GLEBE HOUSE

Welcome to Glebe House, a 200 year-old Welsh coastal farmhouse which has been lovingly restored over a three-year period. We hope your stay will be really magical and trouble-free.

This folder contains some basic information about the house and the local area. We have tried to cover the most obvious questions guests might have, but please feel free to make suggestions and recommendations in the 'suggestions' book (on one of the shelves in the alcove).

PUBS / EATING OUT

There are three pubs in Little Haven. all good. The Castle is the largest and most popular with a good range of affordable dishes. The Swan opposite is more intimate and serves good tapas. The St Brides (opposite the car park) serves good home-cooked pub food.

The Moorings (upstairs at the Yacht Club) is excellent, as is the café, Runwayskiln, in the former youth hostel above Marloes Sands. A little further afield there are several really good cafes and bars around the Milford Haven Marina.

LOCAL HISTORY

Pembroke Castle was the powerbase of the Mediaeval Tudor barons who went on to become kinds and queens of England. It is in good condition and Haverfordwest also boasts a castle. There is a naval war museum in Pembroke Dock while a few miles north is St David's with its cathedral and the excellent Bug Cafe.

The Preselli Hills are due north of Haverfordwest along the back road from to Cardigan. This where the Stonehenge 'bluestones' were quarried 3,500 years ago. It also boasts the Neolithic sites of Foel Cwmcerwyn, Foel Drygarn and Pentre Ifan. The last is spectacular - a 5,000 year-old burial chamber created by a huge rock balanced on four others.

BEACHES

Unfortunately sewage pollution along the coast seems constantly in the headlines, but Pembrokeshire has among the cleanest beaches in Britain. All five of the nearest beaches have Green Coast Award status. This recognises excellent water quality and sensitive management of rural beaches in unspoilt environments.

Little Haven is the nearest beach: a five-minute drive along the road behind the house or a 20-minute brisk walk along the Coastal Path. At low tide it connects with **Broad Haven** to create a huge expanse of sand, but check tide times because the incoming water seperates the two and it is possible to get stranded on the rocks by the rising water. The northern part of the beach has life guards and parking is easy, thus it is popular with bathers, surfers and families. As a result in summer there are restrictions on dogs on this part of the beach.

The coastal path and Little Haven Beach are within a short walk of Glebe House

The view west along Broad Haven beach with Glebe House about halfway along the horizon

Dale lies about five miles south of the house. The village is a mecca for sailors and it is also a base for fishing trips around Milford Haven.

Newgale Sands is about 10 miles along the coast, halfway towards St Davids, and one of the area's most popular surfing beaches.

Nolton Beach (just north of Broad Haven) is a five-mile stretch of golden sand with great views north across St Bride's Bay to St David's. Because parking is tricky (along the road and generally at least five minutes' walk away), this is another beach that is usually less crowded than one would expect – and it has a waterfall at the southern end where you can take a natural – if bracing - shower.

St Bride's Haven is about two miles to the west of Glebe House. This is a glorious rocky cove owned by the National Trust. It is perfect for rock pooling and is also popular with scuba divers. There is a particularly spectacular cliff top section of the Coastal Path leading back towards Little Haven which one can leave at Talbenny.

Marloes Sands is one of spectacular beaches in the about halfway between the eponymous village and the Skomer ferry in St Martin's Haven. The walk to and from the shore involves steep descents and ascents which means it is rarely busy. There is an excellent café/restaurant, The Runwayskiln, a few hundred metres from the car park at the top of the cliffs.

West Dale is only accessible via steep steps which means it is another beach that attracts far fewer visitors than it deserves. It is also the place Henry Tudor landed on 7 August 1485 to march north west to challenge Richard III at Bosworth field.

Caerfai Bay, near St Davids, is yet another delightful cove that attracts far fewer visitors than it deserves because of the steep descents to the sandy cove.

Freshwater West is a huge stretch of sand backed by dunes south west of Pembroke. It faces due west, so has some of the biggest surf in South Wales. Film makers also love its stunning scenery – Dobbie died here in *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows* and Ridley Scott shot parts of *Robin Hood* on its sands.

Freshwater West

WALKS

The Pembrokeshire stretch of the Coastal Path is rightly famous. It can be joined on foot at several points along the road to Little Haven (the closest point is just five minutes away.

If you want a good circular trip, try the Marloes Peninsular (start at the National Trust's Marloes Sands Car Park and walk around to Musselwick returning via Marloes village).

Alternatively, try a trip around the Dale Peninsular, starting in the village itself, or you could drive to St Martin's Haven and walk home along the clifftops. There are also good upland walks to be had in the Presellis (take the backroad from Haverfordwest to Cardigan).

WILDLIFE

Pembrokeshire rightly lures many visitors keen to see its fauna. In summer the hedges ring with the calls of songbirds, but there are other causes for celebration. The adder has a bad and almost completely undeserved reputation because it is mildly poisonous. To start with it is extremely shy and retiring, but more importantly its bite is on a par with that of a wasp. There are some in the garden, but you will be lucky to see them unless you search hard. They hibernate from October until March, but emerge on warm days in spring to bask in the sunshine and mate (rival males perform a 'dance' as they push against each other to establish supremacy). If you want to find them, we have scattered broken slates around the edge of the wildlife meadow. They love the warmth of the dark stone and might be either on top or underneath. The 'classic' adder is black and white, but the local strain tends to be olive with a faint black zigzag down the spine. If you do go looking for these wonderful reptiles, please be careful – they are very delicate and highly-protected. Should you be bitten it will be your fault, so please withdraw your hand carefully – their fangs are very easily damaged. There are two other reptiles present in the garden – both lizards. The common lizard is self-evident, but the slow worm is legless and to the uninitiated resembles a snake. It is completely harmless and lives on slugs – so again, please don't harm them.

BIRDING

Skomer and Skokholm: These wonderful island reserves are reached from Martin Haven (just west of Marloes and well-signposted). The total absence of mammalian predators (peregrines, ravens and black backed gulls are different) means the ground nesting birds are particularly tame.




The highlight of the year is April – July when the puffins return from the Atlantic to rear their young in the burrows dug by rabbits originally introduced for food by mediaeval monks. The wildlife is extremely tame – you don't need to have a huge lens. The puffins and rabbits will let you get to within a couple of metres and even the little owls will watch you without batting an eyelid. Seals, dolphins and porpoises are also often visible on the short ferry trip to the islands (**online booking required**). The puffins leave mid- to late July, but an overnight visit in August will reveal millions of the nocturnal Manx shearwaters wheeling overhead. Indeed many fanatical birders say this should be the real reason to visit the islands – and as a result places book up months in advance.



Marloes Mere: This swampy reserve is at its best in winter when waders and waterfowl descend to feed on its frost-free muddy bottom. These draw in predators such as merlin, peregrine, short-eared owl and hen harrier. It is best approached either by walking west from the Marloes Sands car park or from the Coastal Path.

Marloes Mere

At a little over an hour's drive north, New Quay is not exactly local, but this holds the best chances for dolphin spotting. There are organised boat trips, but in our experience the best sightings are from Tim and Corrinne's 'Epic Fishing' boat in summer (07989496526). This costs roughly the same as the 'dolphin boats', but as well as good sightings of cetaceans, you should also catch enough mackerel, pollock, gurnard and even spider crabs for a splendid evening barbeque.

In winter murmurating starlings make a stunning spectacle as they wheel in the skies prior to roosting communally (if you are lucky you will see them being dive-bombed by a peregrine or merlin). In November and December the best site is Minwear (near Canaston Bridge), but in the New Year try Plumstone where there could be up to a million birds until they disperse in early March.

Peregrines and sparrowhawks fly over the house every day (one tip for spotting them is to listen for the outraged calls of crows and chattering swallows and house martins). There are resident choughs along the cliffs and diving gannets are another highlight to spot from the beach – theoretically they should break their necks by plunging vertically into the sea from 200 feet (they escape death by having a 'rubberised' neck).

Any serious birder should also have a look at www.pembsbirds.blogspot.co.uk for recent sightings of rarities and the best current sites.

Wales is a great place to find redstarts

FORAGING

Rummaging along the coast for food is an ageless pursuit. For at least 33,000 years man has been searching for food along Britain's shores.

Rockpooling is ageless

Neolithic shell remains show the first Britons spent hours searching for food in the tidal zones. In fact, the oldest modern human fossil found in Europe were found on the nearby Gower Peninsula. 'The red princess was discovered in a sea cave in 1823, although we now know the skeleton was that of a young man, and dates to about the same era as the better-known cave paintings from the Dordogne and Pyrenees.

Ever since, children of all ages have rummaged among the weed and crevices for sheer fun. But few people realise quite how much delicious wild food is still there. Collecting this is free and fun and a wonderful way of linking into the natural world.

Cockles can be raked up from sandy beaches (look out for shells to find beds), but mussels are obvious

Rock pools are a good place to start. Each is replenished twice a day by the incoming tide. This brings fresh oxygen, nutrients and occupants. As a result, every fissure in the stone is a rich hunting ground for scavengers and opportunists, all intent on snatching morsels brought in on the currents.

This makes them one of our richest, yet most unpredictable, habitats. Closer to shore, where they are submerged for only a few hours a day, small crabs, anemones, molluscs and bladder wrack sea weed predominate.


Edible crabs have an oval carapace (shell), while laverbread is very red and recogniseable

Most of this is too small to be edible, but the fare is often richer in the deeper pools, with whelks, mussels, shore- and edible crabs (the last have oval carapaces) and even lobsters. An easier way to enjoy the last two is via Lobster and Môr in the middle of Little Haven. Also, while laver is known as a Welsh delicacy, but pepper dulse and kelp are particularly good (both widely available on almost all local beaches). All seaweed is edible and rich in minerals and while some taste better, none are poisonous., however, so try nibbling it as you walk along the shore. It can also be dried on racks in the sun or in front of the fire. Try part-drying dulse and dry-frying to create a vegan snack which is strongly reminiscent of bacon.


Sadly, the delicious samphire – which grows in muddy/sandy areas is infrequent here, but it's well worth collecting!

There are tasty morsels to be had inland too and two highly-edible plants are particularly common along local lanes. The parsley-relative, Alexanders, was introduced to Britain as a vegetable by the Romans. It grows in profusion and its young shoots and immature buds are good steamed and served with butter (but do peel of the stringy skin first). That said, it is a bit of a 'marmite' vegetable – you either love it or hate it.

Another interesting salad plant is penny- or navel wort. This fleshy leafed plant grows in the arid conditions of dry-stone walls and as a result it is technically a desert plant. It's thick waxy leaves are succulent and sweet – reminiscent of a particularly juicy lamb's lettuce. It grows in the wall along the lane behind the house and in the walls of the deer park above Martin Haven. The most abundant outcrop, however, is on the walls surrounding All Saints Church at Walton West (about a mile from Little Haven).

Common scurvy grass (Cochlearia officinalis)

Hogweed can also be delicious when the young shoots are steamed and served with butter – or better still fried in tempura batter – but make sure you don't mistake the common hedgerow weed for its giant cousin which has a very astringent sap which can cause skin – particularly that of children – to blister.

HISTORY

The existing house dates from the early 19th century, but was built on the site of an older homestead. The name 'Glebe' suggests it was originally designed to supply rental income for the nearby Talbenny Church. Until the 1960s Glebe House was a working farm (indeed it is still called Glebe Farm or Glebe Farm House on many maps). During the early part of the 20th century it had a blacksmith's forge at its western end and a dairy and milking parlour on the eastern end. There was a connecting door through to the house.

Glebe Farm House in the early 1960s

Outside there was a *ty bach* (privy) and pigsty beyond the milking parlour (the remains of both are still present). There was also at least one well in what is now the 'wild garden'. Apparently this provided water not only for the farm, but for neighbouring dwellings.

While little more is known about the pre-19th century history of the farm and smithy, in common with many older buildings in the locality, there are persistent rumours of a smuggling connection. One implausible story suggests a tunnel running from the cellar to the base of the nearby cliffs, others that there is gold hidden in the same cellar. This seems unlikely, not least because there is no trace of a cellar today and the relatively high local water table (hence the wells) would make an underground room problematic.

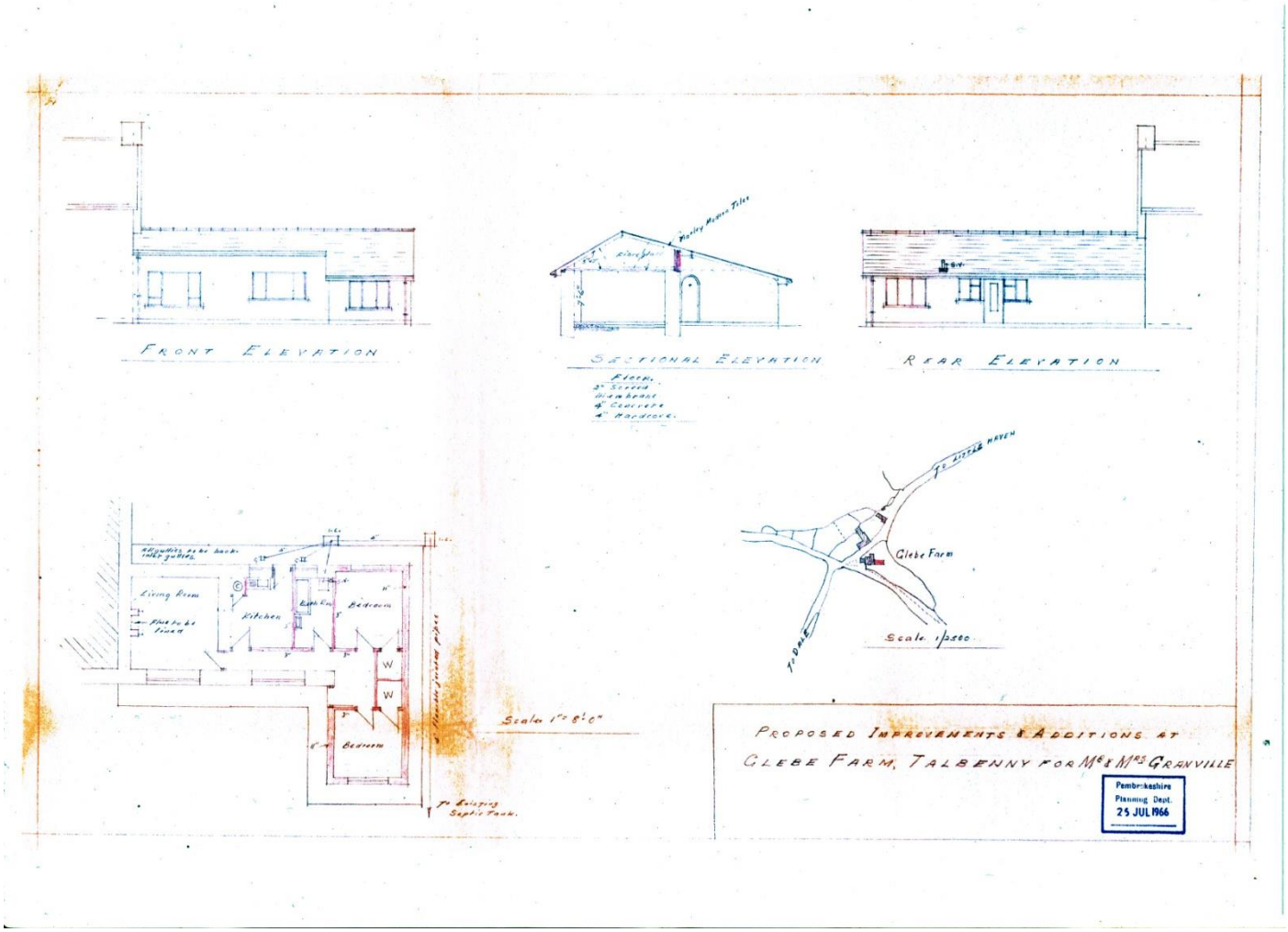
During the war several airbases were built in the area, taking advantage of the relatively flat terrain. There is one just to the west of Dale and, more obviously, another immediately south and west of Glebe House. These served principally to provide aerial surveillance and protection for the Atlantic convoys running the gauntlet of German U-boats to the west of Ireland. The last of these airfields closed in the 1980s, but the runways at Dale are still evident and the buildings at Talbenny remain.

More recently, Glebe House was bought in 1965 by Rose Granville from Bridgend in Gwent. The purchase came by chance. Rose and her daughter Francine had been looking for something similar in south east Wales but had moved their search west to prospect around Pembrokeshire (particularly St Davids). One day the family got lost while driving from Milford Haven to St Davids and happened to pass Talbenny. Rose instantly fell in love with Glebe House, drawn in particular to the rose-draped porch. The building was originally limewashed white, but the new owners immediately set about 'improvements', replacing the existing sash windows with contemporary wooden frames and adding a pebble dash concrete render.

The two downstairs rooms in the 1970s

Rose and Francine lived in the house for the rest of the 1960s and in 1966 obtained planning consent to convert the dairy and milking parlour into a single storey extension – although obviously this was never acted on.

The Granvilles continued to live at Glebe House for most of the '70s, before buying and moving to the Fort Hotel above Little Haven. Following a string of break-ins by people looking for the mythical gold in the non-existent cellar, Glebe House was let to an American couple who worked on the nearby Dale Airbase until they returned to America in 1985. After this there was a succession of shorter, unsuccessful, lets followed and eventually the house was left empty. In 1997 it had to be re-roofed and the milking parlour was demolished owing to its dangerous state. The dairy – which was in better condition – remained.



The 1966 plans were drawn up, passed, but building work never started

The current owner, Daniel Butler, fell in love with the area while on holiday in 2012. He stumbled across Glebe House while idly surfing the Net in the middle of the night. It had only just been placed on the market, but within six hours he had driven down to inspect the building and two days later his first offer was accepted. The sale was completed in January 2013, but the restoration work was not completed until August 2015.

Glebe House in September 2012 and in March 2013

RESTORATION

The short days and poor weather in the first few months of 2013 delayed the start of the necessary repairs. To complicate matters further, planning permission requires a bat survey by a qualified consultant to ensure there is no disturbance to any resident colonies. Because bats hibernate in winter – usually in caves, abandoned tunnels and buildings – the survey work can only take place in summer.

Work begins (March and April 2013 - note the winter damage to the dairy roof)

Nevertheless, preliminary repairs eventually began at Easter, but it rapidly became clear the job was bigger than it first appeared. Most significantly, it was clear the walls were so damp that the first floor was no longer attached to the walls. In practice it was being supported by the wonderful – but out-of-place - modernist fireplace in the lounge.


The chimney place turned out to be all that was supporting the first floor

To complicate matters further, our architect had to withdraw due to ill health: although not before she had advised making the building as structurally safe as possible while awaiting the bat survey. This effectively meant gutting the house, taking down most of the dairy and attempting to repair the kitchen.

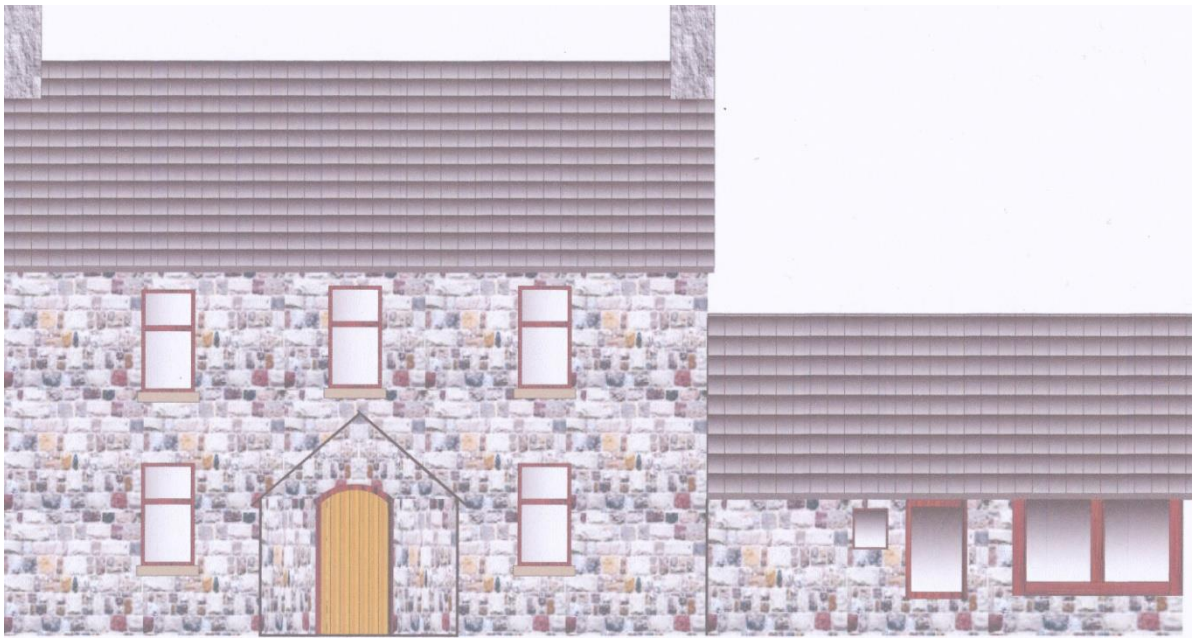
The bat survey eventually came back 'clear' in June 2013, but by this stage the entire first floor and staircase had had to be removed. As the dairy roof was removed, it became clear the chimney at the eastern end of the building was very unstable, requiring the erection of buttresses (now largely disguised as the downstairs bathroom). The thick stone walls of the kitchen also proved so rotten as to require demolition. Despite still not having put in for planning permission, safety considerations meant this also had to be taken this down. It was replaced with a new building with an identical footprint and external appearance.


The interior was gutted and the chimney supported with buttresses (now the downstairs bathroom)

It was at this point – late summer 2013 – that the National Park planners spotted the work and decided we were acting without the necessary paperwork. Apparently even if a structure is unsafe, taking it down requires demolition consent. Not only that, once it has come down, formal permission is needed to reinstate it. Obviously we immediately applied for planning consent. This covered for retrospective demolition and the restitution of both, plus the restoration of a modest extension on some of the 'footprint' of the previous diary and milking parlour.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

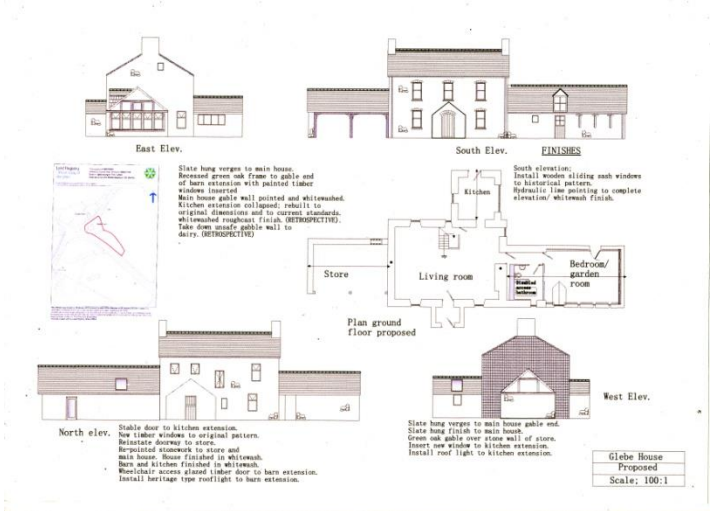
After a considerable delay, in December 2013 we were summoned to discuss the application with the planning officer. It was strongly hinted that were we to want to restore and convert the dairy, we needed to make a significant gesture towards traditional appearance. To this end, replacing the 1960s-style windows on the front of the house with sash windows would be a very good idea. It was suggested that were we to be difficult, the prolonged lack of occupation might become a problem. We were invited to produce evidence of when it was last occupied and to produce photographic evidence of its historical appearance.



The original drawing for the preliminary planning stages (2013)

Now planning permission is not needed for repairs to an existing dwelling. By this stage we had already bought all 12 new windows for the house (five for the front, four for the rear, two for the kitchen and one more on the east side, next to the passage to the new extension). The end result was that all work was frozen while we attempted to resolve the issues.

The cost of new sash windows appeared not only unreasonable, but also very expensive. So we put in for permission to restore not only the dairy, but the milking parlour and forge (the idea being to make 'sacrifices' of parts of these extensions to get what we really wanted).



The revised plans with two extensions

In the end, however, we realised the five potentially 'wasted' windows at the front of the house could be reused in the extension. So when the drawings went in, there were sash windows on the house – we were advised that if they weren't there in the event, there was nothing the planners could do.

The drawings of a sash-windowed Glebe clearly sugared the pill, because – to everyone's surprise – the plans were passed in their entirety. But better still, while waiting for the decision we had stumbled across another supplier who could make sash windows that were only a little more expensive than the ones they were replacing. And they do clearly look much better in an old building than modern designs.

So everyone was happy – but we had ended up with a building that was very much bigger than originally intended. Should we stick to the original scheme or be far more ambitious?

Ready to start the next phase (December 2014)

TECHNIQUES

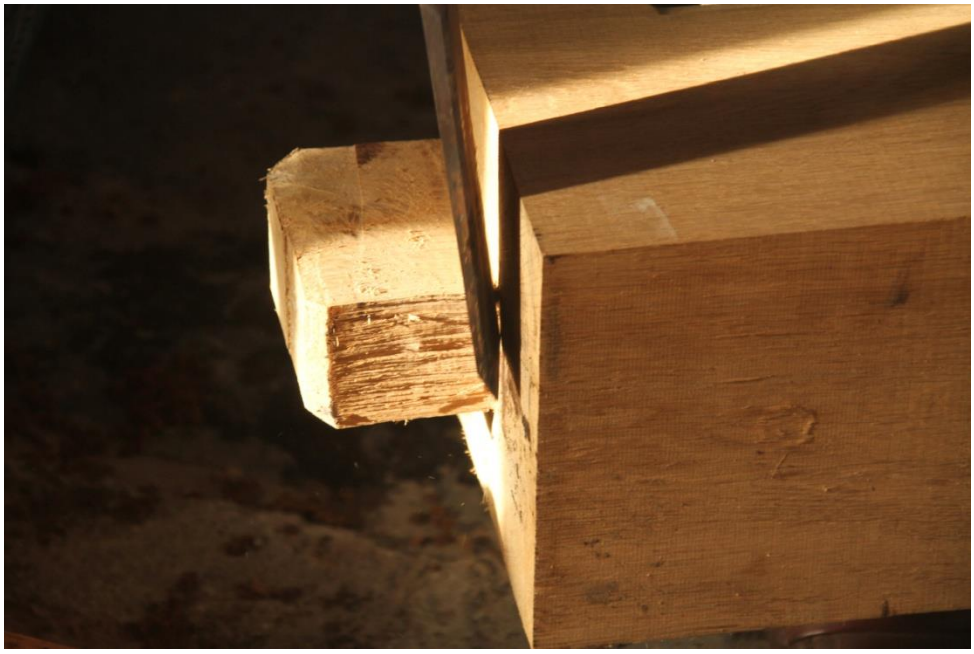
Building materials have changed hugely over the years. Modern walls are generally made of a mixture of treated softwood, bricks, blocks, damp-proof membranes and conventional cement mortars. In other words they are designed to be as water-tight as possible.

Older walls tend to be made with lime mortars. Because until recently it wasn't possible to exclude water totally, old buildings are expected to 'breathe' – to absorb some moisture, but also to be able to release it.

Both principles work well, but it also means it is usually a mistake to mix the two types of material in the same building – or, more importantly, in the same wall. Water is expected to permeate into an old wall from above, below and the exposed surface, but lime mortar allows damp to escape back to the outside air. Conversely, a modern wall is expected to be fully watertight, so using lime mortar with modern bricks would allow driving rain in, but the rest of the construction materials would keep it there. Thus Glebe House contains three main building techniques: two ancient, one modern.

- Green oak framing

In the days before mechanical saws, our ancestors used fresh oak to construct sturdy wooden frames held together by pegs. The last are not rounded on a lathe, but whittled to produce a foot-long poly-sided wooden nail. Holes of a fractionally smaller diameter than the peg are drilled into each mortice and tenon joint from either side at slight angles to meet in the middle. This creates a hole which is effectively slightly curved. The peg is then greased with candle wax and hammered home. Once in, the peg's ridges are squeezed tightly against the hole's walls while the tension from being forced into a curve means the peg is held so tightly it can never be removed.



This type of construction is most apparent in the main living room of the old house, but you can also see it upstairs, in the roof of the dairy/parlour extension and in the front of the two store rooms to the west of the house. We have cut off peg ends below eye-level (to avoid accidents), but have deliberately left those higher up to show the method.

- Lime mortar

This has been used since the 4th century BC and is created by roasting limestone (calcium carbonate – CaCO3) in a kiln. The heat drives off the carbon dioxide in the carbonate to create calcium oxide (quick lime, caustic soda or CaO). This is extremely alkaline and reactive, so it is 'slaked' with water to create the much milder calcium hydroxide (Ca(OH)2). The final product has the consistency of a stiff putty or clay.

This will keep for many months in a large bag, but when spread in a relatively thin layer (e.g. as a mortar between bricks or as a render on a wall's surface), the lime absorbs carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to create a relatively soft, slightly crumbly, mortar. This allows a limited movement of water in – and critically out – of the wall. Importantly, in an era of concern about global warming, unlike modern cements, this is a relatively carbon neutral material because as the mortar hardens it consumes the carbon dioxide driven off in its manufacture.

The main farmhouse and rear wall of the forge were constructed with lime mortar some 200 years ago. A thin 'wash' or render of the same was applied to the walls and this kept out the elements for some 150 years until a 'modern' pebble dash was applied in the 1960s. This kept out the driving rain, but unfortunately it also sealed in water seeping in from the roof and rising damp. As this rose to the surface, expanded with hard frosts, and generally snaked its way beneath the cement, it loosened the render and by the time we bought the house in 2013 most was barely attached to the walls.

We therefore removed all of the 1960s protective covering, leaving the dilemma of what next? Clearly some sort of coating had always been there for a reason, but what next? In the end we have come up with a variety of solutions. We have left the south and east walls exposed because these are relatively protected from the prevailing elements and the stonework is attractive. The northern wall has a lime render – a cross between paint and mortar - using the traditional binding agent of horsehair which was harvested from our own ponies, Spice and Penny. As modern constructions, the kitchen and east extensions have a Portland cement-based render, but we have deliberately roughened this to blend in with the older building.

- Timber frame / breeze block

Modern building methods need less explanation. Foundations are dug and low walls built to create a shallow tank. Then a damp-proof membrane is laid and a modern concrete (Portland cement-based) is poured over a rigid welded wire mesh to make a reinforced concrete pad. Breeze block walls are built up and the inside lined with a light timber frame. This is infilled with the highest modern insulation material available and covered with board and finished with a 'skim' of conventional plaster.


The extension have breeze block walls while the interior is lined with softwood frames

The advantage of this type of construction is that it is cheaper and much more thermally-efficient than ancient building techniques. On the other hand there can be a clash of styles with the older parts of a restoration project.

In the case of the two extensions and the kitchen, while not hiding the use of modern materials, we have tried to smooth out the contrasts between old and new. We have done this with the limited use of green oak and stone, while using deliberately roughened finishes on modern renders.

- Slate

Houses along the coast are battered by frequent storms driving in from the west up St George's Channel. Originally a lime render was the preferred protection (this was usually painted either with a white lime wash or lime mixed with ox blood to produce a characteristic pink effect).

As the Industrial Revolution developed and trains opened up slate mines of Snowdonia, so many Welsh houses started to hang exposed walls with slate.

This began to fall out of fashion during the 1960s and 1970s however in favour of pebble-dash renders made with modern cements. These were applied to Glebe House 32in the late 1960s, but unfortunately the use of an impenetrable barrier on a potentially damp wall was very destructive in the long-run. As the roof deteriorated in the 1980s and '90s water seeped down into the walls causing major damage to the internal floors and joists and slowly detaching the render from the external walls. The last was so damaged that it had to be removed in 2013.

The fact that previous owners had felt it necessary to apply an additional protective layer indicated something was probably sensible. We decided to revert to the traditional slate on the most exposed western walls. When the house had been re-roofed in the late 1990s, they had saved money with an artificial concrete/fibre slate.

Welsh slate is now even more difficult and expensive to source. We reluctantly decided to use the same modern material on the three extensions on the cladding at the west ends of the house and store.

ECO-FRIENDLY

We all need to do our bit to help the planet and nowhere is this more important than in our homes. Buildings account for a sixth of all the UK's CO2 emissions, so it is particularly important to try to take care when renovating or constructing a home.

- Insulation

Old houses are notoriously thermally-inefficient. Thick stone walls absorb huge amounts of energy and much of this will leach out to the exterior (although conversely the stone acts as a nightstore heater by absorbing heat and releasing it inside as well). Similarly slate roofs may be good at repelling the rain, but they are poor at retaining heat while draughty windows act as thermal extractor fans.

In 2012 the house's only insulation was the sheep's wool brought in by nesting jackdaws. So when the scale of the refurbishment became clear and the house had to be gutted, the next stage was to line the entire building with 100mm rigid foam board and a layer of isoprene (a very efficient insulator which looks a little like very sturdy silver bubble wrap). Between them this equates to about 18" of rockwool. The relatively unused attic is layered with an 18" layer of conventional rockwool. All the windows are double glazed, the doors are newly-made and tight-fitting.

- Heat

We looked very hard at various non-polluting energy sources. Ground and air-source heat exchangers, wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and wood pellet boilers were all carefully examined, but each proved impractical. Mains gas is not available, so an oil-fired system was the most sensible option. This heats the house via underfloor pipes on the ground floor and conventional radiators upstairs.

We have installed both a solar hot water system (which should provide up to 80% of the house's hot water in summer and 25% in winter) and two wood-burning stoves. These are more than capable of heating the main house even in the depths of winter, although most guests use them more as the perfect backdrop for an evening snuggled on the sofa with a good book or glass of something warming.

The house has oil-fired under-floor heating on the ground floor and wall-mounted radiators upstairs. This provides a comfortable internal temperature in even the coldest weather, but it can be augmented by the two wood burning stoves in the main living area. These are fuelled by seasoned hard wood logs from Helen's family farm near Llandeilo. Each is supplied with a complimentary basket of logs at the beginning of your stay. Further free wood is available from the store.

PHONE / WIFI / TV

Mobile reception is patchy around the house. It has improved, but 4G seems out of reach [early 2023].

WiFi is also very slow. Despite promises of fibre, we currently struggle with streaming and even Zoom/Team calls. Its use is free for guests and the code is **jets-dig-unbid**.

Although the house has two TVs, for technical reasons only one can be connected to the aerial at any one time. It requires a technician to go into the attic to switch from one to the other. This is currently the one in the games room, leaving the screen in the living area for use with DVDs, laptop connections etc.

RUBBISH/RECYCLING

Annoyingly, every Council in the UK seems to have a different recycling policy and to further complicate matters, each seems to change its procedures every couple of years. Kerbside collections are currently on Friday mornings (usually around midday). The recycling containers must be put just outside the drive on the compacted gravel in front of the house (the bin men will not enter the 'curtelage').

There is a badly-written Council explanation at the end of this folder, but basically recycling should be split into:

Card and cardboard - blue bag

Paper - blue bin

Plastics (not black or brown, films, crisp packets, toys or hard plastic) – red bag

Glass – green bin

Food – Green and grey caddies

CLEANING

The hoover, broom, dustpan etc are kept under the stairs.

Some basic cleaning materials are kept under the sink which is fitted with a childproof catch for safety reasons.

Please try not to pour chemicals (eg bleach) down the sinks and lavatories – these can damage the efficiency of the septic tank. Disposing of fat down the drain in cold weather can also easily result in blockages. This is much better poured onto the ground under the gorse in the wildlife garden. Similarly, please put wet wipes etc in the rubbish, not the lavatory.

LAUNDRY

The washing machine and tumble dryer are in the kitchen cupboard although wet clothing generally dries quickest on the washing line or on a drying rack. There are two under the stairs, plus an iron and board under the stairs.

UTILITIES

The fuse box is in the garage closest to the house.

There is a basic tool box with a few bulbs and batteries under the stairs.

The boiler is in a room at the back of the same garage.

The house is on mains water. In a real emergency, the stop cock is in the parking area in front of the house, just inside the boundary wall. Sewerage is a septic tank towards the rear of the garden.

EMERGENCIES

Withybush Hospital in Haverfordwest has an A&E department. It is on the Fishguard Road and well-signposted.

The fuse box is in the ‘garage’ adjacent to the house. The boiler is behind.

CONTACT

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