

INVITATION TO TENDER

Brief to Consultants For:

Development of Cadw Guardianship Sites on Anglesey

Themed presentation and related access improvements



Introduction

1. **Menter Mon** – Acting on behalf of Cadw are seeking to appoint suitably qualified contractors to undertake visitor access and presentation improvements to the prehistoric burial monuments at Barclodiad y Gawres, and Bryn Celli Ddu Anglesey.
2. The current presentation of **Barclodiad y Gawres** burial chamber is unsatisfactory, old and outdated. Public access to the chamber interior is restricted due to concerns about the risk of damage to the rare prehistoric artwork within. Current viewing arrangements provide only restricted views into the interior of the monument and do not enable the majority of visitors to see the rare prehistoric artwork or help them to appreciate this important ancient monument. Access to the interior is available as an accompanied visit at restricted times.
3. **Bryn Celli Ddu** burial chamber is possibly the most visited of the island's prehistoric monuments. Recent improvements to the infrastructure of the site has seen the formalisation of parking arrangements and a new way-marked surfaced pathway leading to the site. However in order to use the route it is necessary to climb over a number of steps which are unsuited to anyone with reduced mobility.
4. This project will run concurrently with an Interpretation Enhancement Project which will address on-site interpretation and visitor information at several Cadw sites including Barclodiad y Gawres and Bryn Celli Ddu. Successful bidders for this project will be expected to liaise with and work with the successful bidder for the Interpretation Project to achieve the required outcomes of improved site presentation, visitor access and interpretation.

Heritage Tourism Project

5. The funding for this project comes from the Welsh Government's £19m Heritage Tourism Project, which is backed with £8.5m of European funding. The project aims to maximise the economic value of heritage through increasing the volume, length and value of visits to Wales, linking themes of Welsh heritage at national, regional and local levels. The project will also make sure that Wales's outstanding heritage is more accessible and enjoyable to visit – for those who live in Wales and for visitors.

Barclodiad y Gawres

6. The Neolithic burial chamber known as Barclodiad y Gawres (in Welsh literally “the giantess’ apronful”, a name derived from folklore) is located in stunning scenery on the west coast of Anglesey between Rhosneigr and Aberffraw. The monument is set on a cliff top overlooking Cable Bay with panoramic views of the Irish Sea. One of the most popular stretches of the Anglesey coastal path runs directly past the entrance to the monument.
7. The burial chamber was excavated by T.G.E. Powell and G.E. Daniel in 1952. They discovered a cruciform burial chamber accessed by a passage leading into the mound from the north. The chamber was split into three compartments, each apparently sealed up at different points in time, arranged around a central space used for rituals. One such ritual left the remains of an inedible magic stew consisting of frogs, toads, mice, snakes and eels poured onto a fire in the middle of the chamber. Remnants of human skeletons were found in each of the side chambers. The most significant discovery at Barclodiad y Gawres was its decorated stones. Several of the stones inside the chamber have been carved with abstract patterns of spirals, zig zags and lozenges. Though cryptic, these patterns must have held significant meaning to the monument builders. Surviving Neolithic art forms of this kind are very rare and precious. Of the few comparable specimens of prehistoric art the strongest resemblance is to be found in the Boyne valley in Ireland suggesting possible cultural links, or a seafaring people using the west of Anglesey as a base and a burial ground.
8. After the 1953 excavations, Barclodiad y Gawres was covered by a concrete dome covered in grass to approximate the appearance of the mound that would once have covered the burial chamber. A glass lens positioned at the top of the dome allowed natural light to enter into the central chamber of the monument but this was later replaced by a concrete cap, meaning visitors would need to bring a torch to see the rock art. A cast iron gate prevented access to the monument but a key could be borrowed in exchange for a small cash deposit. For decades this key was kept in Beaumaris castle. Towards the end of the twentieth century the keys were transferred closer to the burial chamber - to the heritage centre in Aberffraw and the Wayside Stores shop in Llanfaelog.

9. In 2007, in response to growing concerns about the potential for vandalism to the rare engraved stones and on the advice of the Ancient Monuments Board, Cadw restricted access to the central chamber to accompanied visits only. Locked gates set within the passageway leading into the monument interior allow casual visitors some restricted views into the unlit central chamber but do not allow them to see the prehistoric artwork. Accompanied visits can be arranged via the nearby Wayside Stores – at weekends and Bank Holiday Mondays April 1st to October 31st between 12noon and 4pm. While providing security for the monument, this approach is not considered to be ideal.
10. Research undertaken as part of the HTP has established provisionally that some 12,000 visitors per year investigated the locked passageway into the monument but only a tiny percentage made the arrangements necessary to visit the interior. This shows the strong potential and interest in this monument which could and should be a major asset to heritage tourism on Anglesey. The top priority for this project therefore is to modify the gating and lighting arrangements at Barclodiad y Gawres so that passing casual visitors can view at least some of the stone carving and come away with a positive experience of the site while continuing to protect the stones.
11. Additional documents include the Cadw site audit and recommendations in the Cadw strategic interpretation plan *Origins and Prehistory of Wales 250,000 BC to AD 43* for further information. The interpretation plan is available through the Cadw web site www.cadw.wales.gov.uk.
12. Listed below are the elements which the successful bidder will be expected to address:-
 - Site approach from carpark and beach. Improvements are necessary including directional help and ‘welcome’ information on the site and route to it.
 - Review options for improved interior lighting within the concrete dome to enable visitors to view and appreciate the decorated stones.
 - Review the location and form of security arrangements. Cadw is not committed to retention of either of the current grilles. Consider options to improve visitor access and visibility while still retaining adequate protection for the monument.

- Consider options for improving the appearance and ambience of the monument interior eg by carrying out alterations to the concrete dome, or alterations to the width and appearance of the (modern) passage entrance to more accurately reflect the original configuration of the monument.
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- Review the current keyholder/accompanied visit arrangements during the summer season and propose alternative arrangements to improve accessibility of the monument or maintain existing arrangements if considered appropriate.
- Undertake a detailed baseline record of the stones - using laser scanning technology – to provide a permanent digital record.

Bryn Celli Ddu

13. Bryn Celi Ddu is Anglesey's most famous prehistoric site and thanks to its proximity to the Menai Straits and the A5 is visited by over 10,000 visitors per year. The site was excavated in 1928 after which it was covered by a restored mound of earth, albeit one much smaller than originally existed (the full extent of the original mound is marked out on site by the circle of curb stones). What visitors see today is a passage grave surrounded by a ditch with a diameter of about a hundred feet. It was proven in 2005 by Steve Burrow (Amgueddfa Cymru) that the passage into the burial chamber is aligned to the point where the sun rises on the midwinter solstice, so that its beams strike a quartz rich stone at the back of the tomb. This demonstration of astronomical knowledge adds further interest to the monument.
14. Recent improvements to the infrastructure of the site has seen the formalisation of parking arrangements and a new way-marked surfaced pathway leading to the site. However in order to use the route it is necessary to climb over a number of steps which are unsuited to anyone with reduced mobility.
15. The project will review the present access arrangements from the carpark and propose improvements which will remove obstacles and increase access for all visitors.

General

16. Throughout any alterations it will be necessary for the appointed contractor to address the archaeological sensitivities of the monuments and to work to any conditions imposed by Cadw including requirements for archaeological watching briefs.
17. Submissions should be supported by suitable evidence of work in similar sensitive projects on Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Members of the team and their involvement in the project should be specified, along with their experience.
15. Tender responses will be scored on the basis of the following criteria:
 - Expertise and relevant experience of the company.
 - Suitability of the proposals and estimated cost.
 - Timescale for the delivery of the project.
 - Acceptability of the proposal to Cadw – will the proposed alterations receive scheduled monument consent from the Inspectorate.

We are looking to appoint a suitable organization to design and manage the project and implement the scheme in 2012. Responses to this tender should be received no later than the DATE TO GO HERE.