

## CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

<b>LISTED BUILDING</b>	Church of St Andrew, Penrice, Swansea
<b>Grade:-</b>	II*
<b>Date of Notification:-</b>	06.03.64 amended 29.10.99
<b>National Grid Reference:-</b>	SS 493058940
<b>O.S. 1:10,000 Sheet No.:-</b>	SS 48 NE
<b>CADW Reference No.:-</b>	11542
<b>C &amp; C of S Reference No.:-</b>	LB:040

### **Notes:-**

#### ***Location:-***

In the hamlet of Penrice, 1km SW of Penrice Castle. Churchyard wall in rubble limestone with irregular coping, two stiles, iron gate.

#### ***History:-***

The church was donated by one of the Penrice family to the Knights Hospitallers' Commandery at Slebech in the late C12. It was later appropriated to the Hospital of St David at Swansea, the endowments of which were confiscated and re-granted under Edward VI. The simple Norman chancel arch indicates a date of the early C12 for the nave and chancel. Massive oak timbers of an early Gothic doorway, perhaps C13, survive and are in use as the frame of the south door of the nave, built into a later archway. To the original nave and chancel were added a west tower, a north transept and a south porch, giving the church the semblance of a cruciform plan. The transept and the porch are probably contemporary. The porch, which is unusually large, is entered by a depressed Gothic outer arch featuring a boldly cut Early English moulding, probably C13. Large plain buttresses were added later to the south wall of the porch. The north transept appears to have had a crypt, and probably contained a private chapel of the Penrice and Mansel families. A mark in the chancel-arch wall above the pulpit outlines a former access opening to the rood. In 1836 Glynne noted a low side window in the chancel, and blocked arched masonry at the south side is perhaps a vestige of this. In the C17 the porch is thought to have been used as a school. The arches from the nave to the transept and porch appear to have been enlarged since 1850, when they were described by Freeman as 'very low'. Other C19 restorations include the rebuilding of the chancel and the insertion of the north transept window. The church was described in 1886 as 'newly rebuilt'. The church was thoroughly restored in 1893-4 at the expense of Miss Emily Talbot of Penrice Castle. A gallery was removed, the roof renewed, four large windows inserted in the nave (similar to one which had been inserted in Oxwich church in 1891), a new door inserted in the nave south doorway, and the interior refloored and re-pewed. The nave was divided by a step and a low wall to create a choir in front of the chancel arch. The restoration was directed by F W Waller, Gloucester Diocesan architect. The font is mediaeval: it was recovered from the churchyard, repaired and placed in position in the 1920's.

#### ***Exterior:-***

A large church by Gower standards with a west tower, nave and chancel plus a north transept and a south porch. The tower, the nave and the north wall of the chancel

are in axe-dressed local grey limestone: the other walls of the chancel are rebuilt in a red sandstone brought to courses, including two buttresses on the east. The transept and porch are in random limestone rubble, except for the two large south buttresses which are coursed. Slate roofs throughout with tile ridges: coped gables throughout except for the nave about the chancel. Eaves overhang mostly without gutters: corbels to south side of chancel. Disused C19 vestry chimney at the junction of the north transept. Considerable traces of old render remain on the south side of the nave and on the porch. On the exterior of the north transept the arch of a lost cast window is to be seen, plus three low arches; these perhaps indicate the former use of the transept as a chapel with a burial vault beneath.

The tower is of four storeys, marked only by the slit lights in the north and south faces. Slight batter at foot. A change of masonry probably indicates a rebuild of the top third of the tower. It's parapet projects on all sides on a corbel table: the crenellations are restored. The east window is of two lights in sandstone, with a cinquefoil rounded above, label mould and small floral stops. It is contemporary with the surrounding wall, as it has a relieving arch in the same masonry. The two south windows of the chancel are similarly detailed but lack a relieving arch: to left a trefoil headed lancet and to right a pair of lancets. The transept north window is of two lights in similar stone, with scalloped Y tracery and a label without stops.

The nave has four large square-headed windows in oolitic limestone in the side walls, one at each corner: each is of two lights, with foiled heads and label moulds with humorous life-sized heads as stops. The cast walls of the transept and porch were awkwardly cut back to admit two of these windows, and one label stop was omitted for want of space. The porch south door has a low Gothic arch struck from centres below the springing line: corner mouldings with deep cuts each side and a keel at the corner. The roll each side stands on a small circular base.

### ***Interior:-***

The church is entered by the south porch. There is a slate bench at each side and a water stoup to the right of the nave door. The dominant feature is the Gothic doorway to the nave, with an oak frame of two massive jambs curved inwards at the tops and notched and tenoned into a head beam. This frame is chamfered on the outside face and includes a sill beam, also tenoned into the jambs. A C19 boarded door closes against this frame, and the whole is set within a tall pointed masonry arch, also chamfered. The nave is unequally divided by a low wall and step, defining its east part as a choir. The ceiling is in a barrel shape, panelled with thin ribs and with an enriched cornice at the wall heads. The floor is of red and black quarries. Simple Norman chancel archway, with a roll moulding to the arch on the nave side only, and a simple abacus moulding at the springing line. The jambs below are square cornered. The arch is slightly off centre in relation to the opening. The wall plaster has been kept back to show the old stonework. In the wall above the arch is a stone head of unknown origin, fixed here during the C19 restoration, and to the left of that the outline of the rood access opening has been indicated in the plaster. To the north of the nave is a tall arch similar to that leading to the porch, with chamfered exposed stonework on the arris towards the nave only. To the left of this is a niche, in a position where the early access to the transept is thought to have been. The chancel is plain with a single step at the altar rails. The chancel face of the arch has a moulding in old plaster. The chancel ceiling is barrel shaped with transverse rib. The floor is patterned in red and black quarries and encaustic tiles. The north transept is now a baptistery and vestry, with a C19 Gothic timber screen and door to the latter. The front is octagonal with a slight arris moulding and stands on a square base. There is no pictorial glass. Coloured margins around quarry glazing in the windows of the chancel: larger quarry glazing in coloured obscured glass with

coloured margins in the four windows of the nave. To the left of the east window is a Baroque monument with a cherub spreading an inscribed veil: to John Hancorne (dies in infancy 1741). In the choir, to the left of the chancel arch is a monument erected by Mrs Sarah Bennett in 1726 to William Bennett of Sanctuary (died 1698), and others: broken rounded pediment, pilasters with floral design on the faces, bracketed shelf, large foliage feature beneath. Shield of arms on a ragged cartouche above. To the west of the door is a tablet with a moulded surround to David Bennett of Pitt (died 1666). Other monuments are modern.

**Listed:-**

Listed at II\* as a conservatively restored medieval church of interesting form, retaining much of its original fabric intact including a Norman chancel arch, an early Gothic doorway, the porch and a fine tower.

**Reference:-**

E A Freeman, Antiquities of Gower, Archaeologia Cambrensis (185)) p.44.

J Newman, Glamorgan (Buildings of Wales, 1995) pp.507-8.

G R Orrin, The Gower Churches (1979), 69-72.

Sir S Glynne. Notes on the older churches [1836], Archaeologia Cambrensis (1897) pp.301-302.

NMR file, Glamorgan Eccles. SS48NE & add.inf.file.