

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

LISTED BUILDING	Church of St. Madoc, Llanmadoc, Swansea
Grade:-	II
Date of Notification:-	06.03.64 amended 03.03.00
National Grid Reference:-	SS4389093435
O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-	SS49SW
CADW Reference No.:-	11532
C & C of S Reference No.:-	LB:032

Notes:-

Location:-

At west end of village. Rubble stone churchyard wall to south and east; iron gate with iron lamp arch. Graveyard enlarged to north. Cobble paving at entrance.

History:-

The present church probably dates from the late C12, after Llanmadoc was granted by Margaret, Countess of Warwick to the Knights Templars (1156). The round headed chancel arch suggests the C12, and when plaster was scraped off during the 1856 restoration round-headed apertures were also noted in the north wall. The tower was probably a later mediaeval addition. It was subsequently in the possession of the Knights Hospitallers then vested in the Crown at the Dissolution. The site is of great Christian antiquity; there is a stone of c. AD500 to (...)son of Ductus, son of (...)uanus (or other possible readings), found when the old rectory was demolished, and two scheduled perhaps C8 inscribed pillar stones with crosses, all found locally.

In 1821 the church was described as being in good repair having recently been improved by the addition of enlarged windows. It was also repaired in 1846. When seen by Glynne in 1848 there was still a low-side-window, since lost. The south porch which he mentions was no doubt the "modern porch" which the restorers of 1856 found in such "bad taste" that they had to rebuild it. Glynne also refers to the tower as "low," which suggests the restorers of 1856 may not have been guilty of arbitrarily reducing its height as has been supposed.

J D Davies a pioneering high-churchman and skilled wood-carver became rector in 1860. He carved the oak alter frontal. In 1865 he led a major restoration for which the architect was John Pritchard of Llandaff. Much of the nave and chancel was rebuilt, the roofs were renewed, and the porch and the upper part of the tower rebuilt. All the windows were restored; except the eastern window to the south of the chancel which may be the old east window relocated. A proposed vestry north of

chancel was omitted from the plans. Mediaeval painted plaster destroyed during this restoration was not recorded in detail.

Exterior:-

Tower, nave and chancel in line with a south porch, all in sandstone, the nave and parts of the tower and chancel being original uncoursed axe-dressed work in the local conglomerate sandstone. There is a slight batter to the tower and to the foot of the north and east walls of the chancel. The C19 masonry is coursed and snecked. Slate roof with limestone ridges, coped gables, and gutter corbels. Stone finial crosses throughout. The east window and one to the south of the nave are traceried, the former with a simple label mould. The others are lancets. One mediaeval refoil-headed lancet, in sandstone, is refixed within C19 masonry in the south of chancel; the other windows are all restored, in oolitic limestone. The outer arch of the porch is equilateral-pointed with large chamfers.

The tower is unusually low, and some authorities suggest it has been restored at less than its proper height; it now has a longitudinal slate saddleback roof with crow-stepped gables to east and west and a crenellated parapet to south and north. One slit window to west, one to north.

Interior:-

Entered by a small C19 porch with side benches and black and red quarry tile floor. The south door to the nave is tall and round-headed with a segmental backing arch. Plain nave interior with exposed window quoins; pine pews. The south west corner is arranged as a baptistery with wall seating. Norman font on a modern base. A narrow doorway with straight sided arch leads to the vestry in the tower. Two early monumental stones (scheduled) are displaced in recesses in the west wall, another is built into the sill of the eastern south window.

The chancel arch is small and round, restored, raised in height but otherwise probably little altered from its original form. Another small round-headed arch at high level to its left, interpreted as a rood access.

Pine pulpit at left in Gothic style. One step up to the chancel.

The chancel inclines slightly to the south of the nave axis. Low-pitch boarded roof. Pine communion rails with Celtic crosses in the panels and double gates. Simple choir stalls. The east window is by Celtic Studios, showing Christ blessing offerings of fruit, corn and fish.

The altar frontal is an important carved work of the Rev J D Davies in four painted and gilded Gothic panels showing the four Evangelists. Another carved panelled example of his work, perhaps intended for an altar frontal elsewhere, hangs on the chancel wall. There is a bronze memorial plaque to the Rev J D Davies (1911) at the north side of the chancel.

Listed:-

A picturesque church retaining some mediaeval fabric and saddleback tower, all much restored in the C19 and including carving by the Rev J D Davies. Early carved stones are scheduled Ancient Monument GM 223 (SWA).

Reference:-

F G Cowley, Llanmadoc and Cheriton (publ. by Rector & PCC 1993);
J D Davies, History of West Gower ii (1879);
P R Davis, Historic Gower (1997) pp. 90-91;
S Glynne in Arch. Cambr. (1897) p.298 (written 1848);
J Newman, Glamorgan (Buildings of Wales, 1995) p.390;
G R Orrin, The Gower Churches (1979). pp.21.44-46;
Lambeth Palace Library: ICBS file 6130.