiveness as a cultural destination. Relatively strict brand guidelines exist for all Wales marketing, and each tourism partnership and marketing area has its own guidelines which the Owain Glyndwr project should adhere to.

The web environment is similarly complicated with much duplication of information across web sites or glaring gaps in details. In general, the majority of the images and the positioning of Wales centre on landscape and outdoor activities.

There is still a great deal of work to be done in developing the product to make it more marketable for the tourist and local visitor. It is important that this work is undertaken within the cultural sector and in partnership with others. Improving the product by better interpretation; providing cultural activities which will appeal to the tourist and recognising the importance of the tourism market to provide income and support for the cultural product is also essential.

Currently the development and marketing of the cultural tourism product is undertaken almost exclusively by Visit Wales. It is essential that this work is also embraced and supported by the cultural sector which needs to be encouraged and supported to be more commercial and competitive when appropriate – Cadw is actively now supporting this too.

There is a lack of clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the different organisations involved in cultural tourism. There is a need for better partnership working at all levels in Wales.

There is much work to be done in bringing together the cultural and tourism sectors of Wales for mutual benefit. The role of the Cultural Tourism Partnership has been re-examined in order to assess its effectiveness.

In the increasingly competitive international tourism marketplace the battles will be won on the basis of value, quality, but above all destination distinctiveness. Success in tourism in the 21st Century is all about being different, celebrating cultural difference and achieving 'standout'.

The key messages across all documents can be summarised as follows:

.  
Quality e.g. accommodation, visitor experience.

.  
Distinctive branding – “Challenger” brand

.  
Easier access – physical infrastructure and sensory

Better skills – soft skills and sharing knowledge

Stronger partnerships to create the “Sense of Place”

There is also a strong emphasis on partnership and this will be critical to effectively promote the Owain Glyndwr story since the offer needs to be part of existing tourism products to appeal to the cultural tourist, as well as the activity tourist looking for a cultural fix.

Embassy Glyndwr Comments: The whole of the above section is devoted to quoting paragraphs from WAG and regionally produced strategic tourism documents which, it is claimed:

*“reveals several key messages and target markets which enables the Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan to be positioned in line with local, regional and national priorities”.*

I suppose what is meant by “key messages” are ‘sound bites’ such as “Wales is a challenger brand” and “sense of place” Having myself had need to thoroughly study most of these strategic documents produced by a swarm of consultants as well as their periodic reviews, produced by even more consultants! for my own MBA dissertation on the subject of “Welsh Heritage Tourism for a New Post Colonial Wales” (Ifans, Siân 2009) and having conducted ‘face to face interviews for the aforementioned dissertation with top ranking Welsh tourism officials - as well as having closely monitored developments in Welsh Heritage Tourism over recent years, I know that the “sound bites” or “key messages” as they’re referred to in the Interpretation Plan are still just ‘lip serving rhetoric’ and that the “strong challenger brand” referred to constantly in the aforementioned tourism strategy documents is still being sought – and I would contest, that it will not be found until the WAG government is prepared to recognize that Wales’s Heritage Tourism Strategy must be separate to that of a Cultural Tourism Strategy.

It’s obvious that the WAG, Cadw and Visit Wales are still encountering problems with defining what is ‘culture’ and what is ‘heritage’. Yes, Welsh culture is, of course, an integral part of Welsh heritage, but when it comes to tourism, the WAG’s Cultural Tourism Strategy concedes that:

*“The most popular activity is visiting heritage sites (castles, churches, historic houses, ancient monuments) followed by visiting artistic or heritage exhibits” (WTB/WAG. 2003/2006.2008)*

The aforementioned strategy then concedes that the least popular activity is “watching the performing Arts” (WTB/WAG. 2003/2006/2008) in other words, cultural events so, I would suggest that seeing as this initiative is meant to be

a 'heritage' initiative, concerned with histories, it should have a definite 'heritage tourism' platform and not be dragged into the realms of confusion by being positioned "in line" with the present Cultural Tourism Strategy which has clearly not worked since its original conception due to lack of lateral thinking and foresight in regards to marketing Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism in separate marketing strategies.

I would contend that this Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan, along with the other four in the Heritage initiative, could be that "Challenger Brand" that the WAG, Cadw and Visit Wales have been seeking for many years but, only if they, like other small nations with similar histories, have the confidence and maturity to interpret all aspects of our history as 'unique to Wales' shared experiences that has forged us into a nation to be proud of – and that includes the true history of Owain Glyndŵr's Welsh War of Independence, uncensored and without the unnecessary apologies.

This is an opportunity to put the 'rhetoric' in the aforementioned plethora of strategic documents into practice. i.e. The challenger brand is our 'unique' history enriched by an age long tradition of legend and mythology that has been borrowed from over the years by storytellers, authors and film makers from many other parts of Europe and the USA, therefore, I would suggest that the WAG and Visit Wales would not go far wrong if they confidentially branded Wales as "The Land of History, Myth and Legend" and marketed all the other tourism initiatives (such as culture and outdoor activities) as individual marketing packages alongside that brand.

### **2.3.2 Target Markets:**

#### 2.3.2 Target markets

According to North Wales and Mid Wales Tourism Partnerships, the target territories are principally within a 2 hours catchment, on the basis that 80% of short break and day visitors travel under 2 hours to their destination. Only 30% of visitors are those who purely come for cultural experiences and the remainder casually or accidentally participate in such experiences.

The dominant visitor sourcing areas to North Wales are the North West of England (37%) and West Midlands (27%). Within the overseas markets to North Wales (15% of visitors), the dominant percentage is from the USA and other English speaking regions, followed by Visit Wales's primary European markets of Ireland, Germany, Holland and France. These markets have lost ground in recent years, but opportunities to take advantage of the expansion of low cost air services to Liverpool and Manchester airports will be taken. We can divide the market into the following segments:

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** In my view, the strategic aim should be to create an 'unique to Wales' heritage tourism package that will have within it aspects that will appeal to every potential 'internal' as well as 'external tourist' regardless of, age, gender, nationality, and level of disposable income. Whether the 'potential tourist' is seeking a long or short stay or a day trip to an unique event, nobody should be excluded from being a 'potential target' The marketing process for this new 'unique to Wales'

heritage tourism package should not be guided by past tourism models of “presumed interests groups” derived on what has been on offer in the past – and which can be accessed in any country and therefore, not ‘unique’.

The aim should be to achieve a visible improvement in tourism visits and in tourism employment figures by means of provision of ‘unique’ and well thought out attractions and exiting professionally organized ‘crowd drawing’ events in all Owain Glyndŵr associated areas . Already, in the case of Machynlleth, Embassy Glyndŵr has, since 2004, tirelessly worked on spotlighting the town as the ‘Medieval Capital of Wales’ and has spotlighted the important Cefn Caer site at Pennal as an additional Owain Glyndŵr associated attraction. We have also, of course, constantly drawn attention to the Hyddgen battle site in our literature and on our blogs and it was Cofiwn, the predecessor to Embassy Glyndŵr, that raised the memorial (which was unveiled by Dr Gwynfor Evans) at the battle site in the mid 1970’s.

We have been persistent in our demands to Machynlleth Town Council to market their town as the ‘Medieval Capital of Wales’ – which it was, following the establishment of the First Welsh Parliament there by Prince Owain Glyndŵr in 1404, and they have agreed (in principle) to adopt the annual parade and displaying of the ‘Owain Glyndŵr Crown Ceremony’ as a civic ceremony and to invite dignitaries’ from towns throughout Wales and from further afield to this ceremony.

Embassy Glyndŵr has also begun the process of the restoring of lost (or looted) Welsh treasures with the provision of a prestigious handcrafted Sword of State (Cleddyf y Genedl) , a handcrafted dagger and a silver and gold plated crown. Both the ‘Sword of State’ and the ‘Corwen Dagger’ were handcrafted by a Welsh Master blacksmith whose roots are in the Bala area of Wales and the Owain Glyndŵr seal forms a solid part of the helm of both of them. There is also a small amount of Welsh gold incorporated into each.

‘Cleddyf y Genedl (The Sword of State) was ceremonially presented to the people of Machynlleth Bro Ddyfi by the Honorary French Consul, Madame Claude Rapport in 2004 and is being kept on public display by the town Council at ‘Y Plas’ Machynlleth. The ‘Corwen Dagger’ was presented to the people of Corwen by Professor Gruffydd Aled Williams in 2005 and is kept on public display at the Council Office/Town Library building. The ‘Glyndŵr Crown is a restored national treasure that has been under the custodianship of Cefn Caer since 2006 and is bought into Machynlleth by its Custodian annually on Parliament/Coronation Day – June 21, to be paraded through the town before being put on display at the Parliament House.

Embassy Glyndŵr is also currently in the process of establishing ‘Gardd Arwyr Glyndŵr’ (The Glyndŵr Heroes Memorial Garden) at Cefn Caer which allows for every community throughout Wales to raise money locally to pay for a plaque for their local Glyndŵr hero (a person who fought with Glyndŵr or who assisted in any other way in Glyndŵr’s War for Welsh Independence) to be placed in the Memorial Garden at Cefn Caer. To date, there are eight plaques in the garden – and these have materialized prior to launching a national appeal! These plaques have been temporarily placed until planning permission has been sought but in time, it is intended for individuals, families, groups and schools to visit Cefn Caer to, in the first instance, pay

their respect to their local Glyndŵr hero in the Memorial Garden but also to become familiar with the names and history of the other Glyndŵr heroes and, of course, to view Cefn Caer's copy of the Pennal Letter and be guided and to become familiar with the rich history of the Cefn Caer Hall House and site in general.

All of the above ongoing work has two main purposes. Its main purpose, as far as Embassy Glyndŵr is concerned, is to promote knowledge about Owain Glyndwr, his life and times and of his War for Welsh Independence. We have chosen to spend our adult life promoting this knowledge by going into communities all over Wales (in our own time and for the most part, at our own expense) to organize colourful events that bring this history to life. We were motivated into doing this because we were very aware of the fact that most Welsh people did not know their own history; they had not been taught it as part of the school curriculum and because of this, they had no sense of a Welsh identity. The Welsh have systematically been brainwashed to be 'British' since the '1536 Act of Annexation' forced on us and this brainwashing process, accelerated by other influences in modern times, has robbed the Welsh of the knowledge and ability to unite as a nation to fight for self determination in an independent Wales.

We do also, of course, recognize that the most important aspect of self determination is the ability to be able to sustain a thriving Welsh economy and provide work for all our men and women of working age so, we are appreciative of the fact that, in this day and age, tourism, especially if its all year round tourism, can and needs to be fully implemented and capitalized on as a means towards the sustaining of a thriving Welsh economy and we believe that this Heritage initiative can be of great benefit to, both, the tourism economy in Wales and to the educating of our own people in regards to their history if - and so long as the histories are portrayed accurately and, in the Owain Glyndŵr case, if the Interpretation Plan is expanded to include all Owain Glyndŵr associated sites throughout Wales – as it should.

Embassy Glyndŵr has already laid down foundation stones in Machynlleth and sites associated with the town and surrounding area and these stones can be built on via a working cooperation between the town council and other bodies concerned with promoting tourism in the area. Likewise, the potential for Owain Glyndŵr associated events and activities throughout Wales is immense although, most associated sites have not been mentioned - never mind included, in the Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan under scrutiny.

I would suggest that all local authorities and Tourism Partnerships throughout Wales should be actively encouraged and assisted to organize, promote and market Owain Glyndŵr associated activities at all Owain Glyndŵr associated sites that has an Owain Glyndŵr story to tell and that all present and newly created and inspirational marketing tools should be utilized by Visit Wales, Cadw and the regional and local Tourism Partnerships in those areas to ensure that the areas and associated events and activities are marketed on a broad scale to both potential internal and external tourists. After all, the money for this initiative is European funding! It should not be a case of European tourists "accidentally" coming across and participating in such experiences.

## **Market Segments:**

1. Prosperous early retired couples - this is a growing market sector with forecast growth of 18% to 2011, in the 45-59 and 60-76 age groups. The main holiday is 2 weeks, normally off-peak but they also take several short-breaks.
2. Prosperous working empty nesters - predominantly fall in the 45-59 age group, which is forecast to grow 18%. Because of robust finances they take several short breaks alongside main holidays. UK main destination for the short breaks because of ease of convenience.
3. Young professional couples/groups -ABC 1 no children, well educated aged 25-40 with high disposable income of £20,000 plus. They are likely to be status conscious and seek holidays which are aspirational. The majority will only consider the UK for short breaks linked to activities or visiting friends or relatives. This group is forecast to decline 8.4% in the 30-44 age group by 2011.
4. Young better off families – more likely to take UK holidays than those with school age children, the projected decline in the 15-29 and 30-44 age group would suggest that this group is likely to decline slightly over the next 10 years.
5. Older better off families – generally take main holidays abroad but top up with short breaks often in the UK and tend to be 4 plus days. They tend to use traditional holiday destinations in the UK. Timing is constrained by school holidays taken during peak times.
6. Middle lower income families - these are the loyal visitors to Wales, and whilst a declining market will remain important because of their volume. Choice of holidays is often constrained by affordability, holidays limited usually to the UK, they still aspire to go abroad for a main holiday. Holiday usually dominated by the main season period.
7. Older less well off couples/groups.
8. Special Interest Niche markets of Walking, Adventure, Golf and Cultural Tourism
9. Business Tourism

Embassy Glyndwr Comments: Yes, all groups listed must be encouraged by enthusiastic, imaginative and zealous across the board marketing to encourage potential tourists worldwide and from all possible backgrounds to visit Wales to experience this 'unique' product but, let's not forget the need to be just as zealous and enthusiastic in marketing for schools and internal tourism within Wales which is just as important as an 'economy' factor and which is crucially important in the 'sense of place' and 'sense of nationhood' factors and in the 'educating our indigenous people of their own history' factor.

### **3.0 Plan Aims:**

The improved interpretation of the selected sites associated with Owain Glyndwr and his uprising should:

help the local economy by developing tourism products and promoting nearby sites,

enhance the conservation of these iconic sites and provide a rationale for their maintenance and improvement,

strengthen a sense of identity and pride in Welsh heritage including Wales' links with the rest of the world – particularly amongst schoolchildren,

help visitors from non-Welsh backgrounds to understand aspects of Welsh history and culture,

help dispel myths about Owain Glyndwr and the uprising amongst Welsh visitors,

promote/raise awareness of sources of further information and relevant groups and organisations.

Embassy Glyndŵr Comments: We would agree with this section but would need more clarification as to what exactly is the consultant referring to when she states that the plan should dispel “myths”. What “myths” is she referring too? I would suggest that further detailed information – or, at the least, examples of what “myths” she’s referring to is needed here.

Further on the subject of myths, the need to record a people's history as accurately as possible is important - as historical record and as far as academia is concerned but, it should be remembered that children of every culture are bought up on myths, legends and folk tales as a natural journey and process of their cultural/national identity. Wales is a land enriched with its own mythology and legends and yes, –this includes some interesting folklore associated with Owain Glyndŵr, much of which can be found in Elissa R Henken's very informative and interesting book 'National Redeemer' (Henken, Elissa R. 1996) but, it's a fact that, for centuries, children in Wales have been bought up to be more familiar with biblical history than with their own history and have been taught to believe that every word published in the bible is the “gospel truth” whereas, of course, there is no hard historical evidence to substantiate any truth in this biblical story book. Are we to take everything we are told about historical figures such as Robin Hood, William Tell, Rob Roy, Robert the Bruce and endless others as the gospel truth? And would we expect our children to be taught a “politically correct” Mabinogion? Of course not, so we should not dispel any folklore or legends concerned with Owain Glyndŵr as not being usable for this Interpretation plan. It should be remembered that the fact that he was considered and publicized by the bards to be 'Y Mab Darogan' (the Son of Prophecy) and all the trappings that

goes with such a title, and the fact that he was also considered to have 'magical powers' is an insight into the many aspects of his character. I would suggest that folklore and legends concerned with Owain Glyndŵr can and should be utilized into this intended tourism initiative but care must be taken not to dilute his character and his stature as the National Hero of Wales in the process.

Also, further clarification is needed as to who she means by the statement:

*"promote, raise awareness of sources of further information and relevant groups and organizations",*

because, in this case, if this Interpretation Plan is anything to go by, she/Cadw would exclude Embassy Glyndŵr and an army of historians, authors of Owain Glyndŵr books, medieval literary professors and re-enactors (that have worked on or written on the subject and period) and other Glyndŵr associated commemorative groups, as not being of any relevance!

#### **4.0 Considerations and parameters:**

Embassy Glyndŵr Comments: I feel that there is a need to answer each point made in this section in turn as they appear following on the opening statement.

Whilst developing this plan we have taken the following points into consideration and Cadw should be mindful of the following concerns, expressed by the range of stakeholders and consultees, during the process of producing interpretation material at the selected sites.

*"The Glyndwr story is only one episode in the history of some of the selected sites".*

E.G. That may be the case, but the remit – and the funding for this project is concerned with marketing the Glyndŵr story only.

*"There is a risk that local people may not feel a sense of 'ownership' over the material or items."*

E.G. That is why all the local initiatives have to be 'community led' as has always been the philosophy of Embassy Glyndŵr once a project has been successfully initiated with the cooperation of the community.

*"There is a risk that sites beyond north-east and mid Wales which played a role in the uprising may be ignored and visitors will not appreciate the pan-Wales nature of the uprising."*

E.G. I wholeheartedly agree, the complete Owain Glyndŵr story cannot possibly be interpreted unless all the regions that have figured in the Glyndŵr history are represented. For instance, in regards to what has been selected to be within the "Eastern Cluster". The important sites of Corwen, Carrog, Pen y Pigyn and Caerdrewyn has been excluded – as has Ruthun and all the other towns linked to the great raid which took place between the 18 -24<sup>th</sup> September following the 16 Sept gathering at Llys Glyndyfrdwy.

Then there's the important site of Mathrafal, the location of the native royal dynasty of Powys Fadog which Owain Glyndŵr was descended from on his father's side of the family. Then in regards to locations chosen for the Western Cluster. No mention of the site of the Battle of Hyddgen; Glyndŵr's first victory totally ignored! How odd?

*"Some sites could be damaged by too many visitors".*

E.G. Again, examples of 'which sites' would be damaged and 'in which way' needed, surely safety and preservation measures can be put into place where needed?

*"There is a danger that the story of the 'uprising' will be conveyed as being about heroes and conquerors and ignore the victims and the hardship which ensued."*

E.G. May I remind the Consultant - and Cadw, that yes, Wales was a conquered nation living under a harsh regime in the period leading up to 1400 but, Owain Glyndŵr's War of Independence ended that century of conquest and the Borough Towns rule regime. The serfs were freed and the peasantry were given the leadership and the opportunity to fight for their rights as Cymry. We may, ultimately, have lost the war then but, arguably we won the peace because we still exist as a people. Yes, we are an occupied and a colonized nation but whilst there are 'Pobl Glyndŵr' in Wales still striving to fulfill Owain Glyndŵr's ambitions for an independent Wales with equal rights and opportunities for all its citizens, Wales does and will remain unconquered.

May I also remind the Consultant - and Cadw, of 'Gŵyl y Cestyll ' / Festival of Castles 1983' (which the Cofiw movement renamed 'Sarhad/Insult 83' - where we got a glorification of the history of Edward I's conquest and colonization of Wales) and how the 'Cofiw' movement had to organize resistance to that year round programme of 'glorification' organized by the then Welsh Tourist Board.

In regards to "the victims and hardship" mentioned; yes, of course there were victims – and hardship – on both sides – as in any war, and medieval society, in general, was brutal and harsh but, the Welsh prior to the war, were already victims suffering hardship under an oppressive and brutal regime. If we are to remember 'victims' and 'hardship' Let's remember the hardship bought about by ethnic cleansing as practised by the Normans in the Southern March and in the Vales of Morgannwg, Gŵyr and Penfro with the creation of an apartheid system of Welshry and Englishry, and the enforcement of the native population into serfdom and a bonded tenantry. The English were notorious for their cruelty throughout Europe. Richard I, venerated as he is, was a real brutal butcher of men, women and children as was Edward I and the two Henrys (IV and V). Indeed, Henry V is regarded as a 'war criminal' by most French historians following horrific atrocities against the French at Agincourt, yet, year after year, we are bombarded with Shakespeare's propaganda upholding these kings.

Owain Glyndŵr's War of Independence gave hope for a free and a more just and better life to every Welsh person suffering under the Anglo Norman regime; this is why he was our national hero then and still is today and we

should not make any apologies for the stand that he and his fellow Cymry made or sterilize our history to suit a timid preconceived and patronizing notion that tourists do not want to know and are not mature enough to be able to deal with the truths of history.

For 'mature' tourism strategies, see how America has dealt with:

- The Lewis and Clark Commemoration.
- The Columbus Discovery
- The Virginia Colony

And please try to view such through the eyes of the conquered and not the conqueror.

*"The plan may create a demand which may not be satisfied at some sites".*

E.G. Surely, the whole point of this proposed initiative is to work towards fulfilling the demand and improving on it constantly with creativity, sheer hard work and determination?

*"The provision may be 'tacky' and inappropriate, in particular souvenirs and infrastructure".*

E.G. I agree wholeheartedly that there's a need to ensure that the provision of the 'interpretation' at any site concerned with the Owain Glyndŵr story in Wales does not become 'tacky' and inappropriate. It must be ensured that Owain Glyndŵr is not reduced from being the greatest of national heroes into a 'pantomime' character. His story can be made entertaining to appeal to all ages without such a need and any Interpretation that does this should not be funded.

In regards to souvenirs and ephemera, again, I would generally agree but, I hope that this does not mean that only the 'pricey' souvenir such as expensive books produced by the "usual subjects" who already receive publishing grant after grant will be available. Again, it should be remembered that this is a tourist initiative and that children will want to spend their meagre pocket money on a gift for a friend or for 'mam' or nain/ 'grandma'. Also, it should be remembered that we are in an economic depression that's going to be with us for a long time so, I would suggest that there should be two types of souvenir on offer. The first should be a variety of Welsh produced items of quality that will provide Welsh jobs in their production and the 2<sup>nd</sup> type should be attractive, historically correct and of good quality but mass produced and inexpensive to buy. On the approach of the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the War of Independence in the year 2000, Embassy Glyndŵr successfully negotiated with Welsh wholesalers to bring out a variety of souvenirs (including the flags and bunting now sold in shops throughout Wales and by a number of wholesalers world wide) which were inexpensive and within most pockets. We also supplied ideas and historical research material to a number of publishers and other Individual production companies who bought out more expensive items. See appendix 6 for examples of some of the souvenirs that we have either produced ourselves, or initiated their production, plus, every year, we have designed our own Owain Glyndŵr themed xmas cards to send out to our acquaintances and supporters.

*“Some of the sites may become unofficial national ‘shrines’ which some people may find off-putting”.*

E.G. By “Shrines”, I suppose what the Consultant means is sites of ‘patriotic veneration’ and I now find that I have to repeat myself again!

Owain Glyndŵr is our greatest of national heroes with a national heroes day which is increasingly celebrated annually. His flag, the Four Lions Rampant (the true flag of Wales) is recognized as much as Y Ddraig Goch (The Tudor Flag) is, and sites such as Glyndyfrdwy, Caerdrewyn, Corwen, Machynlleth and Cefn Caer are, yes, venerated by patriots on 21 June Dydd y Senedd and on Dydd Glyndŵr – 16<sup>th</sup> Sept – and quite rightly so. These sites and other Glyndŵr associated sites – or “shrines” if you wish, should be visited by all schoolchildren in Wales on these dates as an important part of their education. Why should the site of the Battle of Bryn Glas not receive as much veneration as, say, the site of the Battle of the Big Horn or the site of the Sand Creek Massacre by native Americans as a place to rally and be inspired by or, the marvellous Square of Heroes in Hungary or the statues of Vytatus in Lithuania or, closer to home, Bannockburn or Sterling Bridge in Scotland or the GPO in Dublin? I’ve yet to hear the native Americans, the Hungarians, the Lithuanians, the Scots or the Irish voice their concerns that their ‘national shrines’ may be “off-putting” to tourists! No, they are proud of their heroes and are proud to display their greatness to the world. What will destroy the success of this intended interpretation plan on Owain Glyndŵr, are misguided attempts to lace the plan with ‘politically correct’ ideas perceived by a Heritage Establishment that fears to raise its head above the parafit of reality that our nation has, perhaps, began to take steps to recover ‘Cenedl Glyndŵr’. A big step in this recovery process will be to ‘really’ recognize and be proud to show the real history of the life and times of this greatest of our national heroes.

## **5.0. General Recommendations:**

Cadw should do the following in support of the recommended projects and initiatives at the selected sites.

### **Research:**

*“Organize a Seminar of Professional Archaeologists and Historians to assess and review research results at all of the selected sites and to agree overall priorities regarding future excavations and historical research. Most of the sites are ripe for further excavation and research, which are vital to provide tangible evidence and information, to attract public interest and involvement and to answer specific questions”.*

E. Glyndŵr Comments: As this Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan is meant to promote Heritage Tourism, I am not completely convinced that there is a need to squander funding meant for it on employing the services of professional archaeologists and historians apart from the need to research Glyndŵr battle sites and, possibly, further archaeological examinations at Pennal and Carrog (which I will come back to in the sections concerning both

these sites) all of which should be under the remit of the RCAHMW and regional archaeological trusts anyway, the other main sites that would attract Glyndŵr tourism are already very well known and documented. It would be more appropriate if the RCAHMW were to establish a 'Glyndwr Unit' to work in unison with an established Advisory Panel on this plan and I would suggest that their best contribution, at this time, would be to produce and Publish an 'Owain Glyndŵr in the Landscape' publication and series of leaflets as they have already done for 'Heritage in the Landscape'

- *"Invest in Audience Research..."*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Please...no more money spent on consultants! In my opinion it would be a futile exercise and a total waste of money. I have already proposed that 'anybody' 'anywhere' in the world should be targeted. Most of this target audience knows nothing about Owain Glyndŵr and his War of Independence at present so it would be impossible for them to comment accurately in an Audience Research exercise. Such funding should be allocated to Visit Wales and Tourism Partnerships and Local Authorities to create creative and exiting marketing packages on this most enigmatic of Welsh historical characters to draw the worldwide audience here asap for that 'unique experience' Once they've had that "experience", then – and only then, would it make any sense to invest money in Audience Research.

NB: Cadw & associated bodies have already, over the last five years, spent a huge sum of money on discussions in regards to establishing an Historic Environment Strategy which, as far as I could detect, included an unreasonable amount of junketing for Historic Environment professionals. We still await the result of all this 'discussing' and whether it was worth the sum spent?

#### Ownership and sustainability

*"Establish a cluster or group to bring together representatives from each of the sites and main interests in the Glyndwr storyline. The one workshop we held in the process of developing this plan brought representatives from the various selected sites together and helped each to understand the other and start to create a cohesive plan. Regular meetings could bring great benefits to the development of the tourist product, site marketing, interpretation and conservation".*

**Embassy Glyndŵr Comments:** If the consultant is referring to the 'secret' undemocratic workshop that was briefly mentioned on page 12 of the plan then I can only see this move as another exercise in time and money wasting that Welsh Heritage tourism and the Welsh economy hasn't got. It would be more fruitful in my view if an Advisory Panel on what the 'Package Guidelines' was to be, was made up of a marketing representative from Visit Wales, a representative of each of the sites and successful authors such as Terry Breverton, Chris Barber, Gideon Gough, Jenny Sullivan and others that have already researched the subject and period and written on Owain Glyndŵr and the War of Independence and that have sold their work world wide because they are popular rather than academic reads. Once this

Advisory Panel has completed their package guidelines for interpretation, this could be given to the site organizers (whether they be private, local authority or community set up committees) to get on with it - assisted by the regional and local tourism organizations.

*“Appoint a temporary part-time project officer to negotiate partnerships, management and access arrangements. Whilst we developed this plan we became aware of the substantial amount of liaison, negotiation and management which is required in order to develop these sites as effective visitor destinations”.*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** We would recommend that a full time Project coordinator be employed by Cadw to coordinate the Pan Wales Heritage Project. The appointed Coordinator should be extremely well versed in the history of Owain Glyndŵr and his life and times and of the War of Independence. He/she should also be very experienced in liaison, negotiation and management and in coordinating events and activities and should have the ability to travel throughout Wales and to be available for advice and support to each site as needed in order to develop these sites as effective and unique visitor destinations.

- *“Undertake thorough and timely consultation with local institutions such as Community Councils and local access groups...”*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Yes, we would agree but would suggest that this work should be carried out by the full time Project Coordinator. Embassy Glyndŵr has already carried out much of this work (as much as finance and resources would permit) for the last 11 yrs but on a voluntary basis and at our own expense in time and money. The main obstacle has always been the reluctance of County and Local Authorities and other bodies to fund Owain Glyndŵr Festivals, re-enactors and other associated projects but this funding problem should, of course, not be so much of an issue again until 2013 if this initiative is realized – and by then, hopefully, the initiative will have been successful and solid foundations established to enable it to continue and prosper on its Pan Wales platform.

As earlier stated, it has always been the philosophy of Embassy Glyndŵr to encourage communities throughout Wales to have a ‘sense of ownership’ over their own Glyndŵr Project and to organize it themselves. Nevertheless, we have – and still are constantly approached for assistance and support.

Since working over the years with local authorities such as at Corwen, Dolgellau and Machynlleth to name but a few, Embassy Glyndŵr has seen that there is a need to set up a ‘Glyndŵr Towns Association’ of all Welsh towns associated with the Glyndŵr history. We suggest that this idea be adopted within this Interpretation Plan as a further means towards forging the Pan Wales nature of the plan.

- *“Consider financing the Interpretation of other aspects of the history of some sites...”*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** We would strongly disagree with and contest the above recommendation. In the first instance, this is an Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation – that is what the funding is for - and secondly, if the funding is filtered off into other areas, not only would it defeat the whole objective but it would weaken the resources and energy that needs to be put into the initiative to create that ‘unique’ project. Anything less, would be similar to what’s already on offer – anywhere! It is Owain Glyndŵr, his life and times and the War of Independence as the subject material that is the ‘unique product’.

- *“Appoint one author each for Welsh and English to produce texts at all sites...”*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Would agree but would add that the authors would need to coordinate fully with the Site Managers, Cadw and the All Wales Project Coordinator to ensure that suitable and inspiring texts are composed and delivered. Also, it should be taken into consideration that theatrical scripts will need to be produced for theatrical and re-enactment displays and, again, as the initiative is aimed at tourism, the scripts will need to be in a language that all tourists can understand and, at the moment, that is English. Translation facilities into a number of other languages may need to be provided on sites and in some situations, especially in Welsh speaking areas, there will be times when the only language of a play, re-enactment or other activity may need to be in Welsh – especially in the case of school visits.

*“Commission an Independent academic expert to verify all scripts and texts”.*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Whereas I would agree with the need to ensure that the Interpretation is as authentic as possible, it must also be remembered that this is a tourism project and not an academic exercise therefore, as well as being as authentic as possible it needs to be exiting and entertaining. If an Independent academic expert is to be employed, it should be out of the list of authors that have, following their in depth research, produced books on Owain Glyndŵr that have sold world wide as good reads. Also, in some cases and communities, Interpretation may need to be centered on legends and myths associated with Owain Glyndŵr – as is already done in the case of the ‘Twm Sion Cati Country’ of Tregaron and Abergweslyn.

Further in regards to ‘authenticity’ – and rarely mentioned in this Interpretation Plan, is the area of Medieval Re-enactment and Re-enactors. We have worked with many of these groups over the last ten years, in connection with Owain Glyndŵr festivals and associated events and activities, and not only are they entertaining to both adults and children alike, most have researched deeply into medieval warfare and are very authentic with their ‘kit’. Nevertheless, I was told by John Tremellian of the ‘Horses in History’ Re-enactment group that Cadw will not employ his company because they do not want the horses to damage the grass on their properties! Well, how authentic is that? A medieval Owain Glyndŵr on a charger that must ride on concrete only - if they are to be considered for employment by Cadw! My God, this can only happen in Wales! In England, Scotland, Ireland - or any other country, it’s not an issue! suitable sites are

found by festival and event organizers for exiting large scale battle re-enactments which includes re-enactments of battles on horseback if needed. So, John Tremellian and his company are in the ridiculous situation where they have to transport Glyndŵr to lead battle re-enactments in Scotland in order to finance the upkeep and stabling of their horses!

One of the projects that Embassy Glyndŵr has had on a back burner for years but has been unable to launch because of the lack of finance and resources is that of Teyrnas Glyndŵr – a Cymric Medieval Living History Re-enactment Academy where present re-enactors would be employed to thoroughly train new Cymric re-enactors (unemployed Welsh and English speakers) in every aspect of life in Teyrnas Glyndŵr (Glyndwr's Kingdom). It is intended for all re-enactors that goes through the Academy to gain acknowledged accreditations (to be decided on) in their chosen field of study before being available for work in the tourism, education and film industry.

The above, of course, would provide employment for the trainers and for the Cymric re-enactors once they've completed their training. It would also provide re-enactors in all aspects of 'Teyrnas Owain Glyndŵr' for all the Pan Wales sites that should be included in this interpretation Plan. The alternative is that this crucial area is left wide open for English Events Management Organizations to be hired who, in turn, will hire English re-enactors whilst the Cymry remain on the slag heap!

- *“Be consistent in referring to the main character as Owain Glyndŵr In all interpretation material since this is Cadw's house style”.*

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** In general, we would agree that our national hero be referred to as Owain Glyndŵr in all Interpretation material although, we do not disapprove regards the use of the familiar 'Glyndŵr' - as to patriots, this is as meaningful as 'Geronimo' or 'Zapata' however, we would stubbornly insist that titles and headings must also refer to Owain Glyndŵr as Owain IV Tywysog Cymru.

Raising Awareness:

- Grant aid a tour of Syched am Sycharth.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** As much as I, personally, enjoyed this show and as much as I want to see the Welsh language survive, I have to, again, remind that this initiative is, in the main, meant to increase tourism figures and, as far as I know, Syched am Sycharth is a Welsh language production. I don't know if it could be translated for external tourism and have great doubts if the bards concerned would wish to do that or, if the show would still work if they did?

However, I would welcome the funding of Welsh medium productions such as 'Syched am Sycharth' and Cwmni Cortyn's Puppet show (on the Dafydd Gam's Assassination attempt on Owain Glyndŵr) if it is to be an integrated part of a Welsh language interpretation internal tourism package to be presented in Welsh speaking areas and aimed at Welsh speaking audiences.

Also, it should be noted that such tours as the 'Syched am Sycharth' one can access funding by other means such as the Writers on Tour Scheme run by the Welsh Academy and Welsh Arts Council Schemes. They can also, of course, charge an admittance fee – as was done in 2001 by the Syched am Sycharth bards.

We cannot remind one and all enough that the funding associated with this Owain Glyndŵr Initiative is intended to boost the Welsh Heritage Tourism industry and economy and will also, hopefully, provide the Welsh "dispossessed under privileged" right across Wales with new training opportunities and jobs in this new and 'unique' Welsh Heritage Tourism industry. If this is to have a real chance of succeeding, then there's a need to be extra vigilant in ensuring that the money associated with this Heritage Initiative is carefully and democratically injected into projects throughout Wales that will need to demonstrate that they could not otherwise go ahead without it and that they will provide jobs for the officially unemployed. There has to be total transparency and accountability and the public needs to be ensured that no 'insider dealings' will take place with the funding being divided up and parceled off to the 'usual suspects' of professional grant grabbers.

- *"Commission a theatre in education show and finance a national tour around schools in Wales".*

**Embassy Glyndwr comments:** This recommendation, again, concerns me for the same reasons that I gave above and ,again, the words 'insider dealing' and 'usual suspects' spring to mind. Again, I have need to remind the Consultant employed, Cadw and WAG that this initiative is about boosting Welsh Heritage Tourism and not about funding Theatre in Education. There are other sources of funding for commissioning written work and for Theatre in Education. This is 'wrong thinking' by someone who is not thinking 'tourism and Welsh economy' but who is thinking 'cultural gravy train'. Expenditure on provision and marketing of the product to 'external tourism' needs to be the priority if we are to get large numbers of tourists here and Visit Wales needs to really get their act together in regards to this but, I would like to see a national tour of a theatre in education show around schools in Wales take place (as part of A Pan Wales 'internal tourism' package) so long as it's the story of the 'Glyndŵr War of Independence' that will be depicted and not some 'flash in the pan' uprising!

## **Marketing**

These actions would ensure that the investment in the interpretation of these Owain Glyndwr sites reaps benefits and achieves some of the stated aims.

Promote fully interpreted Owain Glyndwr sites to tourism partnerships, County Council marketing departments and bus and rail companies so that products become part of their on-going campaigns.

Consider a national marketing campaign to attract visitors specifically to smaller heritage sites in partnership with Visit Wales and National

Museums and Galleries of Wales.

Stimulate co-operation with more established attractions locally in order to use them as points of entry and marketing hubs.

Raise awareness of these Owain Glyndwr sites amongst Tourist Information Centres.

Develop a logo or emblem based on the Owain Glyndwr/Princes of Gwynedd coat of arms to unite the various sites – to be used on brown signs directing visitors to sites and on interpretation items at the various sites.

Negotiate a page on the websites of the following organisations displaying an interactive map highlighting the various selected Glyndwr sites with a brief description of the significance of each, what there is to see there together with directions. This map should also refer to other ‘more minor’ Glyndwr towns or sites not selected as part of this plan but which played a role during the uprising.

Powys Council tourism section,

Ceredigion Council tourism section,

Mid Wales Tourism Partnership (link with on-going campaigns such as ‘food’),

Tourism Partnership North Wales (link with on-going campaigns such as ‘North Wales giants’)

Enjoy Medieval Denbighshire,

Borderlands

Snowdonia - Mountains and Coast (work with Harlech tourism association within SMC marketing area)

Produce a plaque or small panel to be displayed at towns and sites not selected for this plan but which played a role in the history of the uprising. Many towns and sites have verifiable associations with the uprising but we have not selected them to play a role in this plan as fully interpreted sites. A plaque or small panel displayed at these places would ensure a broader ‘ownership’ over the story and would mean that visitors could appreciate the pan-Wales nature of the uprising. These items should refer visitors to the above web page displaying an interactive map of all sites.

Produce a trail leaflet linking all the selected sites to include a geocaching element. A relatively simple leaflet could highlight all eight sites to follow a chronological sequence of events in Owain Glyndwr’s life and career. It must be borne in mind that although families are not the main target audience at several of the selected sites a geocaching element to the leaflet could entice them to visit the sites as part of this trail.

Establish a programme of local school visits to key sites. Once the interpretation and access infrastructure are in place Cadw should encourage local schools to visit by providing specially for them in line with appropriate programmes of study in the National Curriculum – ‘homes’ and ‘the Princes of Wales’. Indeed the educational pack on Owain Glyndwr developed by Gwynedd Council archives service could be adapted to suit the current national curriculum.

Install brown tourist destination signs to direct and reassure visitors as they search for the selected sites.

Jointly market the main iconic sites associated with Owain Glyndwr, Princes of Gwynedd, Princes of Deheubarth and Lords of the Marches under the title ‘essential places every Welsh person must visit’ or similar.

**Embassy Glyndŵr Comments:** There are numerous pointers in the above section which are very welcome and which I would wholeheartedly agree with. I particularly like the point in regards to establishing a programme of local school visits to key sites. This will be ‘educational internal tourism’ in practice, something which we ourselves in Embassy Glyndŵr has advocated for many years.

Re the logo. Its important to distinguish between the ‘Passive Lions’ of the original arms of the Princes of Gwynedd and Prince Owain Glyndŵr’s ‘Rampant Lions’ Coat of Arms. Its true that Prince Owain adopted the Princes of Gwynedd Coat of Arms but the lions had already been changed to ‘rampant lions’ by the male descendants of the Royal House of Gwynedd in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Most people that are interested know the different now in Wales – and abroad, but it is important to ensure consistency.

I will recommend here that you follow through on the way that Embassy Glyndŵr has successfully promoted Glyndŵr worldwide via the promotion of three key dates associated with the Owain Glyndŵr history, they being;

- 28 May 1354. Dydd Geni Glyndŵr/Glyndŵr’s Birthday. Focus to be on Sycharth and Llansilian and Spring Breaks to North East Wales and, Penfro in South West Wales - as a nod to the belief of some that Glyndŵr was born in Trefgarne Owain.
- 21 June 1404. ‘Dydd Coroni Glyndŵr a Dydd Senedd Glyndŵr’. Glyndŵr Coronation and Parliament Day. Focus to be on Machynlleth and Summer Breaks to Machynlleth and Central Wales and walking and trekking tours along the Glyndŵr trail. However, as this is supposed to be the best time of the year, this date could be used to encourage Glyndŵr Tourism at Glyndŵr associated sites all over Wales.
- 16 Medi/Sept 1400. Dydd Glyndŵr Day. Our National Heroes Day. Main focus needs to be centered on Corwen and Ruthun with, also. promotion of the day on a national level and Autumn Breaks Tourism - gain to North East Wales but, as this day is celebrated all over Wales, let’s be mindful of regional Owain Glyndŵr Day Festivals such

as the extremely successful 3 day one at Abercraf which has been organized by the SGF for the last 6 years. (See an update re the SGF Owain Glyndwr Annual Festival in Appendice 5)

Embassy Glyndŵr has already carried out a great deal of hard work over the years to establish the above chief national commemorative days by, in the first instance, embedding the dates in 'This Day in History' web sites world wide, and by encouraging the flying of the Glyndŵr flag in Wales and throughout the world on these dates. They offer great annual marketing opportunities for drawing internal and external tourists to major annual Owain Glyndŵr festivals at the locations specified.

#### 6.0. *"The Selected sites and relationship with each other".*

We have selected eight sites to play a role in this interpretation plan. Each has a well established association with Owain Glyndwr and the events associated with his uprising - indeed they were all central to his career. They also fall into two geographical 'groups' or 'clusters' so that people can be referred and travel from one to another, within the same day if they wish. We believe that this is the way to get the best out of the investment in interpretation and fits in with visitor behaviour

– there is a limit to the distances which visitors will travel from one site to another and how thinly the money can be spread! However we recognise that these sites will operate independently of each other within a very local cluster of destinations, only some of which may have a heritage focus, and none of which will have an association with Owain Glyndwr.

#### **Eastern cluster**

Village of Hanmer

Sycharth

Glyndyfrdwy

Bryn Glas battlefield, Pilleth

#### **Western cluster**

Machynlleth

Pennal

Aberystwyth Castle

Harlech Castle

Visitors with a genuine interest in Owain Glyndwr will be able to gain an appreciation of the pan-Wales nature of the uprising and its general effect on the towns and landscape of Wales either by:

visiting the Owain Glyndwr Centre at Machynlleth or those planned for Harlech Castle or Corwen,

visiting the dedicated web page with an interactive map of all relevant sites,

reading one of the excellent reference books referred to in the interpretation provision.

Towns and sites not selected to be fully interpreted as part of this plan can also play a part by displaying one of the specially produced plaques or small panels which will refer visitors to the dedicated web page. Such places may include Rhuthun, Denbigh, Llanymddyfri, Caernarfon, the castles at Cydweli, Coity, Montgomery, New Radnor,

Conwy, Carmarthen, Brecon and the monasteries at Strata Florida, Llanfaes and Llantarnam, and the town of Bangor where the Tripartite Indenture was signed, amongst others.

**Embassy Glyndŵr Comments:** This is most definitely a controversial and contentious area. The Owain Glyndŵr War of Independence spread throughout Wales very rapidly and apart from the fact that you cannot possibly interpret the complete story of the war without representation for all regions and chapters in the history in question, every part of Wales has got a stake in the history of Glyndŵr and should be encouraged and assisted to take advantage of their part of this history to boost their tourism potential but yet, only eight sites have been chosen to be part of this plan out of at the least fifty five associated sites throughout Wales. The following are merely but examples of the many important areas excluded.

Corwen Caeredwyn and Ruthun and, indeed, all the towns linked to the great raid of 18 – 26 September 1400. Then there's Mathrafal which, of course is the location of the native royal dynasty of Powys Fadog which Glyndŵr is descended from and, of course, Trefngarne Owain in Penfro, where some believe to be where Glyndŵr was born. Then there's the Battle of Hyddgen site (earlier mentioned) and the areas associated with the major Southern campaign of Summer 1402, sweeping from Bryn Glas into Gwent and Bro Morgannwg and into Y Rhondda before returning North. Then there's the important episode in Caernarfon on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1402, where Owain Glyndŵr rose his Golden Dragon battle flag – symbolically confronting the bastion of over 100 yrs of English rule and let's not forget the campaign in Ystrad Tywi and the capture of Carmarthen castle in the summer of 1403, followed by Glyndwr moving North to boost defenses in Flintshire following the battle of Shrewsbury whilst Rhys Gethin led a momentous sweep of the Grand Liberation Army into South Wales to fight such momentous battles as those of Stalling Down and Pwll Melyn.

Every community in Wales could be in the position of getting an opportunity to capitalize on the heroic dynamics of the Owain Glyndŵr story for the benefit of their local economy and what do we get, the same 'template thinking' of a moribund establishment that's terrified of getting real about

'Sense of Nation' aka 'National Identity' by having a real consolidated Pan Wales Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan. This plan, in the way that it excludes Glyndŵr from the rest of Wales, may meet its guidelines as dictated by Cadw but it certainly doesn't contribute to the WAG'S policies towards enhancing a 'Sense of Nation. On the contrary, it serves more to divide Wales artificially into a contemporary Pura Wallia and Marcher Wallia and the pathetic attempt to appease the towns and sites which have been left out of the plan with a suggestion that these towns and sites may have a part to play by the displaying of a plaque is both insulting and unfair and I hope that these areas will insist on their rights to play a pro active role in this plan and to be given practical and financial assistance to do so in the same way that the chosen sites are.

## **7.0. Proposed Interpretation themes.**

These interpretation themes focus on Owain Glyndwr and the various facets of the uprising. Since each selected site will operate independently of the other each will need to present a general introduction to Glyndwr and the uprising but the interpretation should go further so that visitors leave with a greater understanding and even a sense of 'awe'. In order for this to happen, and for visitors to have a memorable experience, the interpretation provision should convey the proposed interpretation theme or themes for each site as detailed in section 9.0. People tend to remember themes and forget facts and these themes are based on the following principles adopted by Cadw that:

a.  
history happened here

I lived here

It must be borne in mind that the themes can be conveyed in a variety of ways including a personalised approach from the standpoint of his supporters, opponents, family etc.

Owain Glyndwr's ancestry and status influenced his actions and ultimately his fate.

A feudal lord, descendant of Welsh royal lineage who lived in splendid mansions

Had an Anglo-Welsh heritage/background

Fulfilled the predictions of poets – 'Y Mab Darogan'

Was a family man, whose wife was key to his cause and who, together with his daughters suffered dreadful fates

b.  
Owain Glyndwr's sense of injustice moved him to take up the flag on behalf of fellow Welsh people with similar grievances.

Led a rebellion against the social, economic and religious hardships in Wales at the time

Gathered key influential leaders around him to provide gravitas and status to his cause

c.

Owain Glyndwr's background, military experience and loyalty from fellow Welsh people made him a defiant leader.

Had served under the English crown

Used astute tactics to defeat his enemy.

His cause split families and communities and wrought destruction to the landscape and buildings of Wales. He was defiant in the face of overwhelming odds.

d.

Owain Glyndwr appealed to many corners of war-torn Wales and nearly brought it greater unity and representation.

His uprising touched on most parts of Wales which were ravaged as a result

Following centuries of feudal dynastic rule he assembled representatives of various 'commotes' as a 'parliament'.

He had a vision of himself as head of state, the leader of a more modern nation.

e.

Owain Glyndwr and his advisers planned an independent Wales informed by the latest religious, social and educational developments in parts of Europe.

His rebellion matured into a vision for a state.

He sought the support of the king of France and the Pope at Avignon to realise his vision.

Became an international figure who sought alliances abroad in Europe.

f.

Although Owain Glyndwr's dream failed, he was never betrayed, but instead he faded into the legend books to re-emerge centuries later a national hero.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** On the whole, the introduction as well as the points raised as areas of interpretation in this section is acceptable but again, more clarification on the points are needed.

First of all, the 'uprising' nonsense does, of course, need to be changed for "War of Liberation".

Also, in regards to section (A)

- Owain Glyndŵr was descended from both the Dynasties of Powys and Deheubarth (Davies, R.R. 1995) and was also descended from the Dynasty of the Princes of Gwynedd through his grandmother Catharine, (mother of Elen or Elenor Goch) who was the hidden daughter of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd (Ellis, Thomas B.D. 1775) This is why he adopted the Royal flag of Gwynedd which had been adapted to depict 'rampant' instead of 'passive' lions by the male descendants of the House of Gwynedd in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Davies, R.R. p163) and why Iolo Goch in his famous poem proclaimed Owain to be the 'un pen ar Gymru' 'only' head of all Wales. (Lewis Henry. Roberts, Thomas. Williams, Ifor. 1937)
- Yes, he fulfilled the predictions of the poets as the long awaited 'Mab Darogan' but the mysticism influence on Glyndŵr can and should be more closely explored. i.e. Was his a self fulfilling prophecy perhaps? Apart from Shakespeare's Henry IV, Glyndŵr has remained a notable figure in the popular culture of both Wales and England, the well documented warlock Alex Sanders for one, made much of this wizardry element in him and, even today, 'Wiccans' claim Glyndŵr as their 'Founding father' ([Lesson 2a: Wicca \[Archive\] - MysticWicks Online Pagan Community ...](#) ... "**Alex Sanders** (1926-1988)" (<http://www.cog.org/wicca/trads/alex2.html>) - by ... [mysticwicks.com/archive/index.php/t-161120.html](http://mysticwicks.com/archive/index.php/t-161120.html) - Cached)

*"Was a family man, whose wife was key to his cause and who, together with his daughters suffered dreadful fates"*

"The role of women in medieval society – and especially in Welsh medieval society does need to be explored. Marred bore Glyndŵr many children, what purpose had this to play in medieval policy of alliances?"

Regards (B)

*"Owain Glyndwr's sense of injustice moved him to take up the flag on behalf of fellow Welsh people with similar grievances".*

The background to this injustice needs to be explored and explained in Interpretation. i.e. The social injustice stemmed from colonial legislation that prevailed against the native population. It was an apartheid system of Welshry and Englishry (Davies, R.R. 1966. Accessed July 2010) with racism against the Welsh also playing a role (Geoffrey of Monmouth 1984) The Statues of Rhuddlan 1284 militated against socio-economic advance of the native and all this was taking place during the period of the famine and plague of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Distant Mirror, Tuchman, Barbara. W 1978) so the native population had 'had enough'. Owain was very aware that he was about to lead a

War of Independence against all odds; a population of 500,000 taking on a population of 3 million and a mighty military machine to boot. Was his destiny decided for him?

*“Led a rebellion against the social, economic and religious hardships in Wales at the time”*

Again, “sigh” he led a ‘war’ not a ‘rebellion’.

*“His cause split families and communities and wrought destruction to the landscape and buildings of Wales”*

All the historical resources and books that I have read agree that communities throughout Wales rallied to Glyndŵr’s and Wales’s cause. Prof R.R. Davies states:

*“ It was no longer a matter of guerrilla raids, those continued, but of an awesome Welsh army marching from Brecon down the Tywi Valley and sweeping all before it. Whole communities now defected en masse to the Welsh cause”* (Davies, R.R. 1995)

Poet Gruffydd Hiraethog, writing between 1556 and 1564 wrote:

*“Owen now won great fame, and a great number of youths and fighting men from every part of Wales rose and joined him, until he had a great host at his back”* (Lloyd. J.E. 1931)

The latter quote was, of course, a translation of the original text but all quotes above surely serves to illustrate that the ‘sweeping statement’ of the consultant in regards to Owain’s cause splitting families is unfounded and has no place in an interpretation plan such as this. As for the ‘destruction’, it took both sides to do this and yes, colonial borough towns and castle – and churches that would have sided with the English would have been legitimate targets and much destruction would have been caused by peasants pillaging, this was war often economic in form! But, let’s not forget English raving and the English burning of villages and homes and Welsh sites of worship (such as the abbey at Ystrad Fflur) and the dragging away (in chains) of 1000’s of Welsh women and children as slaves, not to mention their fondness for blinding hostages. And do remember that much of the destruction that Glyndŵr has been accused of, has come out of the mouths of Tudor propagandists such as Powel of Ruabon (Powel,D. 1584) I don’t think that an interpretation plan such as this one is the place to ‘sweepingly’ endorse such propaganda.

- *“He was defiant in the face of overwhelming odds”*

Obviously so – as Welsh backs were against the wall. Also, it should be remembered when devising interpretations plans that whilst many, towards the latter part of the war, took pardons and revoked their oath to Glyndŵr, many didn’t and Glyndŵr himself never surrendered. We know that his son, Maredudd, continued to fight up until 1421 (Breverton,T. 2009) and whilst much is made of the Welsh that fought at Agincourt, many did not - such as

Henry Gwyn of Llansteffan; and many remained as outlaws right up to the Henry Tudor period - at the least!

(d) “ *Owain Glyndwr appealed to many corners of war-torn Wales and nearly brought it greater unity and representation*”.

Glyndŵr’s War did not “nearly” bring unity, it brought an unity like had never been witnessed in the past history of Wales. It also bought parliamentary democracy as witnessed when representatives of the Welsh commotes were called upon to form his parliament and not the ‘barons’ of the land - as was the case in the Simon de Montfort Parliament for example.

(The first **Parliaments** - UK **Parliament**

[www.parliament.uk/.../evolutionofparliament/originsofparliament/birthofparliament/.../firstparliaments/](http://www.parliament.uk/.../evolutionofparliament/originsofparliament/birthofparliament/.../firstparliaments/) - Cached)

f. “*Although Owain Glyndwr’s dream failed*”

- The War may have been lost in the end but the dream lives on in the minds and hearts of all those ‘Pobl Glyndŵr’ who are still working towards an Independent Wales that will provide an equal opportunity in life to each of its citizens until the end of time.

## **8.0. Target markets, characteristics and preferred media**

### **8.1 Target markets**

Following our research into growth tourism sectors (see section 2.32) we identified three main target markets which are particularly relevant to the areas within which the selected sites sit and which we believe could be attracted to some of the sites or already visit, in the case of Harlech Castle. We then attempted to describe the characteristics of these market segments in order to ‘step into the shoes’ of a typical visitor so that the choice of recommended interpretation media for each site was informed by these ‘pen-pictures’. Our assumptions regarding preferred media are based on our knowledge of individuals whose behaviour we are familiar with rather than on any empirical research. [See Tables on following pages...](#)

**Market segment Characteristics:**

Market segment	Characteristics	Assumed preferred media
<p>1. Prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters</p> <p>English sublet</p> <p>Welsh sublet</p>	<p>Tend to take several breaks out of main season Main holiday focus can be cultural although can be motivated by a mixture of walking and cultural activities.</p> <p>Seeking an enriching and engaging experience, which has substance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Have high expectations because they are experienced visitors.</li> <li>. Despite affluence can be budget aware</li> <li>. Time rich and prepared to devote some effort</li> </ul> <p>Independent and not crowd seeking – perhaps even shun crowds.</p> <p>Have some background based on English history but know little of Welsh history May perceive Glyndwr as anti-English and are turned off by him May know of some myths</p> <p>Have some prior knowledge and think they know a lot but may be mis-informed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. See Glyndwr as an icon and martyr</li> <li>. Want to learn more and have a special memorable experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Interpretation panels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Interpretation kiosk</li> <li>. Reenactments</li> <li>. Exhibition including AV/film</li> <li>. Guided tours/walks</li> </ul> <p>Booklet</p>

Market segment	Characteristics	Assumed preferred media
2. Young professional couples or groups	<p>Visit any time of the year – particularly out of season</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Seeking a cultural experience as a wet weather or rest day alternative to activity</li> <li>· Seeking a novel experience crammed into a busy schedule</li> <li>· Tend to be status conscious</li> <li>· Are time rich but devote short attention to experience</li> <li>· Any one experience has to compete with others</li> <li>· Have a lot of disposable income</li> </ul> <p>May devote some time to planning and research prior to visit.</p>	<p>Mobile phone tour/commentary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Hand held device - audio and/or visual – must be pretty smart.</li> <li>· Themed events e.g. medieval banquets</li> <li>· Sound and lighting</li> <li>· Soundposts/audio commentary</li> <li>· Downloadable MP3/MP4 files from web or bluetooth transmitter</li> </ul>
English sublet	<p>Relatively ignorant but thirsty for knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· May be attracted by hero figure and heroic feats</li> </ul>	
Welsh sublet	<p>Sketchy knowledge and may be mis-informed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Want a special experience they can talk about with friends</li> </ul>	

Market segment	Characteristics	Assumed preferred media
<p>3. Young better . off families .</p>	<p>Looking for entertainment and ways to fill day by keeping children occupied</p> <p>.</p> <p>Not so concerned about standard of experience</p> <p>.</p> <p>Interests of parents can be important and experience needs to appeal to all members.</p> <p>Time poor with short attention spans but will stay under the right conditions.</p> <p>Budget aware and seeking value for money.</p> <p>Want to accomplish something and get a taste of place.</p>	<p>Interpretation panels - quirky</p> <p>.</p> <p>Interpretation kiosk quirky</p> <p>.</p> <p>Hand held device – limited - perhaps a geocaching trail experience needs to appeal to all members</p> <p>Costumed/ in role tours</p> <p>.</p> <p>Re-enactments</p> <p>.</p> <p>Themed events e.g. medieval fairs</p> <p>.</p> <p>Sound and lighting (if not too realistic)</p> <p>.</p> <p>Exhibition including AV/film – must be quirky &amp; entertaining</p> <p>.</p> <p>Public art</p> <p>.</p> <p>Soundposts/audio commentary</p> <p>.</p> <p>Downloadable MP3/MP4 files from web if have access via laptop</p> <p>.</p> <p>Bluetooth download although difficult to share with children.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Leaflet – specific for families</p>

## 8.2 Target audiences for sites:

We have focussed on one or more of the above target audiences at each site, depending on the nature of the site and the area within which it sits, since some sites will naturally appeal more to some audiences than others. This selection has depended on whether there is another attraction or experience which appeals to a particular market segment nearby and is based on the characteristics described above. However it must be borne in mind that visitors local to a site or location may fall within any one of the target audiences.

Embassy Glyndŵr Comments: As I have previously explained in my analysis of section 2.32, In my view, the strategic aim should be to create a 'unique to Wales' heritage tourism package that will have within it aspects that will appeal to every potential 'internal' as well as 'external tourist' regardless of, age, gender, nationality, and level of disposable income. Whether the 'potential tourist' is seeking a long or short stay or a day trip to an unique event, nobody should be excluded from being a 'potential target' The marketing process for this new 'unique to Wales' heritage tourism package should not be guided by past tourism models and "presumed interests groups"

For the above reasons, I would suggest that the "perceived" target markets chosen for this Interpretation plan are too limited and that the "presumed" characteristics of the target markets chosen are 'elitist' in nature and are based entirely on the knowledge of individuals whose behavior is familiar to the commissioned consultant.

Individuals of every class and from all walks of life have frequented Owain Glyndŵr Festivals and events that I have been involved in or have participated in over the years, and, as far as I know, they have all had a wonderful time and have learnt a great deal about Owain Glyndŵr and his War of Independence and, I have seen them returning year after year. For example, families and hordes of children from all over the Rhondda Valleys used to frequent the Coity Owain Glyndŵr Festival which, sadly, has now elapsed due to lack of funding and the death of one of the organizers. The Sleeping Giant Foundation have organized a brilliant Owain Glyndŵr Festival for the last six years and attracts families and individuals from all walks of life. The story is the same at Cosmeston and I'm pleased to see that both the Machynlleth and Corwen Festival has now been re-established.

The above is 'internal tourism' in practice and the aim should be to expand this appeal so that Owain Glyndŵr sites and events will appeal world wide to 'external' as well as 'internal tourists' – of all classes. If a product is exiting and 'unique' and money is invested well in the product and in its marketing, it will sell. Wales is unique and Owain Glyndŵr and his War of Independence is most definitely unique and no class, regardless of their amount of disposable income, should be excluded from the experience on offer.

## 1. Prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters.

English subset *“May perceive Glyndŵr as anti-English and are turned off by him”*

Embassy Glyndwr Comments: Here we go again! The usual ‘timid’ and apologetic approach to our history. So, what’s the recommendation of the Consultant here? That we should ‘tip toe’ around tourists and censor our Owain Glyndŵr history in the same way that the Princes of Gwynedd history has been heavily censored at Caernarfon and the other Edwardian castles for years? No, we should, most certainly not allow this to happen! and I would suggest, that if we did, Welsh heritage Tourism and the Welsh economy would lose out big time. Owain Glyndŵr is the ‘unique’ product only if the exiting truth of his history is told and re-enacted in an exiting and ‘entertaining for all’ way.. Tourists are not stupid, they want to know the truth and not be patronized by a white washed version of Welsh history. Portraying the history of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce did not stop audiences anywhere in the world buying cinema tickets because the films portrayed the characters as being anti-English? We need to be as mature and as proud as other countries in regards to our history. Potential Tourists, wherever they’re from, can be shown a ‘Croeso Cynnes Cymreig’ in numerous ways without us having to censor our history. We will gain more worldwide respect if we don’t.

Welsh subset *“Have some prior knowledge and think they know a lot but may be mis-informed”*

Embassy Glyndwr Comment: More clarification is needed again. By whom would the Welsh potential tourist have been ‘mis-informed’ in regards to the history of Owain Glyndŵr and his War of Independence. Sweeping statements such as this need to be clarified.

*“See Glyndwr as an icon and martyr”*

Embassy Glyndŵr Comment: An icon? I hope so, Owain Glyndŵr is the strongest and most interesting icon in our history. As well as being renowned as a Great Warrior Prince, strategist and scholar, he has left us his vision of a ‘democratic for all’ independent Cymru as a legacy to fulfill so yes, he is our greatest icon.

Martyr? No! a great Warrior leader who deliberately and mysteriously disappeared so that the prophecy – and the dream could survive, Yes! and the only way that the potential Welsh tourist, or any other tourist for that matter, is going to have a *“special memorable experience”* is for the history to be interpreted, with pride, as a great and ‘unique’ history and in the most creative and imaginable way possible.

## 2. Young Professional couples or groups.

Again, as in (1) above, more clarification is needed as to who may have mis-informed these potential tourists.

## 3. Young better off families.

In the 'Characteristics' column, It is perceived that this group are "*not so concerned about standard of experience*". I would suggest that no interpretation provider should think like that - with any interpretation or, their business/project won't last long if they do! And certainly with the interpretation in question, the aim should be to provide a 'spectacular and awesome experience that will encourage visitors to, both, return time and time again and to tell others about it.

### 8.3 Recommended media for sites

Interpretation panels and/or kiosks are a traditional means of interpretation and can vary greatly, frequently seeming to be rather boring but when executed well they can communicate effectively to the broadest range of audiences 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year. Since many of the selected sites are remote then panels and/or kiosks must play a role but the challenge is to make them lively, engaging and relevant. Listening posts can add an interesting audio dimension to the static visual panel and may have a role to play at some of the sites. Although there is a limit to the amount of time any visitor is prepared to stand and listen (currently estimated at 2 minutes max) if the audio file contains a specially scripted dialogue between several characters then this may enhance the experience substantially. Mobile phone commentary downloads from the web, bluetooth downloads and satellite enabled smart phone applications are all exciting audio/visual developments which are in theory applicable at many of the selected sites. However these are not prominent in our site recommendations since we are not convinced that as high a proportion of the target audience of prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters would:

own the type of phones to receive such technology,

carry them with them during their visit,

have them switched on,

have them charged,

would find a signal at many of the sites

as amongst other target audiences.

However once scripted and recorded the audio files and commentaries could be available via several of these technologies in due course. Static computer interactives such as touchscreen are suitable for many indoor circumstances and can appeal to a cross-section of audiences but need some maintenance input. We also recommend other interpretive media, based on our analysis of audience characteristics and the nature of the site or location. If implemented all these contribute to developing a product which make sites more intellectually accessible and enjoyable for both tourists and residents.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** 'Preferred Media' cannot be 'assumed'. Different forms of media and interpretation devices can be 'suggested' as being suitable – and most have been listed in this section but, each media form and devise necessary will depend entirely on the interpretation taking

place at each site and the cloth will have to be cut to suit. For example, in the case of a gigantic production of the Owain Glyndŵr story interpreted via a *son et lumiere pageant* laid on at the Llanelwedd Royal Welsh showground (and do remember that you saw the idea for such a show here first!), there would be a need for numerous forms of technical media as well as the conventional.

The scripted audio files and commentaries will, of course, need to be available in a number of known main languages spoken by tourists as well as Welsh and English and translation equipment will need to be available.

## **9.0. The sites and recommendations**

### **Hanmer:**

#### **9.1.1 Site significance**

Owain Glyndwr was married in the church of St Chad, Hanmer (perhaps in 1383) to

Margaret (Marred ferch Dafydd), daughter of David Hanmer of Maelor. The church was

badly damaged by fire in 1463. The present church is partly the work of the early eighteenth century, with some Victorian and some earlier material. A Medieval churchyard cross

south-east of the church at SJ 4547 3971 may be the only tangible relic of the Glyndwr period. The

Rev. RS Thomas was curate of Hanmer from 1940-1942; his poetry reflects and celebrates the Glyndwr uprising.

#### **9.1.2 Interpretation and access audit**

##### **Strengths**

This highly attractive village is easy to locate being just off the A539 to Whitchurch, with the church tower an obvious feature visible from this bypass. It is a relatively short easy car journey from Wrexham and Oswestry and has an open, welcoming ambience. It would also be possible to arrive via public transport from nearby mainline train stations. The church is central, easy to find and there are no problems with parking nearby. Since the church is part of the Wrexham Hanmer Church.

Open Church Network it is open all the time and already has material relating to Owain Glyndwr's marriage to Margaret Hanmer inside. This gives the impression that

the church is proud of its connections with Glyndwr. Indeed, since the name of the village is the name of the family he married, it is easy to convey the connections and the village could easily be visited by those on a pilgrimage visiting Sycharth and

Glyndyfrdwy. The village sees its association with Owain Glyndwr as its Unique Selling

Point and poems written by R.S. Thomas, whilst he was vicar at Hanmer, provide a valuable means of interpreting this inspirational character. The interpretation material

inside the church consists of one in a series of nicely designed panels located at different points around the church, one in a series of predominantly monocolour, monolingual leaflets and a brief exposition in a frame leaning against a chair next to the Glyndwr coat of arms. All leaflets are displayed prominently and neatly at a visitors welcome desk near the main door.

## **Weaknesses**

The only brown signs to Hanmer from the A525 and A495 display 'tour/taith', which refer to the Open Church Network Discovery Trail with its guidebook available at participating churches and Wrexham Tourist Office, but no signs direct people to Hanmer as a visitor destination in itself. Neither is there anything referring to the Owain Glyndwr association at the village entrance or as you travel through the village. Currently visitors have to venture up the path to the church and search for information inside, since nothing on the roadside outside invites or encourages people to visit. Being located near the border with England the village is on the periphery of Wales and is not perceived as being particularly Welsh – the ambience is that of the borderlands. Unfortunately the present church is not the one which stood during the 14th and 15th centuries and no visible remains or artefacts provide evidence of Glyndwr's marriage and time at Hanmer. The current interpretation material is based on words alone, is very factual and is not eye-catching. Once inside the church visitors have to search for the items and if they stumble across them they are relatively difficult to read due to low light levels in dark corners and tightly packed small typeface. The Open Church Network has a touchscreen unit located at the back of the church but it is currently switched off since having it running effectively for periods of time has proved difficult.

### **9.1.3 Recommendations**

Target audience -prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters

Professionally produce a bilingual full colour leaflet conveying proposed theme via R.S. Thomas' poems to be distributed at the church, shop and pub based on the current leaflet.

Produce and install an interpretation panel, with input from local schoolchildren, on the green outside the church introducing the story and encouraging people to visit the church.

Panel inside the church

Undertake further research into Glyndwr's origins and earlier life.

Finance a programme of guided tours around the village to include Glyndwr family associations by trained local guides.

Maximise the marketing potential via the Wrexham Open Church

Network – its website, touchscreen unit (following it being overhauled) and guidebook.

[Embassy Glyndŵr Comments](#): Recommendations for this site are O.K.

9.1.4. Proposed Interpretation theme.

#### **9.1.4 Proposed interpretation theme**

Owain Glyndwr's ancestry and status influenced his actions and ultimately his fate.

A feudal lord, descendant of Welsh royal lineage who lived in splendid mansions

Had an Anglo-Welsh heritage/background

Fulfilled the predictions of poets – 'Y Mab Darogan'

Was a family man, whose wife was key to his cause and who, together with his daughters suffered dreadful fates

[I have already made points on the 'Proposed Interpretation themes in Section 7.0 above.](#)

## 9.2 Sycharth

**9.2.1** Site significance and **9.2.2** Interpretation and access audit and the Strengths and Weaknesses points.

### **9.2.1 Site significance**

Sycharth has traditionally been described as one of Owain Glyndwr's two principal courts, along with Glyndyfrdwy. It is situated at SJ 2053 2587 in the community of Llansilin and the county of Powys, 0.3km from the present English border. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (De020 [POW]).

Sycharth is based around a motte-and-bailey castle, suggesting a Norman military presence here at the beginning of the 12th century. The motte is circular with a level summit and a slight central depression. To the south-west is a kidney-shaped bailey; at its foot, and again to the south-west is Bryn Derw, a farm-house which may contain some 18th century fabric. To the west the Afon Cynllaith flows past the site. Ridge-and-furrow cultivation is evident in the fields adjacent to the site. Sycharth is the subject of a praise-poem by Iolo Goch written before the beginning of the revolt (see appendix 2). The poem not only refers to Glyndwr's generosity as host in the traditional manner but also identifies the Anglo-Norman and continental European

inspiration for the architecture; he refers to a ‘Tower of St Patrick’s’, which Johnston suggests is St Patrick’s cathedral, Dublin, Minot’s tower of c. 1370, a ‘Cloister of Westminster’, and ‘splendid shops full of fine merchandise/Full and fair, like London’s Cheapside’ (Johnston 233-6).

Prince Hal (the future Henry V) describes how he and his forces arrived at ‘Saghern’, which he describes as well built (*bien edifie*) before burning down ‘the whole place and several other houses near it belonging to his tenants’ (*einz nous fimes ardre toute la place, et plusieurs autres maisons la entour de ses tenantz*) (Ellis 1827, 1112). Prince Hal, who had had ample opportunity to see well-constructed buildings, was clearly impressed by the standard of workmanship, and this description of the burning suggests that it was a complex of some size with what were evidently dependent houses nearby.

Part of Sycharth was excavated in 1962-3 by Douglas Hague of the RCAHMW and Cynthia Warhurst. Excavations were confined to a quarter of the summit of the motte and two cuttings on the bailey. The first revealed the remains of a hall, its long axis north-east to south-west, described as about 17’ 6” (6.7m) across, not wide enough for an aisled hall. Remains of a smaller adjacent building were also identified. Slates, iron nails, window glass, a silver penny of c. 1350-60 and lead were discovered. In addition, a possible sleeper for a gate-house was discovered on the bailey (Hague and Warhurst 1966). Geophysical work was carried out on two areas, one to the west of the motte, the other to the south, in 1998-2003 suggested the presence of a structure, perhaps a collapsed building, and possible banks and ditches to the west. It was suggested that a field-name recorded on the title of 1841, *cae pentre* (‘village field’), may indicate the site of a *maerdref* (Smith 2003).

## 9.2.2 Interpretation and access audit

### Strengths

This substantial motte and bailey site is visible from the B4580 leading from Llansilin and can be well appreciated from here. It is within easy travelling distance from Oswestry and Welshpool and the main borders artery road A483. Although only earthworks remain, they are impressive and with some help they can be deciphered and broadly understood. There is a special ambience to Sycharth due to its remote

rural location and Iolo Goch’s contemporary poem goes a long way to bring the site and the environs to life. Several footpaths lead to the site and these offer walking opportunities although it is easy to gain access from the nearby road. The current permitted open access arrangements mean that visitors can wander freely across the site and the planned car park will provide a focus for visitor welcome and introduction. Currently visitors encounter one interpretation panel hanging on a fence near the stile

into the site which clearly and succinctly outlines its history and displays an extract from the Iolo Goch poem. It also contains a visual reconstruction of a similar motte and bailey by Douglas Hague and an aerial photo of the site together with images of the tokens/seal found at Harlech Castle. Sycharth is an easy drive away from its sister site Glyndyfrdwy and a little to the south of the village of Hanmer.

### Weaknesses

This is a remote location which requires some persistence on behalf of drivers to get to. Visitors have to travel along narrow, twisting country roads currently without the aid of any brown signs and have to depend on considerable map reading skills. The welcome is low-key, if negligible and one has to have the courage of one's convictions to access the site on foot from the road. Once reached,

the single interpretation panel reassures visitors they have arrived at the right place but it is difficult to read at such a low level and does not do justice to the site in terms of its importance nor to its one time grandeur. Generally there is a lack of presence and site presentation. The lack of obvious remains above ground poses some challenges to the untrained eye for appreciating its structure and magnificence properly. Parking near the site is currently difficult.

### **9.2.3 Recommendations**

Target audience -prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters and school groups

Install a kiosk (enhanced roofed panel) in proposed car park displaying rendition of visual reconstruction (Spencer Smith) and robust model of the llys.

Install a listening post (or bluetooth download) with extract of Iolo Goch poem in English and Welsh and modern poem by Myrddin ap Dafydd ' Syched am Sycharth' near panel/kiosk.

Ensure interpretation items are designed into the planned car park and access plan.

Finance training for local guides by CPAT staff as part of their outreach programme for tours by prior arrangement (Heritage Management Grant).

Organise an initiative for local schools to visit with support of web-based material centred on 'homes' & 'princes of Wales'.

Initiate a professionally led community excavation to be filmed by an independent Welsh language television company for S4C.

Research paths in the vicinity of the site and encourage visitors to walk to the site via marketing material.

Establish a group 'Friends of Sycharth', particularly after the excavation and the training of local guides to act as a focus for visitor support, site management and further research.

Consider the provision of toilets at a later stage, particularly if school groups visit the site.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** The Above section is well laid out and informative and I would agree totally with its contents in regards to Sycharth - as I would with most of the recommendations in 9.2.3 but, I would add the following recommendations.

- That brown tourism signs with arrows pointing in the direction of the site needs to be placed on the (B4580, A495 and the B4396) roads. This needs immediate attention.
- That the toilets are installed at the same time as the kiosk as a matter of priority if school groups and the elderly are to be taken into consideration.
- I would agree with the filming of a professionally led community excavation but would, again, remind the Consultant, Cadw and WAG that this initiative is a tourism initiative so, with this in mind, would suggest that the programme that is to be paid for by the money intended for this initiative, should be in a language that's suitable for world wide viewing. I would, at the same time, love to see a similar production produced in the Welsh language for S4C but suggest that such a programme should be financed by S4C.
- I would suggest that a flag pole and the Four Lions Rampant be raised at the site – especially during the summer months – and longer when there are paid guides on site.

### **9.3. Glyndyfrdwy**

#### **9.3.1 Site significance**

Glyndyfrdwy, where Owain Glyndwr proclaimed himself Prince of Wales, is a motte and moated site. The motte is situated at SJ 1253 4313, the moat at SJ 1275 4308, in Corwen Community, and the county of Denbighshire. The whole area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (ME017 [DEN]). The motte is 6.5m high, 36m in diameter at the base and 12m diameter at the summit, and the moat remains partly water-filled. The site lies between the main A5 road and the Llangollen Railway, and is in private hands, though with public access; so far no programme of archaeological investigation has been undertaken here (CPAT Historic Environment Record).

The presence of a motte indicates a Norman military presence here in the 11th century, and the creation of a moat on a scale to enclose a dwelling suggests familiarity with the pattern of moated houses common further to the east, such as in the Maelor Saesneg, where they date from the 12-14th centuries (Cadw/ICOMOS Register 2001, 18).

Prince Hal describes how he and his forces arrived at 'Glyndourdy' and burnt 'a fine lodge in his park ... and laid waste all the country around' after burning Sycharth: Et puis nous enalames droit a son autre place de Glyndourdy, pour lui querer illoques, et la nous fismes ardre un beau logge en son parc, et toute la paiis la entour (Ellis 1827, 11).

Again it is remarkable that Prince Hal should have been impressed by the 'fine lodge'.

Pennant and Bingley clearly associate Iolo Goch's poem with Glyndyfrdwy, not Sycharth. Pennant remarks that many of the evident remains had been lost to ploughing between the first and second editions of his *Tours*, published in 1778 and 1784 respectively (Pennant 329; Bingley 432).

On the sixteenth of September 1400 Owain Glyndwr proclaimed himself Prince of Wales at Glyndyfrdwy in the company of some of his closest family, a number of friends from Sycharth and Wrexham, the Dean of St Asaph and his prophet or seer together with ordinary folk from the area totalling some three hundred people all together. From here Owain and his supporters went on a destructive campaign torching Ruthin, Denbigh, Rhuddlan, Fflint, Holt, Oswestry and Welshpool – this was the beginning of his national revolt against the English crown.

### **9.3.2 Interpretation and access audit**

#### **Strengths**

This imposing motte and separate moat site lies immediately between the A5 main arterial route in and out of North Wales and the Llangollen Steam Railway. It is easily accessible from the tourist destination of Llangollen and the market town of Corwen. Currently visitors can access the site either by parking near Carrog station and walking along a pavement on the A5 or by parking in an informal parking area opposite and crossing the road to the stile. Once on top of the motte its dramatic and strategic location in relation to the river Dee can be easily appreciated and the views in winter when the trees are not in leaf add to the appeal. The site is clearly identified as 'Glyndwr's Mount' at the stile and an interpretation panel at the bottom of the motte's slopes conveys some of the site's importance and explains the layout of the site. It is within easy travelling distance of its sister site Sycharth and the village of Hanmer. The current permitted open access arrangements mean that visitors can wander freely across the site. The proposed car park, if it goes ahead, will provide a focus for visitor welcome, orientation and interpretation although permitted access along riverside fields from Carrog station could do the same whilst also encouraging visitors to use sustainable transport and make a day trip from Llangollen, thus helping the local economy. Nearby Corwen, with its eye-catching sculpture and various panels and leaflets could also encourage visits to Glyndyfrdwy itself although a fully equipped visitor centre could go a long way to introducing Glyndwr as a real historical character.

#### **Weaknesses**

The speed and flow of traffic along the A5 makes it very difficult to stop near or at the site and the corner near the motte adds considerably to the dangers. Currently many thousands of people pass this site without knowing anything of its history or significance and the trees which obscure much of the motte makes it difficult for passers by even to notice it. The site is not signed for road users and the hand-written notice at the stile provides an informal, insignificant welcome which does little to convey the status of the site. The site name 'Glyn Dwr's Mount' probably reflects an English Victorian influence which sits uncomfortably with its spirit, known originally and today by Welsh people as Glyndyfrdwy. The moat site, which is

where Glyn Dwr's mansion probably stood is relatively difficult to understand and appreciate due to the lack of clearly visible earthworks – only a damp hollow lies there. Uncertainties regarding the actual site of Glyndwr's proclamation lead to a certain lack of focus regarding site relevance to visitors. The many mature trees growing out of the motte obscure views into the site and outwards from the top and do little to help visitors appreciate the site's strategic location and what it was like pre-Victorian times. The single interpretation panel reassures visitors they have arrived but does not do justice to the events associated with the site and their context nor to the one time grandeur of the mansion. Generally there is a lack of presence and excitement to a visit to Glyndyfrdwy. Although it is difficult to visit nearby Corwen without gaining some awareness of Owain Glyndwr, the references to him on various panels and in leaflets are obscure (more about legend than fact), lack focus and do little to encourage visits to Glyndyfrdwy itself. Currently Corwen does not act as a hub or introductory departure point but rather as a nebulous experience in relation to Glyndwr.

Target audiences -prosperous early retired couples, working empty nesters, school groups and young families.

Pr 1 - negotiate with Mr Blair, the landowner permanent access through fields from Carrog station, following his permission being granted for managed groups to walk here during an open weekend in September 2000.

Pr 2 - continue with plans to seek permission for a potential car park on the hardstanding in the field to the east of the motte by the side of the straight stretch of the A5 and create a modest car park.

Install an interpretation kiosk pictorially depicting Glyndwr's proclamation near the gate at the corner of the field with the access route from Carrog station together with a listening post and a kiosk only in the car park, if this goes ahead (audio not appropriate so near the A5 due to traffic noise).

The listening post should broadcast an excerpt of a specially scripted conversation between a group of people complaining about life in the lead up to the uprising.

Install a bluetooth transmitter near Carrog station for visitors to download an enhanced version of the above conversation reflecting grievances leading up to Glyndwr's proclamation and a script of the proclamation itself.

Install a map panel interpreting the layout of the site at the stile into the site from the west.

Organise an annual event re-enacting the proclamation.

Remove the current hand-written 'Glyndwr's Mount' notice and encourage the use of the original site name via OS etc.

Remove many of the trees currently obscuring the motte.

Install a flag or just the coat of arms near the site.

Install a panel or two at Llangollen TIC drawing attention to the site and partially interpreting the theme.

Train local guides to undertake a programme of guided walks to/and around the site building on the success of the 'Heather and Hillforts project' and linking in with Denbighshire Countryside Service .

Pr 2 - if the proposed visitor centre at Corwen goes ahead, interpret part of the story here with an emphasis on comparing local legends and stories with the facts as we know them, and develop a comprehensive visitor package to include visits to Glyndyfrdwy itself thus using Corwen as another hub/departure point (similar to that proposed for Machynlleth) for the east Wales cluster.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Site significance (9.3.1) Mostly o.k. but, again, I must point out that the last sentence in this section should read... "this was the beginning of his national 'war' against the English crown and not 'revolt'.

In regards to Recommendations (9.3.4) we are concerned about the proposed site for the proposed car park for the following reason

- The site proposed (in the field to the east of the motte by the side of the straight stretch of the A5) is part of the Llys or, at the least, is dangerously close to it; therefore great care must be taken not to build a car park on the Llys itself.
- Also, the Consultant herself has stated that this is a seriously busy stretch of road, so, would it be wise to have cars slowing down to enter here and to have groups of people and young children gathering around the entrance? I think not.

I would recommend that a car park be established nearer to Carrog Station and that the only official entrance to the Llys site is located near the station. This would be much more convenient – and safer for visitors whether they travel by train or road.

I'm very pleased that a visitor centre for Corwen is proposed and would consider this a priority and yes, this centre should interpret as much as is relevant to the area of the Glyndŵr story and should include local folklore and tradition as well as the factual history.

Apart from the Interpretation Centre at Corwen and the proposed plans for the Llys at Glyndyfrdwy, Embassy Glyndŵr recommends that an archaeological assessment and a professionally led community excavation be carried out at the site of the Glyndŵr Prison House at Carrog. At present, this site badly needs clearing but has a story to tell and, following the assessment and excavation, could be transformed into an enclosed garden/ picnic area with interpretation panels placed to relate the story of the site.

Embassy Glyndŵr also recommends that a memorial to the Founding Fathers of the Welsh Nation (those that gathered with Owain Glyndŵr at Glyndyfdwy on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1400) be erected on the corner opposite to the road leading down to Carrog at Llidiart y Parc and that the names of those known to have been present at the Glyndyfdwy 'Council of War' gathering, are engraved onto the memorial recommended.

Many historians and history books suggest the Caerdrewyn hill fort as the place where Prince Owain Glyndŵr is most likely to have gathered his troops together and raised his 'flag' before the gathered army rode through the night to attack Rhuthun when the town opened its gates at dawn for fair day on the 18<sup>th</sup> Sept 1400 so, Caerdrewyn is an important location and Embassy Glyndŵr recommends that this site should be included into any proposed guided tour programme.

Embassy Glyndŵr also recommends that a re-enactment ceremony of the 'raising of the flag' atop of the Caer takes place annually as part of annual Dydd Glyndŵr Day celebrations in the locality.

Embassy Glyndŵr is confident that the folklore in regards to Glyndŵr throwing his dagger in anger from atop 'Pen y Pigyn' will be interpreted in the proposed visitor centre and that the walk to 'Pen y Pigyn' will be incorporated into a guided tour programme but, we would also remind that Embassy Glyndŵr presented the town of Corwen with a replica 'Glyndŵr Dagger' in a ceremony that took place in 2004 and that this dagger, at present, is displayed in the town library. We would like to recommend that the 'Corwen Dagger' is displayed at the proposed Visitor Centre, alongside an interpretation of the Pen y Pigyn story, once the Visitor Centre' is up and running.

#### **9.4. Bryn Glas Battlefield, Pilleth**

##### **9.4.1 Site significance**

The following summarises the report on the site of the battle of Pilleth prepared as part of the Welsh Battlefields Project Pilot Study -Historical Research of November 2009.

The precise site of the battle is uncertain, though the Project Pilot Study concludes that the principal conflict, where Mortimer's forces advanced against Glyndwr's position, took place on the slopes of Bryn Glas, an extensive area lying to the E, W, and S of St Mary's church, its southern edge approximately defined by the present B4356 while its eastern boundary was represented by the manorial complex of Pilleth Court. However, subsequent fighting could have spread out over a much broader area (particularly following the rout of the English forces) and consequently could have covered much of the floodplain area to the S and SW of Pilleth, extending along the northern bank of the River Lugg.

Another possible site is suggested by a statement in the early 15th century English prose Brut, which locates the battle at 'Black Hill', which might possibly be identified with the eponymous hill lying to the NW of Bryn Glas. While there appears to be no other documentary or place name evidence to associate 'Black Hill'

with the battle of Pilleth, it is certainly not impossible that the fighting could have extended northwards into this area.

The battle is described in several contemporary and near-contemporary sources which differ in content and level of detail, although they appear to agree broadly on the principal details of the engagement and its aftermath. Accounts describe how when Mortimer's men and the tenants of Maelienydd met with Mortimer, they advanced on Glyndwr's forces occupying a hilltop position, but that the contingent of troops from Maelienydd suddenly defected to Glyndwr's cause, which immediately turned the tide of the battle, and Mortimer was captured. The chroniclers describe how 'the corpses were left lying under the horses' hooves, weltering in their own blood, as burial was forbidden for a long time afterwards', and how Welsh women mutilated the corpses, perhaps from the testimony of survivors of the English army. Estimates of the English slain vary from 200 to 1100, and it is difficult to estimate the respective size of the Welsh and English armies, since sources speak variously of 'a small force' of Welshmen (*cum paucis*) or of a 'horde' or 'rabble' (*turba*) and also of 'a great host from Gwynedd, Powys and the South', and that Mortimer's force consisted of 'almost all the militia of the adjacent counties to Wales.

There is evidence for at least two burial sites associated with the battle, one within the churchyard itself and another further up the hillside. A local antiquarian, in a paper published in 1847, makes particular reference to the exceptional number of corpses buried in the churchyard. Further up the hillside to the W of the church, another burial site is marked by a square patch of six *Wellingtonia* fir trees which were apparently planted by the late Sir Richard Green-Price to mark the location where human bones, presumed to represent the remains of persons slain during the battle, were apparently identified.

Rees Davies observes that 'the battle of Bryn Glas or Pilleth was the one of the most momentous of the revolt' (Rees 1995, 107), a victory over a substantial English county levy in a pitched battle, leading to the capture or death of several prominent Marcher lords, and leaving the border towns of Hereford, Leominster and Ludlow exposed.

#### **9.4.2 Interpretation and access audit**

##### **Strengths**

The Church of St Mary's Pilleth and what is believed to be the main battlefield on the slopes of Bryn Glasis accessed via a relatively short stretch of decent track from the B4356 between Presteigne and Monaughty to the south-west of Knighton -an easy road to drive. There is a good sized car park with a robust surface near the Church together with a relatively recent full-colour panel interpreting the battle. The battlefield is signed from the main road along the track with brand new brown signs displaying an i for information. The church is open all the time and contains some articles and papers about the battle arranged in an informal way for visitors to read there. The church has been recently renovated via a Heritage Lottery Grant to a simple, relatively bare state and as a result is highly atmospheric (no electricity). Substantial sections of the church stood at the time of the battle (majority of the tower) and the building probably played a role during the battle prior to being burnt by Glyndwr! The churchyard contains a recent memorial to the fallen of the battle

and a memorial service is held each year on the anniversary of the battle. The square of land containing a group of Wellingtonia Trees, which marks the location of piles of bones believed to be the remains of many of those killed in the battle, can be easily seen from a distance as people travel from Pembridge to the east. The steep slopes of Bryn Glas itself, where much of the fighting happened, can be accessed via a footpath leading from the car park through the churchyard. The interpretation panel at the car park contains a full-colour depiction of the men fighting and conveys the general events of the battle in a lively, engaging way. The location of the battle which opened the way for Glyndwr's advance into south Wales, so near England provides opportunities to convey the uprising in the context of the borderlands. The recently completed report on battlefields by 'Border Archaeology' provides a lot of exciting meaty information. The presence of the church on the battlefield brings the horror of the fighting into sharp focus and stimulates reflection on the victims of the conflict. Overall the church, churchyard, the slopes of Bryn Glas and low lying ground below provide a second to none low-key experience based on the exceptional aura most visitors will feel once they appreciate something of the battle. It is estimated that at least 500 people visit the church per year. A group of local interested people, 'The Friends of Pilleth Church,' spearheaded the restoration of the Church and are keen to influence and shape any access or interpretation provision at the Church and have a deal of knowledge.

## **Weaknesses**

The access track turns at an awkward angle from the main B4356 between Presteigne and Monaughty and can be difficult to negotiate. The track itself is not officially adopted and is currently maintained through the goodwill of a local landowner involved with the Church of St Mary's Pilleth. Neither is it suitable for coaches or buses due to the lack of passing places. Although the newly installed brown signs help visitors locate the battlefield the i they display raise expectations which are not currently met. There is nothing to indicate that the church is open and there are no waymarks or anything to help visitors find their way from the car park to the battlefield on the slopes of Bryn Glas. Furthermore the OS map confuses the situation by indicating that the battlefield is on the lowground on the valley bottom. Pilleth is a good distance from the other border sites associated with Glyndwr and does not sit easily within a cluster of sites for people to visit in a day. People have to use considerable nouse and imagination to understand the battle and its significance and the current limited interpretation does little to convey the context of the battle and the events before, during and afterwards. Whilst the constantly open church provides opportunities to house interpretation, it has no electricity, has a tranquil, somber atmosphere and the 'Friends of Pilleth Church' do not wish it to be swamped by this one episode in its life. Although constituted and with a bank account, the 'Friends of Pilleth Church' does not have the capacity to manage major projects.

### **9.4.3 Recommendations**

Target audience -prosperous early retired couples and working empty nesters and school groups

Waymark Rights of Way and paths in the vicinity of the Church and to the battlefield following research.

Install a map panel directing visitors to the Church and other associated features including the holy well, the battlefield, Wellingtonia trees, memorial to the fallen etc.

Display the coat of arms on small/modest flag or panel near current interpretation panel in car park to indicate that the site is linked to other named Glyndwr sites.

Produce a full colour bilingual leaflet (gatefolded A3) or booklet to be distributed at Church (Dr Charles Kightly possible author) to include a section on the general history of the Church.

Install a panel near the fence of Wellingtonia tree square explaining the significance of the trees etc with the permission of the landowner.

Install a panel display either at the back of the Church (between current cabinet and wall of tower) or outside conveying proposed theme including:

the significance of the battle before and afterwards,

likely sequence of events during battle itself,

the role and fate of the Church,

the role of women etc

Explore potential further excavation including bones discovered during drainage work on churchyard, potential skirmish site on ground below main battlefield and site of nearby medieval village.

Install decent toilet instead of current portaloo

Financially support substantial in kind maintenance and upkeep work carried out on toilet and track etc.

Finance guided tours for school groups by expert e.g. Charles Kightly.

Establish partnership with CPAT to receive funds and manage projects on behalf of the 'Friends of Pilleth Church'.

Install a 'foot-fall' counter at Church entrance to monitor visitor numbers.

Embassy Glyndŵr Comments: We would, on the whole, agree with recommendations (9.4.3) but in regards to the proposed Interpretation theme 9.4.4. we are concerned that the interpretation here could be a very biased 'one sided' interpretation against our national hero as the Consultant has (again) made the sweeping statement of...“ *His cause split families and communities and wrought destruction to the landscape and buildings of*

Wales”, and for this reason, I feel there is a need to quote my earlier answer as laid down in section 7.0.

*“As for the ‘destruction’, it took both sides to do this and yes, colonial borough towns and castle – and churches that would have sided with the English would have been legitimate targets and much destruction would have been caused by peasants pillaging, this was war! But, let’s not forget English ravenging and the English burning of villages and homes and Welsh sites of worship (such as the abbey at Ystrad Fflur) and the taking away of Welsh women and children as slaves, not to mention their fondness for blinding hostages. Much of the destruction that Glyndŵr has been accused of has come out of the mouths of Tudor propagandists such as Powell ( ref) but again, I don’t think that an interpretation plan such as this one is the place to ‘sweepingly’ endorse such propaganda”.*

## **9.5 Canolfan Owain Glyndwr, Machynlleth**

### **9.5.1 Site significance**

The chronicler Adam of Usk records that Owain Glyndwr held an assembly in Machynlleth, where a building on Heol Maengwyn has been identified as its location. Pennant states that he assembled ‘the estates of Wales’ there but does not mention a building (Pennant 359). In 1798 Bingley was shown ‘An ancient building, constructed of the thin shaly stone of this country, and now converted into stables ... pointed out to me as that in which Owen Glyndwr summoned the chieftains of Wales in the year 1402.’ (Bingley 352). Professor Davies was dismissive of the claims of this building: Machynlleth was certainly the site of one of his two known parliaments, and the claim to have identified the building in which this assembly was held is understandable, but without historical warrant (Davies 1995, 339).

Since then, dendrochronology has confirmed that the present structure is two generations later than Glyndwr’s parliament – 1460 (Miles and Suggett 2004), though this does not preclude there having been an earlier building on the site.

Machynlleth itself was already a market town of some importance, though not apparently a borough, a Welsh foundation of the late 13th century. Heol Maengwyn is attested in 1597 but is likely to be much older (Soulsby 180-181).

The building now known as the Parliament House was purchased in 1906 by David Davies of Llandinam, Liberal MP for Montgomeryshire, and was opened as a social centre in 1912. Whatever its links with Glyndwr in the 15th century, it is a testament to the durability of his ideals, as understood by later generations. Davies was the grandson of David Davies the industrialist (‘Davies the Ocean’, 1818-1890), and was heir both to his energy and enterprise as well as to the radical and populist traditions of late Victorian Wales. This was the period of great commercial prosperity and limitless optimism, when a strong romantic and cultural nationalism had largely succeeded the more explicitly political demands of ‘Cymru Fydd’. The

Owain Glyndwr murals were painted during the early 1910's by a Scottish artist, Murray Urquhart, who depicted 'Glyndwr leading on a crowd of his soldiers, most of them roughly dressed as peasants – 'the leader and hero of the common people' (Lord 2000, 336-337). There seems to be some basis for the tradition that as depicted, Owain Glyndwr is Davies himself, suggesting the arrival of a new Welsh elite, the natural leaders of the new nation.

Whilst the claims of the Parliament House to be the site of the Machynlleth assembly called by Glyndwr are therefore incapable of verification, and the 15th century building is undoubtedly post-Glyndwr, it does represent the continuing force of the Glyndwr tradition and the way in which it was considered to be fulfilling itself in the early years of the 20th century, at a time when some of the demands of the uprising, such as religious autonomy and a university system, had been, or were about to be, met.

## **9.5.2 Interpretation and access audit**

### **Strengths**

This medieval stone building is located along Stryd Maengwyn, the main street running through the centre of Machynlleth. The very appearance of the building indicates its age and the entrance door is easily accessed directly from the pavement. The ground floor can be negotiated by people in wheelchairs or those infirm on their feet. The 2,000 visitors a year are met by a volunteer receptionist and they pay a low entrance fee. The inside of the building projects an ancient, genuine ambience and contains several interesting features including the Urquhart mural depicting the battle of Hyddgen on the slopes of Hyddgen. The building's associations with David Davies of Llandinam and the renaissance in Welsh national affairs provides added significance. Machynlleth is located within a strongly Welsh part of Wales and is recognised as a cultural tourist destination. It has excellent train and bus connections and

is within easy travelling distance of the other Glyndwr destinations of Pennal and Aberystwyth Castle, and is not too far south of Harlech Castle. The volunteer staff are keen and knowledgeable and the use of period mannequins bring some life to the upper floor. Some interesting quotations are displayed and the display case containing the Pennal letter provides gravitas and potential to the interpretation. The building has recently received some investment to improve lighting and heat levels. This building is the only dedicated indoor facility which could interpret the exciting, thought provoking, nationally important story of Owain Glyndwr's uprising and act as a hub to other Glyndwr locations or attractions.

### **Weaknesses**

The building fades into the long line of streetside buildings due to its greyish colour and there's little to attract people's attention. The dependency on volunteers could make regular opening hours difficult and the interior which can be generally dark and cold is not always welcoming and doesn't encourage them to linger. The fact that the building did not host Glyndwr's first assembly, since it post-dates this event, considerably weakens its established focus as 'Y Senedd-dy' / 'Parliament House'. It is evident that the building and accompanying interpretation is suffering from a

severe lack of investment – the material is poor in a host of respects – age, legibility, attractiveness, ability to engage and communicate at a range of levels and age, focus, story and message. Much of the available space has been filled with a range of relatively disjointed displays which have some sort of association with Owain Glyndwr or Machynlleth. The upper floor is out of reach of those with mobility problems and some of the low light levels can make it difficult for visitors to either notice features such as the Urquhart murals or to read material. Currently this centre does not provide a comprehensive visitor experience and it is sobering to consider that nearby Celtica closed as a visitor attraction several years ago due to low visitor flow.

### **9.5.3 Recommendations**

Target audience: Young families, young professional couples, retired and empty nesters.

The following recommendations comprise a list of media appropriate for the above target audiences and the proposed themes. Professional exhibition designers should meld these into a cohesive visitor experience.

Costumed staff to welcome visitors.

Introductory film/AV outlining the following in context of proposed theme:

the uprising, associated notable events and their effect across Wales,

the first assembly & associated international diplomacy,

Glyn Dwr's disappearance,

the legendary figure and his rise as a national hero for modern Wales.

Map panel encouraging visitors to visit other Glyndwr locations.

\* Please note that the Glyndwr National Trail is not relevant to the Glyndwr story and the sites selected for this plan despite it ending at Machynlleth!

Leaflet guide and audio commentary (bluetooth and wifi download) interpreting features of the building, including the Urquhart murals, and enhancing the static display with appropriate passages and dialogue.

Actors interacting with visitors as visiting poets (cler) dropping-by telling of Glyndwr's uprising across Wales.

A feast scene with mannequins/speaking heads depicting conversation between representatives from across Wales – different dialects discussing the state of affairs in various parts, their frustrations, hopes and aspirations regarding Glyndwr and the uprising.

Interactive map of Wales depicting events associated with the uprising across the country.

Interactive computer game (touchscreen) debating different facets of Glyndwr culminating in ‘what does Glyndwr mean to you?’

.  
A programme of events such as story-telling, medieval feasts and jousting.

.  
Public art installation outdoors behind centre created by artist in residence working with local schoolchildren.

.  
Further research into building features

.  
Fly Glyndwr flag on roof throughout the year as a means of identifying it as a Glyndwr site.

.  
Eye-catching medieval style hanging outside building inviting people to come indoors.

.  
A ‘foot-fall’ counter at entrance to monitor visitor numbers.

#### **9.5.4 Proposed interpretation themes**

1.

Owain Glyndwr appealed to many corners of war-torn Wales and nearly brought it greater unity and representation.

His uprising touched on most parts of Wales which were ravaged as a result

Following centuries of feudal dynastic rule he assembled representatives of various communities as a ‘parliament’.

He had a vision of him as head of state, the leader of a more modern nation.

2.

Although Owain Glyndwr’s dream failed, he was never betrayed, but instead he faded into the legend books to re-emerge centuries later a national hero.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Embassy Glyndŵr was approached by the Director of the Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ in 2005 with a request to provide proposals/ideas that would assist the Canolfan in their endeavors to raise funding for their development plans for the Canolfan. We provided this service (free of charge – as has been all our help and support) to the Canolfan as a gesture of our support and would recommend that the proposals/ideas we provided the Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr with then, be considered for incorporation into this plan as additional to the Consultant’s recommendations. (See Appendice 2) Proposals from Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr for Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr, Machynlleth)

Apart from the above, again, certain terminology within the Consultants wording in her recommendations (9.5.3) should be changed. i.e. war instead of ‘uprising’. ‘Parliament’ instead of ‘assembly’.

Also, Embassy Glyndŵr found the following statement by the Consultant to be unbelievable!

*“The Glyndwr trail is not relevant to the Glyndwr story and the sites selected for this plan despite it ending at Machynlleth”*

Embassy Glyndŵr would suggest that the ‘Glyndŵr trail is ‘very’ relevant to the Glyndŵr story; the clue is in the name! The geographical area of the trail is ‘Gwlad Glyndŵr’ it covers many areas closely associated with the Prince, including areas associated with significant battles sites and his ancestral lands and ends at Machynlleth where Glyndŵr held his parliament and was officially crowned Prince of Wales. So, of course, the trail has ‘everything to do with Owain Glyndŵr and should be incorporated into the plan.

Exciting and adventurous walking, riding or cycling holidays based on the Glyndŵr story could be organized for, either, parts or the whole of the trail and this could be enlarged on throughout Wales with medieval encampments on farms or at castles and at other relevant historic sites. Entertainment for such a ‘Medieval Holiday Experience’ could be provided by story tellers, bards, minstrels and also, battle re-enactments and banquets could be incorporated into the package. The medieval accommodation en route could be a choice of basic to luxurious.

Embassy Glyndwr suggests that such a ‘Medieval Holiday Experience’ as proposed by above would be much more ‘authentic’ for Gwlad Glyndŵr and the rest of rural Wales than the Wigwam Holiday Experience that’s offered at present. After all, this interpretation plan is for Wales, not the Black Hills of Dakota!

Organizing such a ‘Medieval Holiday Experience’ as suggested by us would need realistic investment and the services of a competent and experienced National organizing body who would coordinate with Visit Wales and other relevant bodies, as well as the ‘experience providers’ in various parts of Wales, to ensure that this proposed ‘unique’ Medieval Holiday Experience is established on strong foundations’; such will be crucial to its long term success

The proposed initiative would also, of course, need enthusiastic input, a creative imagination and good planning and marketing from all concerned but, it could bring ‘real’ worthwhile dividends in tourism terms and could assist struggling farmers as well as provide much needed all year round employment in rural areas.

Embassy Glyndŵr also recommends that each section of the Glyndŵr National Trail should display the 4 lions rampant coat of arms of Owain Glyndŵr and the en-route encampments should always fly the 4 lion rampant flag.

Embassy Glyndŵr recommends that Welsh Heritage tourism must take advantage of every Welsh historical asset at its disposal and in the case of the intended Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation, the Glyndŵr National Trail depicting ‘Gwlad Glyndŵr’ and Owain Glyndŵr in the landscape is a big asset, it would, in our view, be very short sighted and foolish not to capitalize

on it. As a certain character in a certain extremely popular English sit-com would say, *“He who dares wins”*

## 9.6. Pennal.

### 9.6.1 Site significance

The letter written by Owain Glyndwr to King Charles of France is given ‘at Pennal’, without any further indication of a court or chancery. It describes itself as having been written as the consequence of deliberations amongst a council called by Owain Glyndwr of ‘the nobles of our race, the prelates of our Principality and others called for this purpose’ (see below). There seems to be no reason to doubt that the location is Pennal in the southern part of Gwynedd, now a small village near the northern banks

of the Afon Dyfi. A Roman fort is situated 600m to the south-east of the centre of the village, and it is possible that the immediate area formed an alternative crossing point of the Dyfi, less risky than the ferry which operated at its mouth. Pennal is therefore located at a fulcrum point in west Wales.

Prior to the Edwardian conquest, Pennal had been one of the llysoedd (courts) of the princes of Gwynedd. There were 21 of these in Gwynedd (including Anglesey), of which at least eleven were associated with a motte (earthwork castle), including Pennal. The Welsh law-books specify up to ten buildings associated with a llys, which include a hall, a chamber, a kitchen, a stable, a granary or barn, a kiln, a kennel and a privy, but it is probable that by no means all llysoedd were equipped with all these buildings. There was little need for them after the conquest, and in most cases the buildings were dismantled or allowed to fall into ruin. It is therefore not clear whether there was any structure capable of accommodating Owain Glyndwr and his retinue in 1406.

The llys was associated with a maerdref, where the princely tenants lived. The law books specify how officers of the princely retinue were to be accommodated on their circuit, and that the head of the household was to be accommodated in the largest and most central house in the settlement, whilst the steward was expected to reside in the lodgings nearest to the court. This suggests the existence of a nucleated settlement – a village – and it is likely that the present village of Pennal has evolved from a community of bondmen associated with the llys.

Towards the end of the period of Gwynedd’s independence, if not earlier, llysoedd were provided with a royal chapel, some of which became parish churches as territorial parishes developed. This seems to be the case at Pennal (Johnstone 1997).

It is therefore probable that Glyndwr and his retinue made their way to Pennal because it was royal land, associated with the pre-Edwardian dynasty of Gwynedd, part of the Welsh royal inheritance which Glyndwr claimed, and because of its convenient location near a crossing of one of the major rivers of west Wales. It has been suggested (by Professor Ralph Griffiths to the authors of the present report) that

the convenience of a river crossing was a more important factor than the survival of royal land as a locale for any meeting, much as the sealing of Magna Carta took place at Runnymede, not at Windsor. However, it is also possible that the focus of his residence was the area adjacent to the surviving motte, Domen Las, but it is not clear whether any buildings survived to accommodate them. It may be that some sort of

temporary pavilion was erected. Again, it is probable that a village was already in existence and it is therefore possible that some of its buildings were pressed into service to accommodate the royal party. It is likely that the royal party would have attended mass at the church, and it seems certain that this was a structure which stood on or immediately adjacent to the present church, though there is no reference to the church itself in the Pennal letter (G. ab Iorwerth).

Cefn Caer is a five-bay post-Medieval hall-house of 1525-6; it was floored in 1658-60, and rewindowed in the 19th century. It is located within the Roman fort of Pennal, and lies (as noted) some 600m south-east of the centre of the village. The house was historically a centre of bardic patronage. Tours of the house are offered by the owner, Mr Elfyn Rowlands, who displays a replica sword of state and crown. Mr Rowlands' leaflets state 'This house would have been used by Owain Glyndwr when the Pennal Policy was drawn up/Byddai'r ty hwn wedi cael ei ddefnyddio gan Owain Glyndwr pan luniwyd Polisi Pennal'. This is questionable. Nothing has been seen which explicitly connects Owain Glyndwr with the Cefn Caer site. Whilst it is by no means beyond the bounds of possibility that he or his retinue would have needed to make use of a high-status dwelling on the Cefn Caer site (but predating the present house) if there were no suitable buildings remaining at the llys site or in the village (see above), there is no evidence even of a long-standing tradition that he did so. Cefn Caer is nevertheless an extremely attractive dwelling with much to say about the evolving role of the Welsh uchelwyr in the post-Glyndwr years, and is located within a rich historic landscape.

Pennal, its motte and llys, its church and its village settlement are therefore associated with the writing of the single most important document of the uprising, the Pennal letter, though the precise location at which it was written cannot be determined.

**Embassy Glyndŵr Comments:** Embassy Glyndwr is quite concerned about this section and has come to the conclusion that the Consultant has devised her recommendations on 'unfounded hearsay' rather than on thorough research and analysis of the Pennal associations with the Owain Glyndŵr history and, because of this, I felt it necessary to conduct a research and analysis myself to try and get nearer to finding out the truth as to where exactly in Pennal the famous Pennal Letter was signed. The result of this research demands and deserves its own section in this Critique – and for that reason, I have placed it in the Appendice section as [Appendice 3](#) so, please do read Appendice 3 following on from this 'critique' for some very interesting reading.

## 9.6.2 Interpretation and access audit

## Strengths

This pleasant Welsh village lies on the main A493 road between Machynlleth and Tywyn and is neatly arranged around the circular churchyard or 'llan' of the Church of St Peter in Chains or St Peter ad Vincula. It is proud of its associations with the writing of the Pennal letter, one of the most significant documents in the history of the Welsh nation. The church is open 365 days a year and has signs clearly stating this. A modern, stylish 'memorial garden' to Owain Glyndwr, his family, advisers and commanders which also celebrates the royal 'llys' of the Princes of Gwynedd occupies part of the churchyard. There is also reference to the 'royal llys' at the entrance into the church and inside hangs a painting by Aneurin Jones of the 1406 'assembly' depicting the scene of the writing of the Pennal letter and a full colour leaflet interpreting 'the Court of Princes' which explains something of the letter. The ground floor of the church can be negotiated by people in wheelchairs or those infirm on their feet. The church and nearby Cefn Caer medieval farm house each have a facsimile copy of the Pennal letter in a display case and both establishments offer guided tours via prior-arrangement. Cefn Caer medieval farm house also provides medieval banquets accompanied by Welsh harp playing etc. Pennal is located within a strongly Welsh part of Wales and is within easy travelling distance of the other Glyndwr destinations of the Owain Glyndwr Centre Machynlleth and Aberystwyth Castle, and is not too far south of Harlech Castle.

## Weaknesses

There is little to signify the village's associations with this important document as visitors enter or explore the village. The 'story' of the Pennal letter and the Glyndwr association is currently presented by two establishments, namely the church of St Peter in Chains and Cefn Caer medieval farmhouse which vie for attention and compete over 'ownership' of the story. The village does not act as a cohesive visitor destination and parts of it occasionally has an uneasy relationship with the Owain Glyndwr Centre Machynlleth thus this cluster of attractions does not currently operate easily together. The memorial garden contains little interpretation for visitors not familiar with the characters commemorated nor the significance of the Owain Glyndwr association. The title 'memorial garden' in itself does little to prepare visitors for what it is. The current interpretation leaflet does not communicate easily with those not familiar with the writing of the Pennal letter and can be confusing by its use of titles such as 'Court of Princes', 'A great Synod', 'Merlin's prophecies', 'A house of lords', 'the court of Pendragon'.

We now come to the Consultant's recommendations for the Pennal Interpretation (9.6.3):

Target Audience: *"Retired couples and empty nesters and school groups"*

E.G. Again, all tourists of whatever age or group should be targeted as well as the external tourist potential.

*"Professional signs telling visitors that the church is open and indicating the Owain Glyndwr and Princes of Gwynedd memorial Garden"*

E.G. Why is all focus centered on the Church? It has yet to prove an association – of any kind!

*“Film on loop in Church conveying theme – truly bilingual presentation English and Welsh within same production) created by members of Urdd and scripted with local involvement”*

E.G. Why should the film be created by members of the Urdd? How many of the local children/youth of the Pennal/Machynlleth Bro Ddyfi area are members of the Urdd? Why should those that are not be excluded from participation in such an important part of their history? Why not give everyone, of all classes, a chance.

“Bluetooth Audio presentation of someone reading letter with a commentary on it”.

E.G. Again, why is the focus on the Church?

*“Family friendly leaflet depicting letter, those who wrote it and conveying what it meant/ means to Wales particularly appropriate for school groups and local visitors”*

E.G. With a more balanced version of the history I hope?. To be proof read before its printed by all parties concerned – including Embassy Glyndŵr.

*“Interpretation panel in church memorial garden explaining significance of those commemorated there”.*

E.G. Would agree and I would also like to point out that this is already being done at the ‘Arwyr Glyndŵr Memorial Garden’ at Cefn Caer.

*“Amend village sign at entrance to reflect Home of the Pennal Letter”*

E.G. That would not be true and it would be misleading to visitors to Pennal - as the home of the Pennal Letter is the ‘Archive Nationale’, in Paris, France! There is a reproduction of the letter at the Church as there is at Cefn Caer and five other sites throughout Wales.

*“Fly Glyndwr flag on top of tower throughout the year as a means of identifying it as a Glyndwr site”*

E.G. Again, there is no evidence’ of any kind’ to associate Glyndŵr with the church. Cefn Caer already flies the flag all year round and displays the ‘Four Lions Rampant’ on both the signs erected at the village as well as on the slate plaque signing the entrance to ‘Gardd Goffa Arwyr Glyndŵr’.

*“Colourful panel on village green in centre interpreting letter in context of ‘llys’ of Princes of Gwynedd”*

E.G. This interpretation Plan is an Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan. As I understand it, another Interpretation Plan has been produced for the Princes of Gwynedd.

*“Mosaic created by local schoolchildren under direction of professional artist on external wall of village toilet”.*

E.G. Is a toilet wall the right place for it? Also, the proposed mosaic will give a balanced and well researched account of the associated history we hope!

#### **9.6.4 Proposed interpretation theme**

Owain Glyndwr and his advisers planned an independent Wales informed by the latest religious, social and educational developments in parts of Europe.

His rebellion matured into a vision for a state.

He sought the support of the king of France and the Pope at Avignon to realise his vision.

He became an international figure who sought alliances abroad in parts of Europe.

E.G. This above section is O.K. apart (again) that his aim, from the beginning of the War of Independence, was to fight for an Independent Welsh State. Once he had declared war, there was no going back.

### **9.7. Aberystwyth**

#### **9.7.1 Site significance**

Aberystwyth was taken by Owain Glyndwr’s forces in 1404. They were besieged by forces under the command of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and the Earl of Warwick in 1407, whose artillery failed to make much impression on those besieged, though a cannonball fatally wounded William Gwyn ap Rhys Llwyd of Cydweli. Glyndwr had a long standing relationship with Henry IV and a personal rivalry ensued between him and Prince Hal. After several months of siege, the defenders resolved to surrender the castle on 1 November (following negotiations by the Chancellor of the University of Oxford), but when the proposal was put to Glyndwr, he threatened to execute the Welsh commander, took possession and directed the defence himself. However Glyndwr’s lack of sea power proved fatal and the castle finally fell to the besiegers at an uncertain date in the autumn of 1408 or early 1409, after their supplies had run out. From this point onwards, Glyndwr was effectively no more than a guerrilla leader (Davies).

Prince Henry (Henry V) attacked the castle with siege engines and cannon. This was one of the first times cannon were used in Britain. The English failed to take the castle and Henry complained that he had to pawn his jewels in order to support the expenses of the siege - Griffiths, R.A., (1972), *The Principality of Wales*, p. 236,

Morris, T.E., Incidents during the sieges of Harlech and Aberystwyth Castles, Arch Camb, (1925), 390-2 600 men at arms and 1,800 archers were ordered out by the English and nearly £7,000 provided for wages. The stores were collected at Hereford and wood was dispatched from Bristol. The king's 4.5 ton gun was sent down with nearly 600 pounds of powder, 1,000 pounds of saltpetre and 300 pounds of sulphur. This may have been the gun called 'The Messenger' which exploded when it was fired. (Morgan, John, A Short History of the Castle of Aberystwyth, p. 22, quoting Wyle, History of Henry IV) The occupants of the Castle surrendered to Prince Henry on the 12th September, 1408 Maredudd ab Owain (Rhys Ddu's son in law) was handed over as a hostage at the siege with Thomas ap Rhydderch. Rhys ap Gruffydd ap Llywelyn ab Ieuan (or Jankyn) was one of the Welsh leaders who garrisoned Aberystwyth castle at the end of the siege. Maredudd ab Owain ap Gruffydd ab Einion also supported Glyndwr and had to pay £300 pledge for hostages who had been taken to secure the surrender of Aberystwyth castle. John ap Rhys ap Dafydd was one of the hostages and had to pay a fine for his release - Griffiths, Gentlemen and Rebels, p 57, 59 Griffiths, R.A., (1972), The Principality of Wales, p. 273, 274, 306, 326-7 Foedera, IV, i, 120

#### 9.7.1 Embassy Glyndŵr Comments. Site significance generally o.k.

##### **Strengths**

The castle is within easy walking distance of the centre of Aberystwyth, within a stone's throw of the seafront university buildings and stands on a route along the promenade. It has a pleasant, open and welcoming ambience which people frequently stumble across as they wander along the front or walk to and fro between locations. The paths have a good tarmac surface which are suitable for those who are infirm on their feet or in wheelchairs. The remains of the walls, defences and tower create a romantic ruin in a prominent setting and it is easy to discern some of the events associated with the castle in addition to its strategic coastal location. Battles, fighting and sieges are all events which naturally appeal to a good proportion of visitors and contemporary accounts of canon use and warfare add meat to the story. The existence of canon balls, which may have been used during the siege, provide 'concrete' evidence and a tangible link with this episode in the castle's history. Aberystwyth is an exceedingly Welsh town and is already recognised as a cultural tourist destination. It has excellent train and bus connections and is within easy travelling distance of the other Glyndwr destinations of Pennal and Machynlleth, and is not too far south of Harlech Castle to travel in a day. The recently created mosaics under the castle, opposite the promenade, provide colourful insights into the castle's history including the Owain Glyndwr occupation and siege. Although unstaffed, the curator and staff at the nearby Ceredigion Museum are keen to improve the interpretation of the Castle.

##### **Weaknesses**

The castle is not always clearly signposted from the town centre nor the train station and, if travelling in a car, visitors can find it difficult to negotiate the one way system and find space to park nearby. The ruins are not very visible since they 'hide' a little behind the university buildings etc. Although the open ambience goes some way to making visitors feel welcome, there is nothing to inform people of where they have

arrived and the significance of the ruins. Since people tend to wander freely in and out en route from one place to another, it is not perceived as a heritage destination and can attract anti-social behaviour including vandalism. As a result the castle is probably taken for granted by many local people and is on the periphery as a visitor attraction compared with the National Library, the Arts Centre, the museum and the shops. The one interpretation panel is dated, relatively illegible due to the surface having

deteriorated, does not convey a coherent story or message, is in a poor location, is generally unattractive and non eye-catching. The mosaics are out of the way and difficult to find and the castle does not provide a visitor experience beyond the ruins themselves. Certain interpretation provision may be prone to vandalism and may need to be locked at night – safely displaying the canon balls on site may pose some challenges. The occupation by Owain Glyndwr, the subsequent siege and the saga associated with his eventual fateful defeat is only one episode in the castle's history.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Strengths and Weaknesses. Generally O.K. but, again, we must remind that this is, solely, an Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan. The fact that the Owain Glyndŵr association with Aberystwyth Castle is only one part of its history is irrelevant to the plan.

### **.9.7.3 Recommendations**

Target audience: Young families, retired couples and empty nesters

Interpretation panels on main paths into the castle - near entrance from town and at the entrance from the promenade.

Panel looking out over sea on green near war memorial.

A programme of re-enactments including Welsh language performances telling of the events surrounding breaking of the siege.

Audio/lighting in one of the towers/underground room depicting the cut and thrust of the fighting etc.

Exhibition in roofed tower room – the siege and Glyn Dwr's act of defiance including displaying the cannon balls and explaining their role.

Fly Glyndwr flag on top of tower throughout the year as a means of identifying it as a Glyndwr site.

Fingerposts and brown signs from town centre and train station

Research cannon balls alongside those at Harlech castle.

**Embassy Glyndwr Comments:** Target audience should also include school groups and there will need to be translation facilities (in a number of languages) available for Welsh language performances unless, the performances have been laid on especially for Welsh language group visits or Welsh schools.

## 9.7.4 Proposed interpretation themes

### 1.

Owain Glyndwr's background, military experience and loyalty from fellow Welsh people made him a defiant leader.

Had served under the English crown

Used astute tactics to defeat his enemy.

His cause split families and communities and wrought destruction to the landscape and buildings of Wales.

He was defiant in the face of overwhelming odds.

### 2.

Although Owain Glyndwr's dream failed, he was never betrayed, but instead he faded into the legend books to re-emerge centuries later a national hero.

**Embassy Glyndŵr Comments:** Again, the history portrayed must be unbiased and not a repeat of the biased versions of history that's been portrayed for years at the Edwardian castles. Same applies to Harlech Interpretation.

Wales was not ravaged by Owain Glyndŵr "all by himself" as has already been illustrated earlier on in this critique. The English forces are guilty of more than their fair share of ravenging and immense cruelty to boot.

Owain Glyndŵr's dream has not failed – not whilst it is still being fought for by those still striving for an Independent Wales with full governing powers.

## 9.8 Harlech Castle

### 9.8.1 Site significance

Harlech was taken by Owain Glyndwr's forces in 1404, and in August 1405 he held his second parliament there, a fit setting for one who had proclaimed himself prince of Wales. During his occupation he installed his court or llys and his family at Harlech and 'ruled' Wales from here. As at Aberystwyth, the besiegers under the leadership of Prince Hal used artillery, though to little effect. The castle finally fell to the besiegers at an uncertain date in the autumn of 1408 or early 1409 (Davies).

### Strengths

The castle at Harlech is an established visitor destination due to the size and remarkable state of the ruins, its spectacular position on a rock overlooking the sea and its location in the centre of Harlech town. It forms the focus for the town and is regarded as was one of the greatest of Edward 1st's castles. Harlech is located within a strongly Welsh part of Wales. It has excellent train and bus connections and is not too far north of the other Glyndwr destinations of Machynlleth, Pinnal and Aberystwyth Castle. Visitors are greeted at the desk in the small reception building where they pay an entrance fee and can buy a smart and comprehensive guidebook.

Harlech Castle was experienced by some 92,000 visitors last year who particularly enjoyed the views, the grandeur of the remains and the opportunity to let off steam, relax and interact with other members of their group in the open air, according to comments in the visitors book. The water gate and associated stairway between the castle and the sea when its level was higher than today, is an aspect of the castle which visitors find particularly interesting (pers comm M.Jones). The audio-guides, which were available until recently, were mostly used by 'serious' visitors from the retired couples and empty nesters target market. The re-enactments which occur within the castle walls during the summer months are popular, particularly with families. The interpretation panels which dot the castle walls convey some of the castle's history particularly its architecture and the function of various rooms and features. For those who come across the colourful and comprehensive panel exhibition they can read a thorough interpretation of aspects of the castle's history including Glyndwr's life, his rise and fall and events at the castle associated with his uprising. The Welsh is 'graenus' and is easy to read and the colourful reconstruction paintings (artist R.Jones), images of artefacts and plentiful quotations help bring the story to life. The overall design of the exhibition is attractive and appropriate to the subject and setting. Furthermore, if the aspiration to build a visitor centre at Harlech Castle goes ahead there are substantial opportunities to do justice to the Glyndwr episode in the life of the castle and for it to operate as a hub/departure point for other Glyndwr sites.

### **Weaknesses**

Despite its prominent position there are no obvious brown signs informing visitors of where to turn in the centre of the town to get to the car park – one has to guess relative to the position of the castle in the town. It appears that the reception building is not accessible for visitors in wheelchairs or those who are infirm on their feet. Little attempt is made to prepare people for their visit and to build up a sense of anticipation or excitement for what lies ahead. Since the audio-guides are no longer available then the interpretation is static, visual and only for visitors minded to make an effort to read. Only a proportion of visitors purchase the comprehensive guidebook which is not appropriate to be read during a visit and so visitors are left to wander and discover or miss-out by chance. The interpretation panels, placed at certain points on the walls do little to orientate or guide visitors around the ruins or to bring the castle to life in any way e.g by conveying what it was like to live in, serve in or defend the castle. Neither do they build up into a single story or message regarding the castle.

The panel exhibition is not signed in any way and so visitors stumble across it - the same is true for the cannonballs believed to have been used to break the siege at the end of Glyndwr's occupation, which lie on the floor of one of the towers. The layout of the exhibition does not encourage a particular flow and so visitors do not know where to start or how to move around it. The panels are in a low position with key text and images at such a low level as to make them difficult to see or read. The content is not arranged in any sort of hierarchy and so it is difficult to pick up the main messages or gist without laboriously reading all the text, much of which is in a small typeface. The role of the castle, events there and key characters associated with its history are not evident – in short the exhibition does not convey a sense of place nor what is special about the castle but rather outlines a general history of the important periods in its life. Despite the vast numbers of people who visit Harlech Castle it is difficult to see how it can effectively operate as a hub/departure point for other Glyndwr sites without

substantial investment in an enhanced visitor centre fit for the 'llys of Owain Glyndwr'!

[Embassy Glyndŵr Comments. Site significance and Strengths and Weaknesses generally o.k.](#)

### **9.8.3 Recommendations**

Target audience: Young families, retired couples and empty nesters and school groups

An AV show outlining the momentous events at the castle during Glyndwr's occupation to whet the appetite and prepare people for their visit if a new visitor centre goes ahead.

.A son et lumière show against the castle wall ruins based on imagined discussions between members of Glyndwr's family before and during the siege and alluding to their fates.

Explore the possibility of sculptures of silhouetted figures (temporary in the first place and as vandal resistant as possible) placed around the castle depicting various characters who were present with Owain Glyndwr during his occupation and his assembly.

A specially commissioned audio file as a bluetooth and wifi enabled download for mobile phones conveying the siege, its ending and the disappearance of Glyndwr into the legend books - what it was like to live in, serve in or defend the castle.

A panel at the exit point highlighting other Glyndwr sites for people to visit and the pan-Wales extent of the uprising.

Install barrier free access to the visitor reception and ground floor of the castle.

Provide a free map based leaflet for all visitors based on existing 'Discovering Harlech Castle' currently used by school groups.

Fly Glyndwr flag on top of tower throughout the year as a means of identifying it as a Glyndwr site.

Fingerpost and brown sign from town centre

Research canon balls alongside those at Aberystwyth Castle.

### **9.8.4 Proposed interpretation themes**

1.

Owain Glyndwr appealed to many corners of war-torn Wales and nearly brought it greater unity and representation.

E.G. . Not “nearly”, he “succeeded” in uniting all of Wales for a number of years

His uprising touched on most parts of Wales which were ravaged as a result

E.G. Again, he led a ‘War of Independence’ and not an ‘uprising’ and Wales was not ravaged by ‘ONLY’ Owain Glyndŵr and Welsh forces as has been illustrated on a number of occasions in this critique.

Following centuries of feudal dynastic rule he assembled representatives of various communities as a ‘parliament’.

He had a vision of him as head of state, the leader of a more modern nation.

2.

Although Owain Glyndwr’s dream failed, he was never betrayed, but instead he faded into the legend books to re-emerge centuries later a national hero.

E.G. Owain Glyndŵr’s dream has not failed – not whilst it is still being fought for by those still striving for an Independent Wales with full governing powers.

E.G. Again, the history portrayed must be unbiased and not a repeat of the biased versions of history that’s been portrayed for years at the Edwardian castles.

### Embassy Glyndŵr Conclusion

In my introduction to the above critique, I stressed that its purpose would be to draw attention to major failings that I had detected, both, within the Interpretation Plan as well as with some of the Consultant’s recommendations. It is hoped that the critique will serve as a means to illustrate that the plan, as it stands, does great disservice to the true national dimension of the Owain Glyndŵr story and it’s full Pan Wales potential in regards to a desperately needed boost for the Welsh tourism industry and hence, the Welsh economy.

Early on in this critique, I mentioned that there are, at the least, 55 sites associated with the Owain Glyndwr story but certainly, much more consideration should have been given in the plan to important sites in Ceredigion and Ystrad Tywi; to Trefgarne Owain in Penfro, to the Welsh Border Offensive 1403-1404, to the 1405 battles in Gwent, to the French Landing and the March on Woodbury Hill 1406 and what about Mathrafal, Meifod and Powys in general, so crucial a part of Prince Owain Glyndŵr’s ancestral history.

I have also stressed my concern in regards to the lack of transparency that has prevailed throughout the development procedure of this Interpretation

Plan. I am especially alarmed in regards to the way that certain individuals and groups - often with no track record of having ever promoted, organized or even participated in an Owain Glyndŵr initiative or event, have been invited to participate in workshops to advice on the construction of the plan, whereas authors of popular Owain Glyndŵr books, Owain Glyndŵr festival organizers, such as the 'SGF' (who have organized a very successful Owain Glyndŵr Festival for the last six years) and the 'Gŵyl Coroni Owain Glyndŵr Machynlleth Committee or, Embassy Glyndŵr – who has a long history and a successful track record of coordinating, promoting and organizing Owain Glyndŵr events, were not!

Similar and associated with the lack of transparency noted above is the means in which Consultants have and are being contracted by Cadw to provide their input into this interpretation plan and the others associated with this Welsh Heritage Tourism initiative.

For example, It seems that the appointments concerned were not openly advertised in Wales; instead, nineteen U.K. recognized Interpretation Consultants were invited by Cadw (via e-mail) to submit their quotes for the contracts. Thirteen of these Consultancies were English based, three were Scottish and three were Welsh.

Sian Shakespear Associates was paid £20,875 for the production of the Owain Glyndwr Interpretation Plan but, apparently, they then subcontracted Aqua Marketing and Govannan Consultancy to assist with Marketing Tourism and to collate historical information. Again these contracts were not advertised.

Apart from the obvious absence of transparency in the placing of the aforementioned contracts, there is also a need to question why did Cadw contact sixteen companies that were not Welsh based to quote for a contract to produce an Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan? When I queried Cadw about this I was told that WAG procurement guidelines state:

*“We cannot mark negatively if the company is not based in Wales”*

How on earth could these English and Scottish based companies have come up with a strong plan based on a subject that they would have known little (if anything at all) about? And what about the creation of work for our own 'home grown' businesses in regards to these contracts? Yes, at the end of the day, the Welsh based Sian Shakespear Associates won this particular contract but, to illustrate how ridiculous and how detrimental such procurement guidelines are to such initiatives as those regarding our History in Heritage Tourism packages, the contracts for similar Interpretation Plans for 'The Princes of Gwynedd' and 'Castles and Town Walls of Edward 1' has been awarded to PLB, a North Yorkshire based Consultancy!

One of my greatest fears is that up to present times, Cadw has far from been 'nationally' minded in regards to presentation of the native Welsh version of our medieval history; the internal Interpretation boards on sites under their custodianship, as well as their external exhibitions, often ignore or play down such history and this practice is often followed in their, otherwise, good tourism literature. For the most part, it is the Anglo – Norman version of history that is highlighted and presented, such as that of the Conqueror,

Edward I, and the English Princes of Wales - as has been the disgraceful case in Caernarfon Castle for many years - whilst the true history of the native Princes of Wales has been poorly displayed . If one then views the whole Cadw Heritage Interpretation plan, one sees a perfect example of their 'colonial mentality' in so far as Wales's medieval history, once again, is not presented from a 'national' or 'native' view; for, 'Welsh Speaking Wales' is handed the 'Princes of Wales Initiative', that is, 'Princes of Gwynedd and Deheubarth, incorporating into it some of the Glyndŵr plan. Then 'English Speaking Wales' gets what is described as the 'Marcher Lords Initiative', incorporating into it the North East, Central Wales/Powys and all of the South. Just what does this say? It not only divides Welsh Medieval history geographically but also undermines the 'National' consciousness that Wales at this time in our history so desperately needs to reinstate in our nation. But most insidiously, is the way in which the 5 packages have been divided and the way in which Consultants have been hired to produce the Interpretation Plan for each package. Such will allow for Cadw to carry on (as usual) employing English medieval re-enactment groups to put on largely what may be perceived as English Medieval Castle/Borough Plantagenet history. I would suggest that the time has come to query just how many ex English Heritage People work for Cadw and have a major influence on how Welsh history is interpreted - and by whom?

I have also illustrated weaknesses in the research procedure undertaken – and especially so in the Pennal case where, it seems, the Consultant devised her recommendations on 'hearsay' rather than thorough research and facts. I would agree that a great deal more research needs to be carried out in this case if we are to get conclusive proof as to where "exactly" in Pennal the famous 'Pennal Letter' was signed – and we may never find that conclusive proof and can only do what all other countries have done in such situations and that is to go with the 'law of probabilities' and, as I have illustrated, the 'law of probabilities' in the Pennal Letter case, falls heavily in favour of Cefn Caer as the site where the letter was more than likely signed.

As illustrated in the critique, I myself conducted some research to arrive at the above conclusion but could not continue with this research due to time and financial constraints. Also, many of the documents that still need to be researched in quest of the 'gospel' truth demanded by Cadw to prove the Cefn Caer case are in medieval script which calls for the services of a medieval specialist in the reading of such material so, if there is anybody out there prepared and able to take on the challenge, I will be more than happy to pass on what leads I have.

What must be remembered throughout the process of implementing this plan is that it is a tourism initiative above anything else. Its main purpose must be to give a much needed boost to the Welsh economy. Such can be achieved if the history of Prince Owain Glyndŵr and his times is creatively used to create an 'unique' and exiting Heritage tourism package that will have worldwide appeal.

For this plan to realize its full potential, it has to be an 'all Wales – Teyrnas Glyndŵr initiative' that will provide jobs and training in all types of associated occupations to all of a working age throughout Wales; the European Convergence funding that is available for the initiative must be carefully and

fairly distributed to qualifying groups or Town Council Associations in communities throughout Wales and not squandered on further unnecessary consultations and junkets.

Siân Ifan  
CEO Embassy Glyndŵr

Imbolc 2011

### **Appendices:**

#### **1. An Introduction to Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr and a list of some of the group's achievements since its establishment in 1989.**

Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr, a non paid, voluntary, non profit making collective was established in 1999 to prompt knowledge of Owain Glyndŵr, his life and times, and of the great War of Welsh Independence 1400 -16 - 22. The members of the collective were well experienced in the subject to take on such a task as they had been organizing Welsh historical commemorative events in Wales since 1966, managing to achieve a turnout of 3000 of men, women and children, of all walks of life, to Cilmeri in 1982 to commemorate the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd in 1282.

The initial aim of the collective was to act as the Prince's Embassy to the world; an international link to provide knowledge in regards to Prince Owain Glyndŵr as a national hero and the great liberation struggle he led – which continued to, at least, 1421 – despite Prince Owain's disappearance into Welsh myth and legend as the Mab Darogan in 1416.

During its 11yrs of operation, Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr has covered a great deal of ground and achieved much. Following is a brief summary of some of the group's achievements since its beginnings.

#### **Methods of Communication:**

The Llysgenhadaeth's website was launched on June 1st 1999 to provide a comprehensive 'News and Information Service' to publicize events and activities that were to take place during the period 2000 – 16. Unfortunately, the server unexpectedly deleted the site in 2004 destroying 5 years worth of hard work and useful and interesting material!. Since then, the information and 'post events reports' are regularly posted onto a number of blogs. It is also sent out to media and supporters via the e-mail system and by snail mail in some cases.

### **The Owain Glyndŵr Flag:**

Prior to the year 2000, very few people knew what the Owain Glyndŵr flag looked like and now, thanks to a Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr initiative launched in the year 2000 which ensured production of Flags, bunting and a wide range of souvenirs, the flag is recognized immediately and is flown all over Wales as well as in a number of countries abroad. Since 1999, we have continuously lobbied bodies such as the WTB (now known as Visit Wales) Cadw, Local Authorities, TICS (Most of which have now closed down in Wales) The Civic and National Trust and Chambers of Trade to come on board and assist communities all over Wales to organize 'Gwyliau Glyndŵr' and to fly Glyndŵr flags on all civic buildings in Wales associated with the all important Welsh National Hero and the War of Independence he led. A number of communities now do organize 'Gwyliau Glyndŵr' and the Millennium Stadium, many councils, businesses, hotels, caravan parks, youth hostels, private homes and even whole streets of shops, in some towns, fly the Glyndŵr flag – and not only on important dates associated with the hero, but throughout the summer in many places.

Cadw does now fly the Glyndŵr flag on some of the castles in their care on Dydd Glyndŵr Day and we will continue to lobby until the body concedes to fly the flag on all the Civic properties in their care on Prince Owain Glyndŵr's birthday (May 28<sup>th</sup>) on Coronation and Senedd Day (21 June) and on Dydd Glyndŵr Day (Sept 16) We would expect them to fly the flag on properties associated with Owain Glyndŵr throughout the year and will continue to lobby until this is done.

Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr presented the Welsh Assembly with a gigantic embroidered flag in 2001 and this is flown on Dydd Glyndŵr/Day Sept 16<sup>th</sup> annually. We have also presented the National Eisteddfod of Wales with a similar flag which is flown atop the main pavilion at the Eisteddfod throughout Eisteddfod week annually. Both flags were sponsored by Welsh Castle Crafts of Caerdydd who also sponsored 'Cleddyf y Genedl' presented to the community of Machynlleth and Bro Ddyfi by Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr on 21 June 2004 and the 'Corwen Dagger' presented to the community of Corwen by Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy, Glyndŵr in 2005.

Following is a list of some other Owain Glyndŵr Initiatives, Events and Projects initiated and/or advised on by Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr and taken to conclusion by others:

- The London Memorial in memory of Catrin Glyndŵr and her children.
- The Pegaso (Milan,Italy) Fine Art miniature model of Owain Glyndŵr on horseback.
- The Cranston Fine Arts painting (Scotland) of the Battle of Bryn Glâs.
- The Pendragon range of gifts and souvenirs.
- Cleddyf y Genedl, the ceremonial 'Sword of State'

- The Corwen Dagger.
- The Owain Glyndŵr Replica Crown.
- The Gwasg y Lofa range of books on Owain Glyndŵr
- A prestigious bust of Owain Glyndŵr
- A good quality Rugby Shirt of the Four Rampant Lions flag.
- A good quality sports shirt with the 'Four Lions Rampant Coat of arms and the wording 'Juratus Oweyn' (loyal to Owain in Latin)
- At least one Owain Glyndŵr story themed C.D.
- 'The Assassination attempt on Prince Owain Glyndŵr by Dafydd Gam on the Day of Prince Owain's Coronation' Puppet Show by Cwmni Cortyn.

In 2001, we organized a Marketing expo at the Pier head building in Caerdydd so that all the above products could be displayed for public viewing. We also organized an exhibition for this event and this exhibition has been taken to the National Eisteddfod and a great number of events throughout Wales over the years. The exhibition has now got a home at Cefn Caer but can be adapted, updated and taken out as needed.

### **Gwyliau Glyndŵr Festivals:**

Over the years, Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr have, either, organized or assisted others to organize events and Festivals on relevant dates and in locations relevant to historical events that took place during the Great war of Independence. For example...

- We organized an Owain Glyndwr 'Gig' in Clwb Ifor Bach, Caerdydd to coincide with the 'Expo' and the 'Flag Presentation' to WAG events in 2001.
- We organized an exhibition and assisted with a 'Gŵyl Owain Glyndŵr event for Dolgellau Council in 2003.
- We assisted with the organizing of a Gŵyl Glyndŵr in Pontarddulais in 2003
- We organized a four day Gŵyl Dathlu Coroni Glyndŵr in Machynlleth in 2004 and have now assisted to establish a local 'Gŵyl' Committee to concentrate local efforts into this event.
- We assisted with the organizing of a Gŵyl Glyndŵr in Harlech in 2005.
- We assisted with the organizing of a Gŵyl Glyndŵr in Corwen in 2005 and presented the community of Corwen with the 'Corwen Dagger'.

- We assisted with the organizing of a Gŵyl Glyndŵr event in Caernarfon in 2006 and unveiled a plaque to commemorate Owain Glyndŵr's stand of defiance against Caernarfon castle in 1401.
- We collaborated with Machynlleth Town Council to hold a Civic Ceremony on Parliament Green in 2006 to present the Medieval Hall House Cefn Caer with the Owain Glyndŵr replica crown and have since then, annually on the 21<sup>st</sup> June or the nearest Saturday, organized a 'Displaying of the Glyndŵr Crown', where the crown is brought to Machynlleth and displayed during a parade before it is taken by the town mayor to be displayed at the Parliament House.
- We are now in the process of establishing a Memorial Garden to 'Arwyr Glyndŵr/Owain Glyndŵr's heroes at Cefn Caer. Every community in Wales is being given the opportunity to sponsor a plaque to a local hero that is known to have been on the Welsh side during Prince Owain Glyndŵr's Great War of Independence. Mr. Rowlands and Mrs. Thomas the present owner and occupier of Cefn Caer has kindly given use of their beautiful peaceful orchard for the garden and has donated the plaque for the entrance and, so far, 8 Welsh communities have donated plaques to their local Glyndŵr hero or heroes.

#### **Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Advice and Assistance:**

- We provide constant advice to a growing number of individuals worldwide researching areas concerned with Owain Glyndŵr.
- We provide A&A to schools working on educational projects.
- We have provided A&A to the 'Wisdom of Ancients' Tourism Initiative at Dolgellau.
- We have provided A&A to a growing number of local authorities such as at Machynlleth, Dolgellau, Caerfyrddin, Cydweli, Caernarfon, Corwen, Ruthun, Caerffili, Castell Nedd.
- We have provided A&A to local tourism interest businesses such as at Harlech.
- We have provided A&A to 'Glyndŵr's Farmers Market', Corwen.
- We have provided A&A to Corwen Cricket Club re adopting the Glyndŵr Coat of Arms as their badge.
- We have provided A&A to 'Bwrdd yr Iaith' and 'Mentrau Iaith' on Glyndŵr Festivals.
- We have provided A&A to a number of Artists/Sculptors' producing sculptures on Owain Glyndŵr.

- We provide A&A to a variety of media on Owain Glyndŵr themes.
- We have provided A&A to United Flag Traders of Llansamlet re the production of heavy duty ‘Owain Glyndŵr flags.
- We provide A&A to Actors and Theatrical Production Groups re Owain Glyndŵr themed productions, pageants and carnivals.

We have had 10,000 cloth ‘Owain Glyndŵr Day’ ribbons produced which have been given away at Owain Glyndŵr Day events. We also produced a Welsh language magazine entitled ‘Galwad Glyndŵr’ in the year 2000 and have since produced enamel Owain Glyndŵr Day ribbons, an embroidered ‘4 Rampant Lion’ Cloth Badge and an Owain Glyndŵr T-shirt.

The above account is by no means a comprehensive account of all the work that is being carried out by Llysgenhadaeth/ Embassy Glyndŵr but it suffices to demonstrate how active we are on the ground in Wales – and how far reaching we have become in other countries. I challenge any body or group to come forward with a similar testimony of their record of activity - and all our work, to date, has been carried out without a penny from public funds. We have achieved all the above by sheer determination, placing ourselves on the poverty line and by the support of a few like minded supporters because we are passionate in what we believe in. We are determined to take a ‘sense of place ‘ and ‘sense of nation’ to its ultimate conclusion in that as a nation, we can be proud of our greatest of national heroes because had he and his Welsh followers not made a stand when they did, it is very unlikely that ‘Welsh nationhood as we know it today would have survived.

**Siân Ifan**  
**Chief Executive Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr**

## **Appendice 2:**

### **Proposals from Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr for Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr, Machynlleth as requested.**

Introduction: There is certainly no need to remind any person that receives a copy of these proposals of the importance of Parliament Green and the event of Prince Owain Glyndŵr establishing a free Welsh Parliament as the singular most important event in Welsh history that might well stand forth as the beginning of the march towards nationhood and democracy in our country. Comparisons might well be drawn with England – in the historic event of the signing of the Magna Carta at Runnymede on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1215. Surely, the establishment of an all Wales Representative Parliament at Machynlleth, on or about 21 June 1404, deserves to be regarded with the same importance and status and to be worthy of the same annual national recognition and commemoration in the form of a National Day, a day by which we may focus attention on the advancement of our national political Sovereignty. Thus, in 2004, we declared 21 June - ‘Dydd y Senedd’ (Parliament Day) as the most appropriate date to have our National Day and

associated with such, needs to be the restoration of icons associated with Owain Glyndŵr's Coronation on this Historic Day, they being the icons that give meaning to that national Sovereignty– such as Coron Glyndŵr – Glyndŵr's Crown symbolic of National Sovereignty and Cleddyf y Genedl – Sword of the Nation - symbolic of Justice.

## **Part I: Image Branding Pivot.**

### **21 June – National 'Sovereignty' Day**

It then follows that such a National 'Sovereignty' Day should be declared a 'Mid – Summer National Holiday' to allow for annual widespread celebrations of this historic 'Dydd y Senedd' aka 'Dydd Coroni Glyndŵr' with people from near and far then attending an annual '*Juratus Oweyn Ceremony*' on Parliament Green. Such, we hope, would be the basis for the 'on going' development of a National Great Owain Glyndŵr Festival that we hope to see established in and around Machynlleth on and about 21 June annually. In time, it is hoped this festival will become a week long event of various activities held throughout the Gwlad Glyndŵr of Bro Ddyfi.

But, before that National 'Sovereignty' Day/Holiday and the Great Festival becomes a reality, a great deal of preparatory foundation work needs to be done by the Machynlleth and Bro Ddyfi community and Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr is of course - and has to be, central to the proposed developments. *Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr* is very aware of Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr's very exiting development plans and we sincerely hope that the Canolfan now get their target funding for development without any further delays. However, we must stress that long before such development plans are put into effect, we advice that there is a need for the Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr Development Committee to work with others - such as the Town and County Councils, the Cefn Caer Initiative and, in due course, my Antur Teyrnas Glyndŵr – Welsh Medieval Living History Initiative to establish the foundation of an identifiable brand and identity on Machynlleth and Bro Ddyfi in general, as a Gwlad Glyndŵr Medieval Heritage Area (CGMHI). I advise that This can be best achieved by means of putting in place 'Gwlad Glyndŵr' identifiable 'foundation stones' which can be clearly recognized and promoted over the years ahead. Below are suggestions/proposals for simple but very necessary 'foundation stones projects' that can be immediately set in motion via the Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Development Committee:

Note: Regards below, before you read on, I would like to draw your attention as to how, in recent years, the Languedoc/Occitan a region of "Southern France" is identifying the region as CATHAR COUNTRY, not least, with large medieval figure heads of Knights and fallen crosses set up on road sides at frontiers of CATHAR COUNTRY (See the Albiginese Crusade) I am not suggesting the same for your 'Gwlad Glyndŵr' but, perhaps, large signposts with a startling representation of Owain Glyndŵr would be both impressive and effective (see Pegaso's model of Glyndŵr attached) Pegaso is the World's main Medieval Modeller and the company is based in a City with great Medieval History. You may find it of an advantage to link up with this city of Milan.

I am sure Pegaso would give permission for you to use this image as we helped them (research wise) to enable them to produce the figure - and any way, it would be to their advantage publicity wise. The image could be placed over a wide area of Central Powys, on roads leading into Machynlleth, stating the Legend 'Gwlad Glyndŵr – Bro Dyfi' and 'Machynlleth Site of Glyndŵr's Parliament'. I would further suggest that the background colour of such signs be a Royal Purple as I note that Ceredigion's Blue Sign posting really stands out making a big impact.

One cannot shout out loud enough what must be emphasized constantly in the case of 'branding', and what must be emphasized here is that "this is 'Glyndŵr Country'".

- a) Sign Posting: We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr contact the highways department of the Council to inform them that you, as a committee, consider it of the utmost priority that 'Brown Signs' are erected on all major roads leading into Machynlleth to show the way to Machynlleth, Royal Capital of Wales & Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr.

*Note: To qualify for the above, the Canolfan will need to declare that you are open to the public for 150 days annually; if this is not the case already then we strongly suggest that funding is sought for this purpose.*

- b) We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr contact the Town Council to request that they place 'Information Notice Boards' around the town that will interpret the history of our National Hero and associated places in the town, to the general public who visit Machynlleth.
- c) We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr contact the Town Council to request that they erect a sturdy flag pole atop Penrallt and that they officially raise a very large embroidered Owain Glyndŵr flag on this pole on three relevant annual dates namely:

28 May – Owain Glyndŵr's birthday.

21 June – Dydd y Senedd – Parliament Day

16 Sept – Dydd Glyndŵr Day.

Canolfan y Senedd-Dŷ could further request that a local women's embroidery circle or Merched y Wawr -or both, work together to produce the aforementioned flag.

- d) We suggest that Canolfan y Senedd-Dŷ requests of the Town Council that they express pride in the important historical status of the town as a 'Gwlad Glyndŵr – Medieval Heritage Town' by erecting bannerettes of colourful medieval shields of the 'Royal & Noble Tribes of the Ancient Cymru' on lamp posts throughout the town.
- e) We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr raises three or more flags poles on the Ganolfan to a higher level where it will be safe to leave flags on them all year round without danger of the flags being stolen. We suggest that flags flown all year round should be Glyndŵr's 'Four Lions Rampant', The Glyndŵr Family flag and 'Baner y Ddraig Aur' (Glyndŵr's Golden Dragon on a white background)

On 21 June – Dydd y Senedd a Dydd Coroni Glyndŵr, we suggest that it would be worthwhile to consider flying also, the Royal Flags of France and Scotland who sent representation to the Coronation of 1404.

- f) We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Owain Glyndŵr makes the necessary arrangements to receive Cleddyf y Genedl into its safe keeping ASAP for the following reasons:
1. It will be an additional attraction for visitors to the centre.
  2. It can ‘ceremonially’ be bought out of the centre next year and annually after that to be part of the Juratus Oweyn Civic Ceremony.

We suggest that Canolfan y Senedd-Dŷ immediately commences on a project to set up a major memorial to commemorate the establishment of Senedd Glyndŵr and the coronation of Owain Glyndŵr on 21 Mehefin 1404. We further suggest that this memorial be erected on Parliament Green in the form of a life size sculpture of Owain Glyndŵr (similar to the imposing statue of Abraham Lincoln in Washington) and that the proposed sculpture should be as is represented on his great seal, depicting his coronation, and should be raised up on a plinth with overhead canopy. We suggest that wording on the plinth should be as on the seal but in three languages. Welsh, English and the original Latin.

There are, at the least, two options open to the ‘Canolfan’ for raising the necessary funding for such a memorial:

1. It can be an open competition with a money prize and world wide recognition for the winning artist which means that the project would receive Welsh Art Council funding but, should you choose this path, it is important that you set the guidelines i.e. that the work must be based on the Glyndŵr seal. You would, of course initially ask for illustrations and from these, choose the finalists who would then produce small scale plaster cast models as final entries to find the winning entry.
- 2.
3. As with the Corwen memorial, the funding can be raised by other means, i.e. Public appeal, Powys and Town Councils, Business Sponsorships, Fund Raising Events etc.

## **Part II: Platform – Annual Event.**

### **A Ceremony to Commemorate 21 June 1404.**

During the years ahead, the annual Juratus Oweyn Ceremony on Parliament Green will allow for a great annual platform for Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr – and such can start from next year and hence annually on 21 Mehefin – ‘Dydd y Senedd’. It will be noted that the aforementioned ceremony held this year was deliberately kept low key with its main significance being only the presentation of Coron Glyndŵr. this was done so that our *Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr* image and identity would not be stamped on what we hope will become a "Civic Event" organized, in the main, by Machynlleth Town

Council although, It is intended for this 'Civic Ceremony' to be central to the aforementioned Gŵyl Fawr in the form of a "civic event" of local and national importance - similar to that held on the Isle of Man's 'Tynwald Day and the Basque's 'Guernica Arbola' and Scotland's Declaration of Abroath ceremonies that are held in commemoration and as reminders of the national Sovereign rights of those countries. It is therefore the intention of Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr to propose to the council that they, in the first instance, adopt the annual 'Juratus Oweyn Ceremony' on Parliament Green as a "Civic" event and secondly, that they then forge official links between Machynlleth, St Johns on the Isle of Man, Guernica in the Basque Country, Abroath and Scoone in Scotland and Tara in Ireland, as recognition of the common important historical inheritance experienced and shared by these small nations, and thirdly, that official representatives from the aforementioned countries are annually invited by the Town and Powys Council to the 'Civic Juratus Oweyn Ceremony'.

Such links, in time, advanced with other countries that have similar historic events and days of great importance will prove to be worthwhile in public relations terms for Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr and Machynlleth Bro Ddyfi in general. We would suggest a study of or a visit to 'Tynwald Day', on St John's Day, on the Isle of Man, for further enlightenment on the usefulness of such "civic" ceremonies.

We will also then suggest to the council that they hold a civic buffet (for invitees) in the Senedd- Dŷ after the Juratus Oweyn Ceremony followed, hopefully, by a presentation and a guided tour of the Senedd-Dŷ by Pwyllgor Canolfan Owain Glyndŵr and a theatrical presentation by the schools.

- g) We suggest that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr prepares an exhibition of your Development Plan for this occasion and decide, where in the Ganolfan, to place it so that visitors to the Senedd- Dŷ can view it with ease on the day.

All the above suggestions are things that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr can do immediately to assist in raising the profile of the Canolfan as an active centre of operations. Llysgenhadaeth Glyndŵr considers it to be of the utmost importance that the Canolfan is seen to be 'very active' at this moment in time when you are approaching funding bodies for a great deal of public money. We are already working with Cefn Caer in order to raise the profile of that historically important house and will also be issuing proposals to the Town Council, Bro Ddyfi School and the Rugby Club for consideration. But, as aforementioned, in time, we hope that all elements we make contact with now in the Machynlleth – Bro Ddyfi area, will realize the importance and potential of working together towards what will gradually grow to be a Prif Gŵyl Coroni Owain Glyndŵr that will be of economic benefit to the whole area as a whole.

I cannot stress enough that many ventures fail because they do not give enough consideration to successful world wide marketing. Key towards such ends is getting the foundation work done ASAP and constantly develop. Establishing useful links with similar interests world wide is another must. Then, "sprats to catch Mackerels" must be set out to ensure that through

use of the w.w.w. you cast out the bait of a number of interests that will draw people as tourists to Machynlleth.

For example, an organized Mid Summer Dawn Welcome Ceremony on Penrallt on 21 June (on longest day of the year) could put such a Penrallt Ceremony and Machynlleth into a 'world media attention search' for Longest Day Ceremonies from Stonehenge to Lithuania. I remind the Town that not so long ago, bonfires were ceremoniously lit atop Penrallt, why not revive this custom or at the least, light a Beacon at the going down of the Sun on Dydd y Senedd, this could be most effective along with the taking down of the flag.

### **Part III.**

**The following proposals are ideas that Canolfan Senedd-Dŷ Glyndŵr may be interested in either, incorporating into their Development Plan or, for consideration once the Canolfan has undergone development.**

1: A Web Site to lay before the public your plans as to future developments (see similar on the internet re proposed Robert the Bruce Centre) little point in constructing a major site until the new Centre is set up and you have money to do a brilliant website.

2: Prifysgol Glyndŵr. Represents a period in the year (during Student holidays) in which may be organized a series of Day Lectures, Weekend Conferences and workshops. This could be developed with Welsh University History Departments and such as WEA and OU etc. Also could be presented as Academic Holidays in Gwlad Glyndŵr and linked to B&B's and Hotels and Caer Cefn activities and Banquets. Further links to this could be the Glyndŵr trail in Powys and, of course, field Trips and outings to Glyndŵr sites in the wider area.

Re 2 above: Prifysgol Glyndŵr. Such could be embarked on as from next year, I am prepared to assist and do have more info to make available soon

3: A Tapestry depicting 'Hanes Glyndŵr' which may be set up in panels around the new Glyndŵr Centre.

Further to above, I am in the process of developing other initiatives that may be of long term future use as and when the New Centre is in development, such as:

A: Inter-active Educational Displays & Projects.

B: Visual, Photo and Film Presentations.

C: Product Merchandising, Quality & Authentic Welsh Medieval.

D: Children's Corner FROM 3 - 7 and from 7 – 11.

E: 11 – 16 Youth Activities.

Not Least for your consideration, an Archive and Study Room for Researchers and Students.

Worth Noting:

You will be aware by now of the situation regards the WMC, The National Botanic Gardens and Celtica had encountered the same problem, failure to attract sufficient visitors. This has been the case with a great number of Millennium Lottery Projects – particularly those set up in deprived regions where they were seen as a panacea to socio – economic problems (employment hopes etc) I cannot stress enough that not allowing enough consideration to the “how to get them here (visitors) issue” is, in many ways, putting the cart before the horse. I draw your attention to the fact that the attempt to set up that “Ice Dome” in Llanberis was finally killed by failure to “deliver” on the matter of visitor attendance. I can assure you that the Heritage Lottery Commission and other bodies (Assembly and Local Authorities etc) drawn on to offer advice to them and support to you, will be closely looking at this visitors issue. Obviously, they will not want to see any more failures – and subsequent calls for further annual subsidies, having already had to pay up for the NBG and now, no doubt, the WMC also in the near future. It is thus crucial for your committee to, not only put in a well structured development plan application, but also to consider fully this “visitors issue” and incorporate your findings into your plan.

Siân Ifan  
CEO Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr.  
2005

### **Appendice 3:**

#### **Pennal – The Case for Cefn Caer**

The all important letter written and dispatched to King Charles of France in March 1406 does, indeed, state that it was signed by Owain Glyndŵr at Pennal and there is sound reasoning for accepting that the Pennal referred to under Glyndŵr’s signature is the Pennal located in the Southern part of Gwynedd. To begin with, recorded history informs us that Owain Glyndŵr had established a Welsh Parliament in nearby Machynlleth in 1404 and had been officially crowned there as Prince of Wales in the same year. (*The History of Powys Fadog, Vol 1, 1881*). Also Thomas Pennant in his recorded history has also, time and time again, depicted this warrior Prince as a shrewd strategist who, through both his political and warfare strategies, had displayed a thorough knowledge of the past history of his country and of the war strategies employed by previous leaders during conflict both in Wales and on the continent. (*Pennant, Thomas. Tours of Wales V3. Appendix VII*) History also testifies to the fact that Prince Owain and his many commandants were familiar with the old Roman forts dotted around Wales and has illustrated how they would make use of these sites as military

encampments and meeting points for their large armies. They did so for sound strategic reasons; they were aware that these old Roman forts had been built in locations that allowed for good all round surveillance and close to rivers and lakes which would provide necessary water resources for everyday living and industry as well as provide ferrying means to transport goods and warfare supplies.

By Owain Glyndŵr's time, there would have been little left of these forts standing but nevertheless, the recorded history illustrates how their sites were to play an important part in the War of Independence. They would provide shelter and water and would, invariably, connect to bridle paths that connected well throughout Wales.

It is a well established fact that one such Roman Fort, of substantial proportions by all accounts, was built on the land which now occupies the Medieval Hall House 'Cefn Caer'. The 'Cefn Caer' fort covers an area of around 5 and 1/3 and is described by a Professor R.C Bosanquet, F.S.A. as follows:

*" The site is a low ridge rising from marshy flats beside the river Dovey, distant 300 yards to the south, and commands a good view of the estuary and its setting of wooded trees. The position may have been chosen as a convenient one for unloading sea-borne supplies"* Bosanquet, R.C. p157)

Further detail is given in a letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> Aug 1693 from Maurice Jones (who was rector of Dolgellau at the time) to Edward Lhwyd.

*" The main fort was upon the highest topp of the hill and built quadrangular; and about it there was a strong wall and a broad ditch of an ovall forme towards the land, but towards the valley it was built in a direct line: And on the outside of the great ditch next the river Dyfi there were a great many houses built, and a little fort upon a lower banck"* (Jones, Maurice, 1693))

The aforementioned letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> November 1693 also states...

*"All the out walls were built of a rough hard stone which needs be carried thither by water, because there are noe such stones to be found elsewhere in the neighbourhood nearer than Talygarrog which is 6 or 7 miles off. From the fort to the water-side there is to this day a broad hardway paved with stones 10 or 12 yards broad in a straight line made through marsh ground and meadow lands to the river side which is in length about 200 yards"*

And...

*"In memory of some now living there was found by a mason (who sought a convenient place to build a kilne) a large hole which proved to be a well, the hole was built with lime and stone, as farr as could be disurn'd of it, and it proved to be so deep that the bottom of it could not be dived into with 10 or 12 fathoms"* (Jones, Maurice. 1693)

Evidence such as the above clearly illustrates that 'Cefn Caer' ticked all the necessary boxes in regards to the strategic necessities needed for a military

camp and would, without doubt have been the ideal site for Owain Glyndŵr to set up his whilst in the Pennal area in 1406.

Further, Glyndŵr was the most important person in Wales at the time, he was the Warrior Prince and leader of the Welsh in a war against England and although his Parliament had been established in Machynlleth since 1404, he would hardly have based himself in the town of Machynlleth or the village of Pennal, openly exposed and trapped to potential assassins in the pay of the English crown. He and his council would have been very careful to ensure that only those needing to know, would know where he was based at any given time and they would have been very careful to ensure that he stayed at places that would allow a number of routes suitable for a quick escape should one be needed.

Cefn Caer, sited as it is, had the necessary escape routes whether they needed to be via the old Roman roads, bridle paths or via the river Dyfi – and estuary so, it would have made more logical sense for Owain Glyndŵr and his retinue to have stayed at Cefn Caer rather than at the exposed site of a “temporary erected pavilion” as was suggested “may have been the case” by the consultant in the Cadw Interpretation plan.

The suggestion by Professor Ralph Griffiths, (the historical advisor appointed by Cadw - or the Consultant for this interpretation plan) that the convenience of a river crossing would have been a more important factor than the survival of royal land as a locale for any meeting can but add substance to the above logic suggested by Embassy Glyndŵr, and the importance of the river Dyfi and its closeness to Cefn Caer - and the fact that it led down to the Dyfi estuary – and the sea, could provide Cefn Caer with a very strong case as to why Owain Glyndŵr would have needed to be resident on the site in March 1406. In order To seek the answer to this mystery, we will now need to briefly look at historical developments taking place at the time in question.

In February 1405, Glyndŵr’s forces had suffered great defeats at the Battles of Grosmont Castle and Pwll Melyn in Usk. Gruffydd (Glyndŵr’s son) had been captured and both his brother Tudur and another of his greatest warriors, Hopcyn ap Tomos - the bard and antiquarian had been killed - as was John ap Hywel, Abbot of Llantarnam Abbey. 300 captive Welsh warriors had been beheaded on the spot at Usk. Following these defeats, Biwmaris castle fell in June 1405 and by November 1405, French troops had begun to return to France whilst King Henry, in the meantime, had raised a further 3,500 men to reinforce the garrisons across Wales and the borders, and was preparing for another Welsh invasion. (Peniarth MS 135)

Wales by now was war-weary, Glamorgan had submitted, Glyndŵr’s support from both France and Scotland was waning (Peniarth MS 135) and Glyndŵr was withdrawing men from Anglesey – along with cattle and grain stores as he did not want his men cut off on an island which would be difficult to retake (Breverton Terry, 2009)

Hywel Gwynedd, another of Glyndŵr’s Commandants had been captured and beheaded on Moel y Gaer (another old Roman fort) in Fflintshire on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1406 and the French had withdrawn their remaining forces in 28 troopships. (Breverton, Terry, 2009) In the meantime Glyndŵr’s Ambassadors were in France seeking further French support and on the 8<sup>th</sup>

March 1406, they arrived back with a message from Charles VI promising further military support if Glyndŵr would pledge to support the French Pope in Avignon in preference to the Pope in Rome. Also in March, the Earl of Northumberland and Lord Bardolf and their supporters had landed in Wales having left their Scottish refuge to join Glyndŵr. (Thomson, Edward Maunde.ed (1904)

The above activities were all taking place in the period leading up to the composing and signing of the Pennal Letter and, we suggest, can only further strengthen Cefn Caer's claim that the famous letter would have been composed at that site.

To begin with, if Glyndŵr was withdrawing troops, cattle and grain (as was the case in Anglesey) to protect them, he could hardly have housed everything and everybody at Harlech castle whereas at 'Cefn Caer' – and the rest of the Plas'n Rofft/Ynys y Maengwyn estate (we shall return to the important connections with this estate in due course) there was fertile land aplenty, to accommodate animal stock, and granaries to house the grain and, at Cefn Caer, plenty of land and shelter and water supplies on the remnants of the old fort to accommodate the returning armies and the animals – and of course, the grain and cattle were needed to feed the armies. Also, as far as Cefn Caer is concerned, the causeway to the river Dyfi could conveniently be used to ferry supplies and people to and from the sea and would have been a safer option for envoys and other important figures to come and go from Cefn Caer (and for important documents to reach their intended destinations) than over land.

Now for the million dollar question that Cadw 'insist' is proved in regards to Cefn Caer, was there a dwelling on the site suitable to accommodate Owain Glyndŵr in 1406? Again, let us look at the evidence that we do have.

We know from evidence provided by letters referred to earlier in this section and from further evidence provided by the RCAHM, The Snowdonia National Park and by Cadw itself that there was a Roman Fort of considerable proportions located at Cefn Caer which consisted of the main fort, a smaller fort and "a great many houses" Maurice Jones - and Fenton, stated that...

*"The Farm House and outbuildings seem to occupy a great part of what was once the area of the camp" (Fenton R, 1804).*

Now it's accepted that stone and brick from the old fort was taken and used to build the church in the village but also, according to Fenton, the stones are also in the walls of the Cefn Caer farm house, therefore, I would suggest that there has always been a dwelling on the site since the Romans left but, as happens with all properties, was renovated over the centuries as needs, materials and fashions evolved.

The Cadw appointed Consultant boldly states that "Cefn Caer is a five-bay-post-Medieval hall house of 1525-6" (Shakespeare, Sian. 2010) yet, a report by Cadw itself states...

*"Evidence suggests a building of some substance existed on the site "prior" to the erection of the present 3-bay hall house, which has been dated by dendrochronology to 1525-6, (roof construction). It is probably a dwelling of*

*an important functionary, perhaps the house of a commotal bailiff prior to the Act of Union” (Cadw, 1966)*

And...

*“a remarkably well-preserved sub-medieval house of gentry status” (Cadw, 1966)*

Note that the above report concedes that there was a building on the site prior to the erection of the present 3-bay house but also note that the dendrochronology report is for the roof construction only. Cefn Caer has in its possession, a slate confirmed (by the distinguished historian James Barfoot) to be from the earlier roof. See pic 1 below.



Also, see pic 2 below which shows a hole where a sill- beam of passage truss was in place in the lower ceiling/roof of the earlier building:



There is a footnote in the Cadw report which states one sample (ccp13) from a joist could not be dated by the dendrochronology test and the location of this timber sample is not, like all the other samples, shown on the reconstruction drawing of the primary phase of Cefn Caer drawn by Geoff Ward and Charles Green of RCAHMW.

**Note: Anyone wishing to study a copy of the aforementioned drawing should contact the Research Department of the RCAHMW.**

Also note, Sir Simon David Jenkins, author and a former editor of both the Times and the Standard and who's been a Chairman of the National Trust since 2008, stated the following in regards to Cefn Caer in his voluminous book on the subject of Welsh Houses, Castles and Churches;

*“Cefn Caer is certainly an old Welsh Hall House, the hall appears to have been divided in the Tudor period and given a new chimney dated by the beams to 1525. What is remarkable is the survival behind it of the fireplace and chimney of the original house”* (Jenkins, Simon. D.2008)

All the above evidence strongly supports the case for a medieval hall house of some substance, suitable to accommodate Owain Glyndŵr and suitable for receiving envoys and the holding of councils, having existed at Cefn Caer in 1406. Even today in 2011, Cefn Caer still has its granary, orchard, and the old medieval stables with rubble walls. The house and all the other buildings and resources on the Cefn Caer site in 1406, could certainly have been put to good use and such along with the precautionary measures needing to be considered at the time, makes Cefn Caer, in our view, the most logical place for Owain Glyndŵr, his ambassadors, his Council and some of his Commandant leaders to have been located when the contents of the Pennal Letter were agreed on and signed by Prince Owain. Also, of course, it would have been safer for Glyndŵr's Ambassadors to deliver King Charles of France's letter to him by sea, to the Dyfi estuary and up the causeway to Cefn Caer, as it would have been the safest way for the Earl of

Northumberland and Lord Bardolf and their supporters to travel to join him having left their Scottish refuge.

I shall now turn my attention to the fact that Cefn Caer is sited on the old Esgairweddan which became (via inter marriages) the powerful Ynys y Maengwyn estate. There is plenty of documented evidence to show that the Gors y Gedol and Ynys y Maengwyn families were loyal supporters of Glyndŵr and the Welsh cause. There was also a family connection between these families and Owain Glyndŵr as I will illustrate with the following quote from a historical note written by A.J. Parkinson of the RCAHMW who had carried out a survey of the Cefn Caer site.

*“ The deeds relating to Cefn-Caer do not seem to have survived in any of the major collections in the N.L.W However, a genealogy of the family settled at Cefn- Caer c.1600 (and probably before) is given in Robert Vaughan’s pedigree book (Peniarth MS287,pp1148,1156) They were an illegitimate branch of the influential Ynysymaengwyn family. John ap Richard, the first of the family specifically said to be of Cefn-Caer, was the great grandson of Howell ap Jenkyn of Ynysymaengwyn who (according to tradition preserved by Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt) imprisoned his father until he disinherited his other sons. (Arch. Cam,vol11 (1847), pp245-6) The Cefn-Caer family like their cousins at Ynysymaengwyn were bardic patrons and the poetic references have been collected by Glenys Davies, “Noddwyr Beirdd ym Meirion” (Dolgellau 1974) 28-29.” (A.J. Parkinson.1983)*

The Howell ap Jenkyn (or Hywel ap Siancyn) mentioned above (who, incidentally, died of the plague in 1494) was the son of Jenkyn ap Iorwerth who was the son of Iorwerth ab Einion ap Gruffydd. His brother, Gruffydd, had inherited Gors y Gedol and had married Lowri, the daughter of Tudur – Owain Glyndŵr’s brother. (Miles, Kirby Wynn Cato. 1989) so, as well as being supportive of the Welsh cause, both these powerful families of Gors y Gedol and Ynysymaengwyn were related to Owain Glyndŵr through Lowri’s marriage into the families and if Owain Glyndŵr was going to be safe anywhere, it would be amongst kin and loyal supporters at Cefn Caer on the Ynysymaengwyn estate.

Some of the above is proven evidence and some may be circumstantial or speculative, but nevertheless, the whole offers a very plausible explanation as to why Glyndŵr would have had a need to have been in resident at Cefn Caer at the time the Pennal Letter was signed - and a growing number of published authors have - or are, coming to the same conclusion in regards to this issue. There are also, of course, the associated folk tales such as the one quoted below regards an underground tunnel going from Cefn Caer to the Glyndŵr Parliament at Machynlleth:

“On a hill immediately above Penyrallt House are the remains of an ancient fortification of great strength, within sight of Cevn Caer, and commanding all the passes in the district around it. Part of the senate-house in which Owain Glyndwr assembled his parliament, is yet remaining: it was built with the slate stone of the country, and, from the appearance of the spacious entrance, which is still in good preservation, seems to have been an edifice of no mean extent. The old building called "the Garrison" is situated near the Wynnstay Arms, and it is supposed that there was formerly a subterraneous

passage leading from this place to the fortification of Cefn Caer, in the adjoining parish of Pennal. Adjacent to the town is a field named the "Garshion," at the extremity of which is a copious spring, whence the inhabitants of Machynlleth are supplied with water". (Mancott.(1849) Accessed 20 December 2010)

When I queried the Rowlands (the present owners of Cefn Caer regards the above, they also said that there was a local tradition that the tunnel went from the cellar at Cefn Caer to the old Royal House at Machynlleth and that when horse drawn carts travelled over a certain part of the road at Craig y Morfa, the horses hoofs could be heard echoing loudly due to the hollowness of the tunnel.

Folk lore maybe? But there's usually a substance of truth in folklore! Maybe further archaeological work on Cefn Caer is long overdue?

Regards the Church of St Peter ad Vincula in Pennal village. There is no doubt regarding the fact that stone and brick from the Cefn Caer Roman fort was taken as building material for this church but, as of yet, I have not been able to find any reference 'anywhere' (Apart from the Church's website) to an association between the church and Owain Glyndŵr.

I have found a small paragraph in an inventory of the RCAHM which reads as follows:

*"This is a church consisting of a single rectangular chamber. It lost much of its antiquarian interest in a recent renovation. All the fittings are modern. The roof though considerably renewed, retains some of the original timbers and much of its very late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century character. The oldest monuments are to William Anwyl died 1721 and Hugh Vaughan, died 1717".* (RCAHM, 1921)

And according to Carlisle's Dictionary of Wales, the church referred to above, was taken down in 1769 and a new church erected. (Carlisle. 1811)

However, the Church's website claims:

*" Having called the noble and princes of his race to Pennal to hold that only House of Lords of his reign in his Chapel Royal of St Peer Ad Vinacula"* (Ap Iorwerth, G. Accessed Sep 2010)

*and..."This political assembly or senate was also a great synod of the Welsh church"* (Ap Iorwerth, G. Accessed Sep 2010)

*and..."Chapel Royal, Senate House, Court of Pendragon, Pennal Church is all of these and more"* (Ap Iorwerth, G. Accessed Sep 2010)

Wow!, I'm sure that all historians, researchers, archaeologists and authors who have spent a great deal of time researching Glyndŵr and his movements during the War of Independence will be eternally grateful to Geraint ap Iorwerth for informing them –and the rest of the world that they - and we, are all wrong! According to the gospel of G. ap Iorwerth, there had

been no parliament established at Machynlleth in 1404 and no ceremonial crowning of Owain Glyndŵr as Prince of Wales at that Parliament. There had been no parliament held at Harlech in 1405 (Davies, R.R. 1995) No Senedd held at Dolgellau and no treaty with France ratified at Llanbadarn in the following year. In fact, according to Geraint ap Iorwerth, no Parliament, Senedd or gathering of the Chieftains, Lords or Owain's Council had taken place anywhere during the War of Independence apart from the "supposed" Senate or House of Lords held at Pennal Church which, if one did exist on the site in 1406, would have been a tiny insignificant structure, so insignificant that it has disappeared totally off the radar screen – along with any recorded history or, even tradition, of Owain Glyndŵr having been anywhere near it!

We can but conclude that the truth in regards to Pennal Church is that which has been accurately summed up by Sir Simon Jenkins:

*"The arrival in the 1980's of an eccentric but enterprising vicar, Geraint ap Iorwerth, transformed Pennal church into 'Owain Glyndŵr's Chapel Royal, 1406', a claim for which there is no shred of evidence and which was quite unknown in my youth. Glyndŵr, on his way to Machynlleth in 1404 and again in 1406, may have rested in the neighbourhood (see Cefn Caer, p213 above) That Glyndŵr may have worshipped in a church on this spot is pure surmise. That it was his 'Chapel Royal' is invention". (Jenkins, S.D. 2008)*

Taking the above into consideration, the question begs to be asked as to why the recommendations in the Cadw Owain Glyndŵr Interpretation Plan is so centered on the Pennal Church rather than Cefn Caer? In her report, the Consultant states that the church is **"proud of its associations with the writing of the Pennal Letter"** (Shakespeare, Sian. 2010) and as we, have illustrated, there is no grain of evidence, circumstantial or otherwise, to substantiate this claim, whereas, we have provided some concrete evidence and sound and plausible reasons as to why Cefn Caer is the most logical and likely location associated with the composing and the signing of the Pennal Letter. Once the letter had been signed and sealed with the Prince's seal, he would have been eager to send it on its way to France immediately – via a waiting ship. Why would he have wasted time taking it to an insignificant village church? To bless it perhaps? He had Bishops (such as Bishop Trefor) and other clergy on his council to do that.

In the 'weaknesses' section of the SWOT, the consultant states that "there is little to signify the village's associations with this important document as visitors enter or explore the village". (Shakespeare, Sian. 2010) Yes, there's a lot of room for improvement but Cefn Caer, with the assistance of Embassy Glyndŵr has promoted itself quite well since 2006 both on its website and via Embassy Glyndŵr blogs and, since 2009, has had two large signs strategically placed in the village which advertise Cefn Caer as a medieval hall house and the home of the Owain Glyndŵr crown. The Cadw Consultant refers to the Glyndŵr Crown on exhibition at Cefn Caer as merely "a replica" without further questioning – which, in our view, exhibits a total lack of understanding of how to recreate a 'sense of sovereignty and nationhood.

So, for the sake of those who need enlightening as to why the crown is at Cefn Caer, I shall endeavor to explain:

Over the centuries, Wales has lost its most important national treasures. Llywelyn ap Gruffydd's crown and his 'Croes Naid' had been taken to Edward 1 when Wales lost its independence in 1282-3. Glyndŵr's crown disappeared with him – or, as mysteriously as he had, so Wales had been left without the essential symbol of its sovereignty – a crown. One of Embassy Glyndŵr's aims is to replace such items of national treasures – symbols of sovereignty that have been lost to our nation. We find sponsors to pay for the commissioning of these new national treasures and, to date, the town of Machynlleth has received a 'sword of state' (Cleddyf y Genedl) for civic use, Corwen has received the Corwen Dagger and Cefn Caer has received the Glyndŵr Crown.

Cleddyf y Genedl was handcrafted by a Welsh Master Blacksmith and has been modelled on a sword presented to Owain Glyndŵr by the King of France on the Prince's Coronation in 1404. This hand made sword has a piece of Welsh gold incorporated into it and is on show in a glass case on the wall of the reception area of the Machynlleth Town Council Offices at 'Y Plas' Machynlleth. See pic below.



*Cleddyf y Genedl*

Corwen has been presented with a hand made dagger of the same style produced by the same Welsh blacksmith and this new Welsh treasure is, at present, on show at the Town Library/Council Office in Corwen. See Pic.



*Dagr Corwen*

'Coron Glyndwr', a handcrafted silver crown which has been gold plated, has been homed at Cefn Caer and Elfyn Rowlands of Cefn Caer has signed a Covenant during a Civic Ceremony held at the Senedd-Dŷ in Machynlleth in 2006 that he will be the Guardian of the crown whilst he lives and will annually deliver it to Machynlleth on 21 June – Dydd y Senedd to be displayed to the nation at the head of an annual parade through the town. During the rest of the year, the crown is displayed in a glass case at Cefn Caer - as is the Cefn Caer copy of the Pennal Letter which is an authentic looking reproduction of the original. This reproduction was commissioned by Cadw and meticulously produced by the N.L.W. and unveiled at a prestigious ceremony at Cefn Caer on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010 by the late Lord of Talgarth, Richard livesey.



Coron Glyndŵr at Cefn Caer



Cefn Caer's Reproduction of the Pennal Letter after it was just unveiled by Lord Richard Livesey of Talgarth. Unveiling ceremony was organised by Embassy Glyndŵr.

There is also, as the Consultant rightly said, a replica of 'Cleddyf y Genedl' at Cefn Caer –but the original hand grafted sword with Welsh gold set into it is displayed at 'Y Plas' in Machynlleth.

All of the above initiatives, apart from the reproduction of the Pennal Letter, have been instigated by Embassy Glyndŵr as positive contributions towards the re-establishing of Welsh sovereignty – something, we feel, we desperately have need to do as a nation if we are to strengthen the sense of nationhood and identity in our people so, I would suggest, that our efforts in this direction along with those of Machynlleth Town Council, the Senedd-Dŷ, Corwen Town Council, Cefn Caer and others to realize the aim, should be understood and fully supported by the WAG, Cadw and their Consultants.

Embassy Glyndŵr did prepare a 'provisional' Tourism Interpretation Plan for Cefn Caer in 2008 and both the WAG Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred, and Jayne Rowlands of Cadw received copies of this plan which includes a 'Memorial Garden' for 'Glyndŵr Heroes', those (we know of) who fought & lost their lives or sacrificed in other ways during the War of Independence. This 'Gardd Arwyr Glyndŵr' was officially opened by the Mayor of Machynlleth on June 19, 2010 and to date, nine plaques have been donated by Welsh communities to their local Glyndŵr hero. Each of the plaques gives a brief account of what happened to that particular hero and are already on show (temporarily placed) in the 'Gardd Arwyr Glyndŵr'. The next step in this initiative will be to appeal to every community in Wales to raise the £130 needed to pay for a plaque for their local hero to be placed in Gardd Arwyr Glyndŵr. This is being done very early in 2011. This project will give every community throughout Wales a connection with Cefn Caer which will, of course, encourage each community that has a plaque in the garden to arrange school and other community trips to visit the site – as well as all the other associated sites in the Machynlleth Bro Ddyfi area. Cefn Caer has a very good working relationship with the Senedd-Dŷ at Machynlleth as well as with the Town Council, the Gŵyl Coroni Glyndŵr Festival Committee, the Glyndŵr hotel and Mid Wales Tourism.

Siân Ifan  
CEO Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr

#### **Appendice 4:**

#### **A short update report of the SGF (Sleeping Giant Foundation) Annual Owain Glyndŵr Festival.**

This event is held in four fields adjacent to the Ancient Briton pub about a mile from Abercraf on the Brecon road and although the area itself has no historical significance with Owain Glyndŵr, this festival has proved very popular with the surrounding communities - and news of it has spread much further afield resulting in approximately 1500 paying visitors through the gate in 2010. Add to that the hundreds of participants, service providers and volunteers and you can easily reach 2000. 5 service providers were paid, for the provision of marquees, premises, First Aid, a supply of Straw and the stage/PA/Electrics, totaling around £2045. £2000 was paid for authentic medieval re-enactment; approximately £1230 for musicians, £1120 for specialist medieval play providers and over £500 was spent on publicity / printing etc. And last year, the event became self sustainable. Quite an achievement for a small group of volunteers giving freely of their energy and time over a 6 year period but, sadly, the small group of volunteers cannot commit themselves this year for various reasons (partly fatigue - as continuous all year round fundraising for this event is very demanding for such a small group of volunteers) but nevertheless, this annual event is living proof of what can be done with an 'unique product' and if the enthusiasm is present – and it has certainly entertained and educated the surrounding communities and other visitors from far and wide on the history of Glyndŵr

so, if any event deserves sponsorship and funding to employ full time organizers, this one does.

Siân Ifan  
CEO Llysgenhadaeth/Embassy Glyndŵr

## **Appendice 5:**

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