



# AGM 2026 CHAIR'S REPORT

ST MADOC OF FERNS COMMUNITY GROUP

REGISTERED CHARITY 1204104

This report covers the year between 6<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and 5<sup>th</sup> April 2026. During this time the Community Group has again been working to agree a lease for St Madoc's, Haroldston West, from the Church in Wales.

Despite our success in the previous year of agreeing the conditions and clauses of the Heads of Terms it did not translate into a simple negotiation of a lease. The Property Department of the Representative Body of the Church in Wales were short-staffed for a period and subsequently underwent a re-structuring. This change to our contacts within the department meant that relationships had to be rebuilt. We received a draft lease from the solicitors acting for the Church in Wales in October 2025, but we were disappointed that it bore little resemblance to the Heads of Terms and contained conditions more appropriate to an urban church hall than a rural church. The trustees met and responded in November through our solicitor.

We are grateful to Alex Glanville, new Head of Property Services for the Representative Body, for meeting us on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026 to understand our concerns. It was a very constructive meeting and Alex committed to instructing their solicitors on a number of points raised. Further communication from the solicitors for the Representative Body, later in January, suggested that the majority of these have been resolved. There were, however, a few unresolved issues that required detailed discussion between the trustees and our solicitor. We responded in April and are now awaiting a final version of the lease, that we hope will be acceptable to both parties. It is also important that we receive an estimate for the building insurance, which Nicky, in the Treasurers Report, suggests will be a high proportion of our costs going forward.

We have used the additional time to run events, raise funds and engage with other groups, as Ally will cover in the Secretary's Report. I would, however, like to mention that once again, our participation in the Cadw Open Doors initiative for a weekend in September was one of the highlights of my year. I had expected fewer visitors in the Autumn downpour but if anything, we had a few more. They were treated to Greenala's lovely medieval music and Semele's fantastic story-telling in the wonderful atmosphere and acoustics of the church.

There has also been more admin to do as we understand the policies and procedures that are likely to be required by insurers, grant funders and the Charity Commission.

The length of time taken to agree the lease has been frustrating, but from conversations with other groups it appears not to be untypical. Although painfully slow, we have at least reached the stage of talking to solicitors and have greater confidence that the end is in sight. We continue to work for the re-opening of the church and are very grateful for the help and support we receive from local groups and the community.

Gareth Morgan

Chair of St Madoc of Ferns Community Group.