



Caring *for our* Heritage



Dŵr Cymru
Welsh Water

In Our Care

The mid-19th century's growing need for water and the provision of treatment works, resulted in a rich legacy of structures, artefacts and records of significant historic interest.

As guardian of these historical landscapes, presently we care for 56 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 44 listed buildings within our 35,000-hectare landownership. Wherever possible, we feel it is important to help our customers understand and enjoy the many treasures in our care.

At Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water our primary goal is to provide a safe and reliable supply of drinking water for customers and to deal effectively with wastewater to safeguard both public health and the environment. In carrying out this essential service we are committed to protecting our heritage.

Within our area of operations, which includes most of Wales and parts of England, there is much beautiful landscape that is of high archaeological and conservation value. In this region there are currently 3,894 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMS) and over 100,000 sites of archaeological interest listed on the Sites and Monuments Records.

The need to protect our beautiful environment and archaeological inheritance is therefore a recognised priority, and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water has risen to the challenge. We work closely with such bodies as CADW, the Welsh Archaeological Trusts and the English Heritage and Archaeological Services to safeguard our heritage.



ELAN VALLEY— A STUNNING RESERVOIR LANDSCAPE

The Elan Valley reservoir landscape is situated in the heart of Wales and is one of the most spectacular examples of its kind.

Built in the late Victorian and Edwardian periods (1893-1906), this amazing engineering feat was opened by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in 1904. This elaborate reservoir scheme includes five massive dams and 73 miles of aqueduct to the south of Birmingham.



Elan Valley Visitor Centre

A unique place

The dams and their associated structures, many of which are Grade II* listed buildings are a fine example of the industrial heritage that Welsh Water actively protects. They are visible for the public to appreciate as physical examples of the development of engineering over the past century.

The visitor centre itself is situated in the original workshop for the project, which has been sympathetically extended and now welcomes over 150,000 visitors each year with interpretive material bringing to life the fascinating history of the area.

The dams celebrated their Centenary Anniversary in 2004 with a whole series of events amongst which was the creation of a commemorative statue of a typical dam worker.



Our forefathers bought the whole 18,400-hectare catchment area to protect water quality. This unique historical landscape is recognised by innumerable archaeological and conservation designations and in 1989 we established the Welsh Water Elan Trust as a charitable foundation to care for the wider estate under a 999-year peppercorn lease.

The unveiling of the commemorative statue of a typical dam worker at the Centenary Celebrations.



Typical Elan Village house – grade II listed building

As well as preserving and enhancing the area, the Trust's objective is to encourage public enjoyment of the valley.

For more information visit www.elanvalley.org.uk

The Elan Valley is included in the Register Of Landscapes of Historic Importance in Wales and a report prepared by Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust gives a fascinating description of it's historic and archaeological features. For more information visit www.cpat.org.uk

The Trust is very conscious of its responsibilities towards the heritage and built environment of the estate. They have recently completely restored the derelict Grade II* listed longhouse at Llanerch-y-Cawr. Additionally, Welsh Water have recently transferred additional assets within the Elan village, built in 1909 to house the workforce employed to maintain the dams, into the care of the Trust.



Restoration of Llanerch-y-Cawr Welsh Longhouse



Safeguarding Our Heritage

Welsh Water is investing £1.2 billion in its water and sewerage network between 2005 and 2010 to ensure that we maintain very high levels of drinking water quality and deliver further environmental improvements to the rivers and coastline of Wales.

We are aware of our responsibility to preserve and enhance the historic landscapes of our area and the possible impact of our activities forms a major consideration during the planning and implementation of all projects. To help us sensitively manage this, we use a sophisticated Geographical Information System and liaise widely with archaeological and heritage interests. Wherever possible we seek to avoid disturbance to sensitive areas however where this proves impossible we employ a staged process of archaeological investigation.

Consequently, thousands of successful projects have been undertaken. An excellent example is the South Eastern Coastal Strategy Pipeline—

Cleaner Rivers and Beaches

As a result of our wastewater programme, Wales has been awarded a record 47 International Blue Flag Awards for achieving the cleanest rivers and beaches in England and Wales with minimal impact on the environment. An important part of this programme involved the construction of a new pipeline and expansion of our existing treatment works at Nash, near to Newport.



Remains of Roman soldier excavated at Nash, Newport

Before work began Welsh Water had commissioned a full archaeological site evaluation. The archaeologists successfully located ancient land surfaces, a former watercourse and ditches that contained 1st and 3rd century AD Roman materials, including bones and pottery. The material uncovered also revealed evidence of the proximity of Roman populations to the major legionary fortress at Caerleon (Isca Silurum).

The archaeologists recommended extensive evaluation of the whole length of the pipeline running from the wastewater treatment works at Nash over the Caldicot Levels to Magor, Caldicot and on to Chepstow.

More discoveries along the Chepstow length of the pipeline revealed an old river barge in a dry dock opened in 1759. Designed to transport produce to the upper reaches of the Severn, the barge, a rare historic craft, is believed to have been used to block the mouth of the dock around 1832 after the Board of Health considered it a cholera hazard.



A post-medieval river barge uncovered during the construction of the South Eastern Coastal Strategy Pipeline Scheme

Understanding and Sharing our Heritage

More and more people are eager to explore the wealth of historic structures, artefacts and historical information that have been preserved under our guardianship. We encourage access to our sites and provide exhibitions and leaflets describing the archaeological treasures within our care.



Children visit the Alwen Dam

Alwen Dam, Denbighshire, N Wales

The Alwen Dam in the Denbigh hills, a listed structure, was completed over 75 years ago. Taking a decade to build, its open-arched Italianate tower is one of several features that qualify the Dam for special protection.

A history lesson and an exhibition on the construction of the Dam are available for school visits at our Alwen Environment Education Centre, which is located in the original Reservoir Engineers House. A tour of the Dam itself is included.

For more information on our educational resources visit www.livingandlearningwithwater.com



Historic exhibition of the Alwen Dam construction at The Alwen Education Centre

Educational centres have been set up at operational sites supplying teachers and students with a “hands-on” experience of our cultural heritage and historical environment, with history lessons, artefact displays and interpretation panels.

Here are more examples of our rich heritage that you can experience at the appropriate education centres or sites where you can visit and enjoy:

*The archaeological
trail along Llyn Brenig*

Ed Parsons

Llyn Brenig, Denbighshire, N Wales

Visitors to our reservoir are invited to step back in time with a walk along the Archaeological Trail. The area is steeped in history, which dates back to Mesolithic man, who camped and hunted in the area, and Bronze Age man, who built settlements and a great cemetery of ritual and burial monuments. An exhibition illustrating the history of the area is available at our visitor centre.



Above:
*The Bronze age
exhibition at Llyn
Brenig*

left:
*The ring Cairn at
Llyn Brenig*

Herefordshire Waterworks Museum

For many years Welsh Water has supported a museum in Hereford dedicated to telling the story of drinking water through the ages, managed by an Independent Charitable Trust established in 1974. This fascinating collection of working pumping engines is housed in the original Hereford Water Pumping Station.

Built in stages between 1856 and 1906—as the demand for drinking water grew—it is scheduled as an Ancient Monument and is classified by English Heritage as a Site of National Importance. It is a fine example of Victorian municipal architecture. The crown jewel of the collection is the oldest working triple-expansion steam-pumping engine in the country. It stands two floors high and is quite awesome to see in operation.

The Museum successfully won a Heritage Lottery bid and celebrates a new extension of a steel and glass structure providing much improved and enhanced educational, interpretive and restoration facilities.

Further information: www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk



Compartment wheel

*Triple-expansion steam
pumping engine*

*Enjoying the past,
present and future*





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