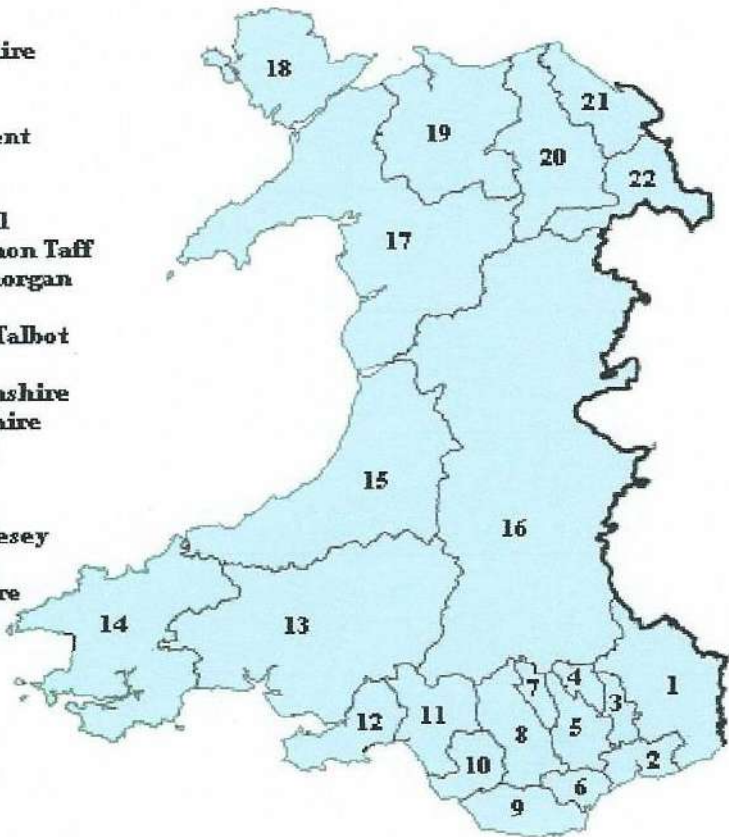


PART 1

General Introduction: The Unitary Authorities of Wales

1. Monmouthshire
2. Newport
3. Torfaen
4. Blaenau Gwent
5. Caerphilly
6. Cardiff
7. Merthyr Tydfil
8. Rhondda Cynon Taff
9. Vale of Glamorgan
10. Bridgend
11. Neath Port Talbot
12. Swansea
13. Carmarthenshire
14. Pembrokeshire
15. Ceredigion
16. Powys
17. Gwynedd
18. Isle of Anglesey
19. Conwy
20. Denbighshire
21. Flintshire
22. Wrexham



(From '*The National Gazetteer of Wales*', 2001:5)

The seaside resort of Porthcawl is located on a low headland jutting out into the Bristol Channel and lies midway between the cities of Cardiff and Swansea, south of the M4 motorway in south Wales. Currently, the town comes within the parliamentary constituency of Bridgend and under the devolved jurisdiction of the Welsh Assembly Government (W.A.G.). At the last Census in March 2011, Porthcawl's inhabitants numbered 15,672 whereas in 1891, 2 years before Porthcawl first acquired urban district council status in 1893, it had a population of almost 1,000 people (Office of National Statistics (O.N.S.), 2015).

When Porthcawl received its Royal Assent in 1914, the town fell within the boundaries of the now defunct Welsh county of Glamorgan (Higgins, 1968).

Since then, successive political developments during the 20th Century have resulted in the Local Government Acts of 1972 and 1994 respectively, bringing about the subdivision of the old county of Glamorgan and ushering in Local Government Reorganisation (L.G.R.) in Wales.

Following those changes at an administrative government level, Glamorgan remained one of the 8 preserved counties in Wales. At a more local level, the arrival of 22 Unitary authorities or principal areas in Wales, has meant that Porthcawl now comes within the boundaries of Bridgend County Borough County (B.C.B.C.) – number 10 on the above map – which is flanked by the counties of the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff in the east and Neath Port Talbot and Swansea in the west ('*The National Gazetteer of Wales*', 2001).

Old Glamorgan

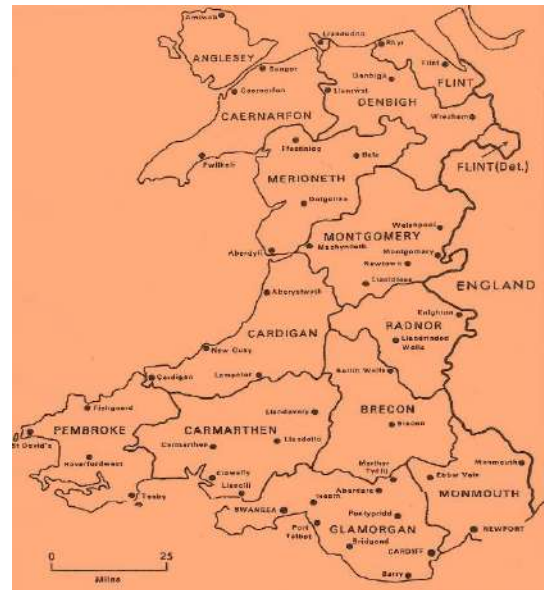
To fully appreciate Porthcawl and its unique characteristics, the town has to be seen in the context of its historical past and the geo-political circumstances that brought it into being as an industrial coal-port on Glamorgan's southerly coastline at the beginning of the 19th Century.

Prior to its demise in the early 1970's, the historic county of Glamorgan had an ancient lineage and its diversified terrain witnessed varying degrees of human activity stretching back over 200,000 years, maybe even longer. Geographically, old Glamorgan straddled the south-east extremity of Wales and, in its entirety, was the most southerly of all the Welsh counties with a coastline stretching approximately 88 miles from Trowbridge in the east to the Gower peninsula in the west. As a county, Glamorgan could be broadly divided into 3 separate and contrasting geographical territories each with their own distinct heritage and traditions i.e. Blaenau Morganwg which was made up of the northern mountainous uplands, the western peninsula was spoken of as Gwyr or Gower, while the southern tableland was named Bro Morganwg (Wade, 1914; Wikipedia, 2014).

During the 19th Century, old Glamorgan gained prominence as a national economic asset and was recognised as the most commercially important of all the Welsh counties as it was blessed with immense natural resources, the labour of its indigenous people and a very large immigrant population. The combination of all these factors contributed hugely to the advancement of the Industrial Revolution both in Wales and in the United Kingdom (U.K.) generally. So much so, that Glamorgan's anthracite-rich and steam coal was said to power the navies of the world and amounted to a quarter of the global trade in the 1890's (Davies et al, 2008; Wikipedia, 2014).

'...not only the foremost county in Wales, but one of the richest provinces in the kingdom. Its industrial development has been one of the wonders of the age...'

J.H. Wade, 1914:4



The counties of Wales before 1972
(Reproduced from 'Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980',
Morgan, 1981:x)

Glamorgan's importance stretches much further back than the 19th Century, however. Several generations before in the Middle Ages, the town of Kenfig, only a few miles to the north of present-day Porthcawl, was a flourishing community that, by 1375, had a significant population for that time of perhaps 1000 people, and an economy that dominated the local area (Robbins, 2002).

Moreover, while they have been mostly absorbed within the environs of modern Porthcawl, the nearby villages of Nottage and Newton were also busy, thriving settlements in their own right during the Middle Ages, although they date from much earlier, each having a recorded history of its own dating from at least as far back as the Stone Ages (Morgan, 1987; Robbins, 2002). Indeed, Porthcawl's genesis as a town lies in Newton's role as a port for the export of agricultural surplus from the Vale of Glamorgan prior to 1800, and its ambitions to be a fashionable watering place at the onset of the 19th Century (Hunter, 1892; Davies et al, 2008).

The birth of Porthcawl

Porthcawl, on the other hand, is a comparative newcomer to historical records and, as a town, did not begin to take any identifiable shape as a centre of population until the first quarter of the 19th Century. Until then, if noted at all, it was no more than as a geographical point on a map of south Wales called Porth Cawl or Pwll Cawl (Higgins, 1968).

Porthcawl's arrival on the scene was due to a complex web of events and circumstances. That said, the original catalyst for the transformation of an obscure point on the map into a modern urban conurbation was the industrialisation and insistent push for profit and growth in the mineral rich northern regions of Glamorgan or Blaenau Morganwg.

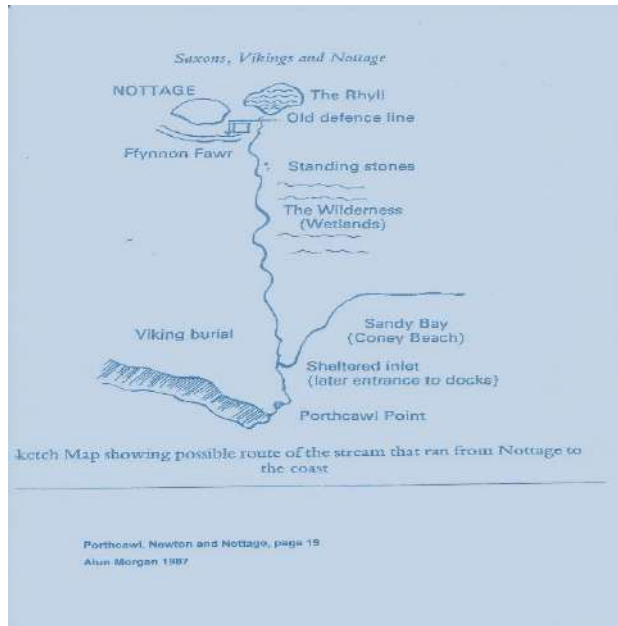
At the close of the 18th Century and onset of the 19th Century, industrial and entrepreneurial activities dominated the mid-Glamorgan area, resulting in an upsurge of the coal and iron trades in the Llynfi Valley and thereabouts. Accompanying the process of industrialisation, was a perceived need for a substantial mode of transport and a harbour outlet to trade and transport the valuable '*Black Gold*' and associated goods and minerals to national and international destinations. This goal was not easily attainable as the challenging geography of mid-Glamorgan rendered it unsuitable for a canal system modelled on those found in neighbouring west and north-east Glamorgan. Added to which were further impediments in the form of the prevailing communication and road transportation systems in the area that were hampered by a series of toll gates and limited to a few stagecoach and Royal mail routes, drovers' trails and tracks of a horse and cart variety to the extent that they were deemed unfit for such a heavy duty purpose (James, 1987).

Other possibilities were looked at and while, initially, the estuary of the River Ogmore was a favoured location for this new harbour outlet, the notion failed to find sufficient backing, possibly due to a recession, local divisions, and a belief that the water in the estuary was too shallow and turbulent, so that option was discarded. The focus shifted instead to the existing port at Newton but that was

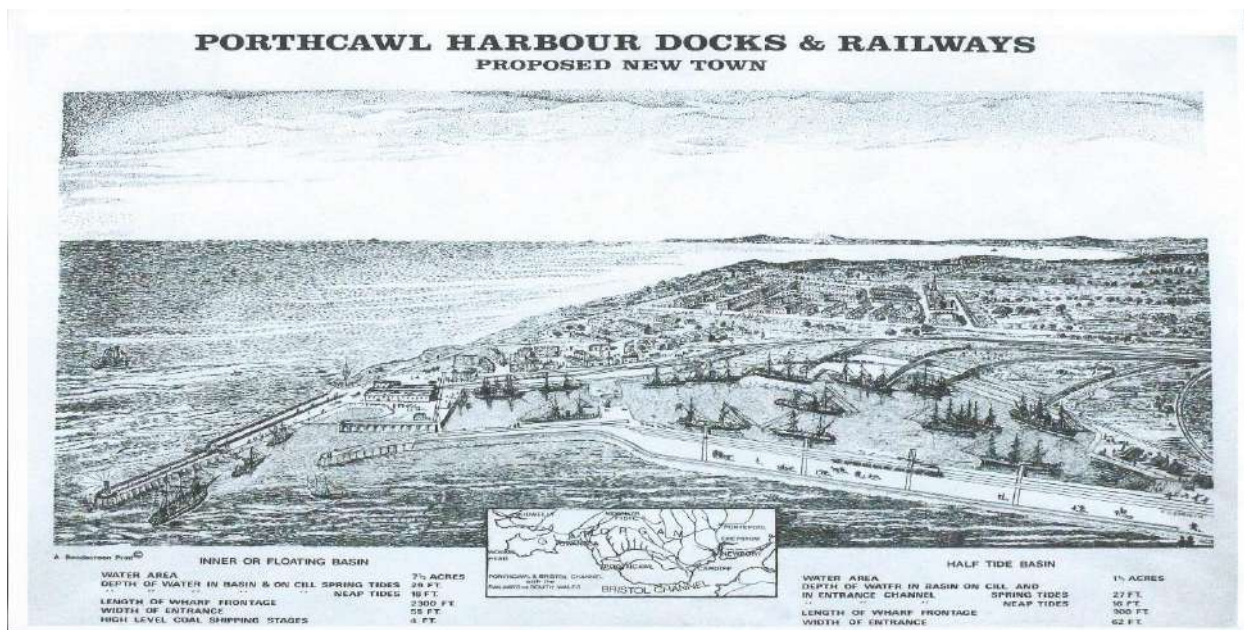
discounted as too sandy plus the beach gradient was thought inappropriate for a tram-road and the transportation of heavier cargoes in bigger vessels. Even as late as 1825, when building preparations at Porth Cawl Point were at an advanced stage, replacing it with a harbour development further west in Aberavon was considered as there were manifold problems with adverse weather and difficulties in delivering supplies to the, then, isolated building site at Porth Cawl Point (Higgins, 1968; Morgan 1978 & 1987; James, 1987).

With the mouth of the River Ogmore and Newton Bay out of the running, the search for a suitable site for new harbour outlet was extended. One feature of Glamorgan's coastal plain is that it is especially well-watered by virtue of a watershed of small rivers and streams that rise in the mountainous uplands of Blaenau Morganwg and run southwards, scoring the landscape of the coastal belt with gullies and tidal river estuaries that empty into the Bristol Channel. In spite of this, there are few natural harbours along this particular coastline. Undeterred by such a drawback, our late Georgian and Victorian predecessors used their ingenuity and engineering skills to convert several tidal estuaries into ports and docks in the 19th Century, the aim being to create commercial arteries that would aid and enhance old Glamorgan's industrial capacity (Wade, 1914).

Porthcawl was one such port and it is here that Porthcawl's geographical/geological features come into play. As early as the 17th Century, it was known that there was a small creek or tidal estuary to the lee of Porth Cawl Point, near to the later 19th Century Porthcawl Dock. Apparently, the tidal estuary then extended as far inland as the village of Nottage, although such an estuary did not appear in the various lists published by the Port Books. Even so, there seems to be a sheltered port in Henry Knight's estate map of 1791 and Porthcawl Harbour is marked on unpublished Ordnance Survey (O.S.) drawings of 1813-14, a decade before the Outer Harbour Basin was started (Higgins, 1968). Further evidence of a tidal waterway extending inland from the present Salt Lake car park to Nottage is the existence of possible tidal moorings in the shape of the Standing Stones in the marshy area of the Wilderness in Porthcawl (Morgan, 1987).



(Reproduced from
'Porthcawl, Newton and
Nottage', Morgan, 1987:19)



(Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)

Only after a prolonged process of elimination, was there a realisation that the headland of Porth Cawl or Pwll Cawl bordering the 'Severn Sea', had the potential to be developed into a port of sufficient capacity to support maritime trading on an industrial scale. In what symbolised a radical innovation for its day, Porthcawl was born as a harbour and terminus for a horse-drawn tram-road for the transportation of the much sought after coal, iron, minerals and heavy industrial goods from the mid-Glamorgan valleys.

Notable figures of the era like the Earl of Dunraven, Sir John Nicholl, Member of Parliament (M.P.) and Colonel Henry Knight together with industrialists, for example Messrs. Guest, Crawshay, Coffin and Buckland, were enthusiastic about the idea. With such powerful, influential supporters, the Duffryn Llynfi and Porthcawl Railway Act was rapidly enacted in 1825 (D.L.P.R) Act (1825), enabling building to begin on the Outer Harbour Basin on a little known tidal estuary and land reclaimed from the sea (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987).

That was only the beginning. In the ensuing years throughout the 19th Century, the D.L.P.R. Act (1825) was followed by at least 10 additional enabling Acts of Parliament affecting Porthcawl Dock. Furthermore, in 1853, there was another significant development when John Brogden, a prominent Manchester entrepreneur, famously bought a controlling interest in the iron works in Tondy, near Bridgend, and, together with his 4 sons, energetically set about improving and enlarging the Porthcawl Dock with the addition of an Inner Dock Basin in 1867 (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987).

Unfortunately, although Porthcawl Dock was such an important player in the industrialisation of the Llynfi Valley and the transformation of the socio/economic fabric of the whole area of mid-Glamorgan, Porthcawl's ascendancy as a maritime trading port was destined to be brief, despite the investment of time and money from members of the Brogden family and the impetus they gave to the area by their involvement.

In practice, Porthcawl Dock was a fair weather port and although the improvements implemented by the Brogdens were welcomed, the subsequent leap in trade did not last. The final tipping point for maritime trading in Porthcawl Dock came with the successive opening of Roath Dock in Cardiff in 1887, Barry Dock in 1889, and another, much-enlarged, port at Port Talbot in 1898. The latter 2, in particular, had a detrimental impact as, although Barry and Port Talbot were both tidal ports and were also situated in the Bristol Channel, they were bigger and more modern, with less treacherous, more accessible maritime approaches than Porthcawl Dock.

As a result, they eclipsed Porthcawl Dock and its maritime trade fell sharply after 1898. By 1906, Porthcawl's career as a commercial shipping port had ended and the town entered a transitional period in which James Brogden, John's son, and his wife Caroline, continued to devote their considerable energies, as well as their fortunes, to the expansion of Porth Cawl or Pwll Cawl and turning the embryonic town into a seaside destination. This is what Porthcawl is chiefly known as and thought of today.



James Brogden (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)



John Brogden (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)

Porthcawl's geography and geology

Nearly 200 years after the passage of the D.L.P.R. Act (1825), Porthcawl has expanded enormously, both inland and along its coastline with the Bristol Channel. What remains unchanged, is the physical foundations on which Porthcawl is built and its location at the southerly tip of Wales on the geological cusp between the wide sandy shores of Swansea Bay and the Gower Peninsula - now designated to be an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - to the west, and the Vale of Glamorgan and the Lias cliffs of the Heritage Coast to the east.

Unchanged too, is Porthcawl's geological situation within the territory of old Bro Morgannwg with its undulating limestone plateau coterminous to the Bristol Channel coastline (Wade, 1914). In fact, along Porthcawl's extensive shoreline, the limestone bed forms some of the most prominent points along the town's beaches and coastline and are visibly exposed in long stretches of low rocks between Newton Bay, Porthcawl Point and Sker Beach.



Newton beach looking east, October 2014



Newton beach looking towards the Harbour, October 2014



Town beach looking east, October 2014



Limestone rocks on the town beach, October 2014



Sker Point (Google map, 2015)

Porthcawl and the weather

Wales, generally, has a maritime climate, though the southerly coastal belt of Bro Morgannwg to which Porthcawl belongs, has its own climatic conditions. To an extent, this sets the coastal belt and Porthcawl apart. As a result, while the town has a mostly rewarding relationship with the weather, any meaningful characterisation of Porthcawl needs to demonstrate how the weather affects the town if that characterisation is to offer a real sense of place (Wade, 1914; Met Office, 2013).

As recently as this year, Porthcawl earned an entry in the '*Top 20 Places for Holidays in Wales*' (WalesOnline, 2015). As far back as 1880, however, before the town fully took on the mantle of a seaside resort, the town drew positive comments about its developmental potential as a holiday destination (Slater's Commercial Directory, 1880)

At the turn of the 19th Century, as holidays and leisure time were coming within reach of more people in heavily populated areas, increasing numbers of visitors to Porthcawl discovered that, when the weather was set fair and the sun shining, the town's many natural assets, for example its 7 sandy bays, the pebble foreshores, the rock pools and glowing sunsets in the west, were all shown in sparkling form. Consequently, by 1907, Porthcawl had earned the epithet '*...that pearl of holiday resorts, that gem of the wild South Wales coast...*' ('*The Glamorgan Gazette*', 30th August 1907: 6).

This popularity is understandable as, during the summer months, the Azores high pressure system is the likeliest weather system to affect Porthcawl, often bringing balmy sunny days when residents and visitors to the town can make the most of the outdoors and avail themselves of the town's sun, sea and sand.

Be that as it may, as Porthcawl residents and its visitors know, the sun does not always shine in Porthcawl. The Azores high pressure systems subside in the autumn and winter months and Atlantic and Polar frontal depressions take over. It is then that Porthcawl frequently undergoes a dramatic change of character.

As it is, Porthcawl has an established, though small, commercial centre and many tea and coffee shops, snack bars and public houses. Regrettably, the town has a paucity of all-weather activities and facilities, and does not have adequate community facilities or an indoor recreational or leisure centre. There is also a dearth of resources for a variety of indoor interests such as antique markets or bookshop browsing, as found elsewhere in Wales like Brecon, Hay-on-Wye or, nearer to home, Cowbridge.

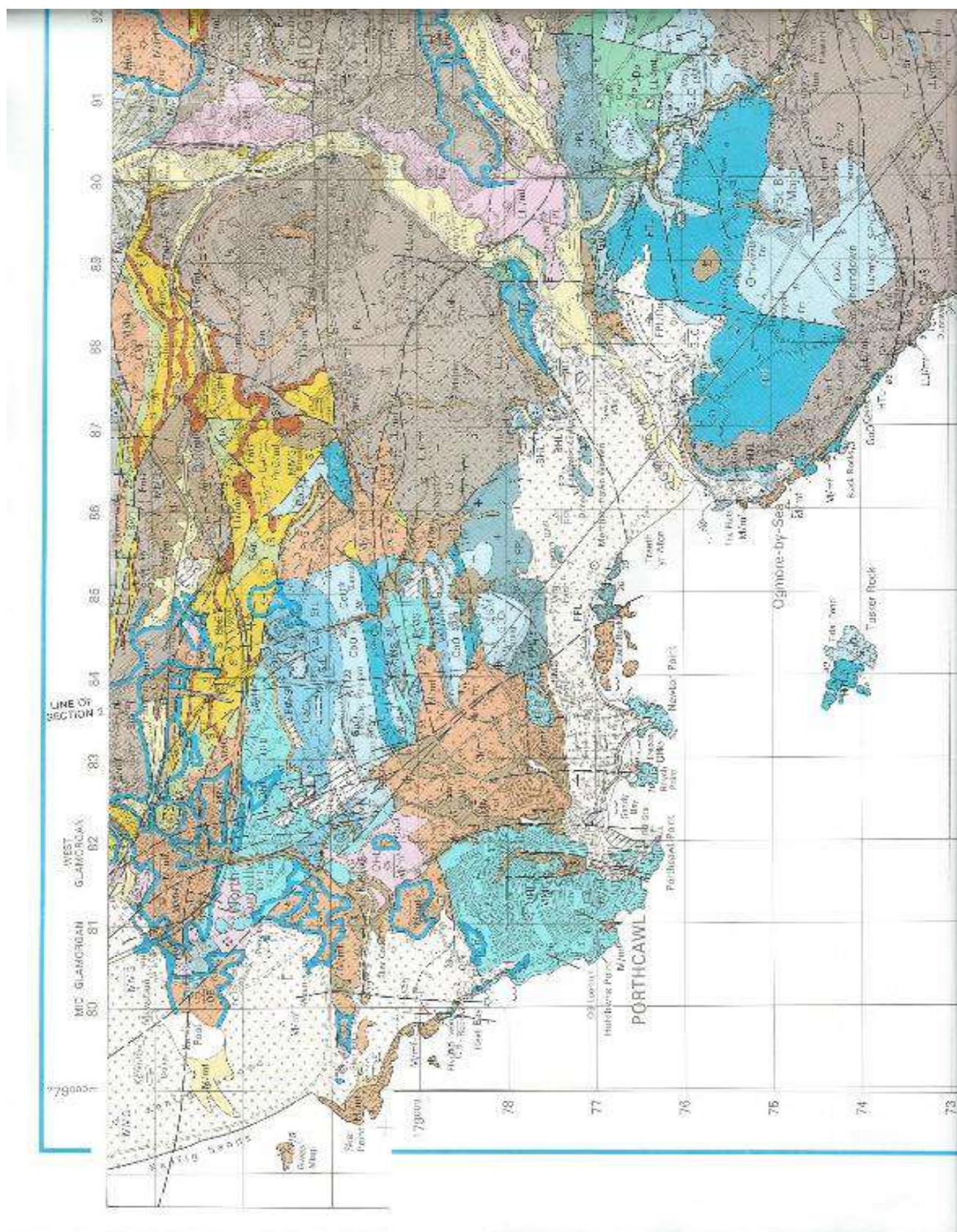
So, unless they are enthusiastic about walking, surfing or other outdoor pursuits, when poor weather strikes and it is cold or wet, people have no choice of where to go and are at a palpable loss as to what to do with themselves and their families. In place of crowds content just sitting in the sunshine, enjoying the beaches, having a '*spot of lunch*', or taking in the seaside air with a stroll along the Esplanade, the streets empty of people and take on a dismal, dejected air.



John Street on a wet day, January 2015



The Esplanade on a wet day, January 2015



Geological map of the Bristol Channel

(British Geological Survey England and Wales Sheet 262, 1990)

OHL : Oxwich Head Limestone
 MMG: Mercia Mudstone Group
 FPL: Friars Point Limestone
 GuO: Gully Oolite

LLi: Lower Lias undivided
 CoO: Cornelly Oolite
 HTL: High Tor Limestone
 PtMS: Pant Mawr Sandstone

The weather and the topography of the Bristol Channel

When the weather is stormy though - and it is often stormy in Porthcawl - there is quite another story to tell.

From its earliest origins as a port and aspirations to be a health resort soon after, Porthcawl quickly acquired a reputation for bracing air and a blustery location. The configuration of several geographical and meteorological factors accounts for this, namely:

- the shape of the land
- the mass of water to the west
- the topography of the land, and
- the influence of permanent and semi-permanent pressure systems

(ABP, South Wales, 2014).

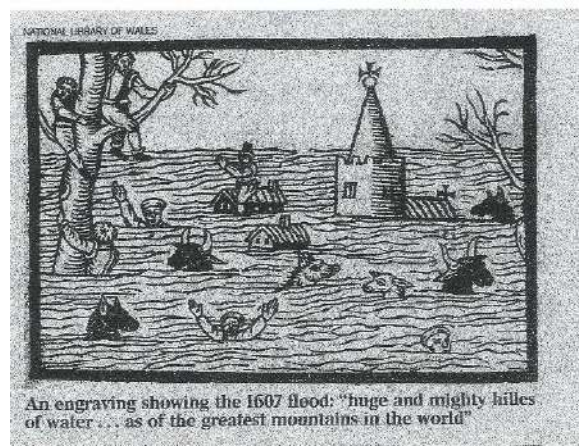
Essentially, the Bristol Channel can be likened to a deep funnel-shaped inlet of the Atlantic Ocean. It is bordered by the high ground of Exmoor in Devon to the south, and to the north, are the mountains of Blaenau Morgannwg. The topography of the Bristol Channel, therefore, ensures that any pressure system coming in off the Atlantic Ocean to its west and tracking eastwards inland, effectively reduces air pressure and increases tidal pressure, thereby intensifying any tidal surges in an already high tidal range area (ABP, South Wales, 2014).



The Pier and Lighthouse, January 2014 (reproduced by courtesy of Jason Jones)

Another factor contributing to the turbulent nature of Porthcawl's weather is its geographical location. The boundaries between the Inner and Outer Bristol Channel are loosely defined but Porthcawl is usually regarded as situated at the far easterly end of the Outer Bristol Channel, just before the tidal estuary of the River Ogmore, which is internationally accepted as marking the beginning of the Inner Bristol Channel (Wikipedia, 2014; Bristol Channel Standing Estuary Group (B.C.S.E.G.) 2015).

All the above factors, combined with Porthcawl's very exposed position perched on a rocky outcrop protruding into the Bristol Channel, ensures that when adverse meteorological conditions coincide with tidal peaks, the town experiences the brunt of weather systems that frequently come barrelling in from the Atlantic Ocean and the Outer Bristol Channel with truly spectacular ferocity. These events are awesome but they are not a new phenomenon. In 1690 and 1720 and, as far back as the Little Ice Age in 1607, there are historical records of waves of tsunami proportions sweeping up the Bristol Channel, causing considerable havoc as they went (Disney, 2005; IMCORE, 2011; Wikipedia, 2014).



(Reproduced from 'The Times', 4th January 2005:11)

Fast forward to the 20th and 21st Centuries, and there also are credible reports of the exceptional nature of the storms that occurred along the south Wales coast in the years 1981, 1984, 1990, 1996, 2008, and 2010 together with the most recent series of storms in January/February 2014 (IMCORE, 2011).

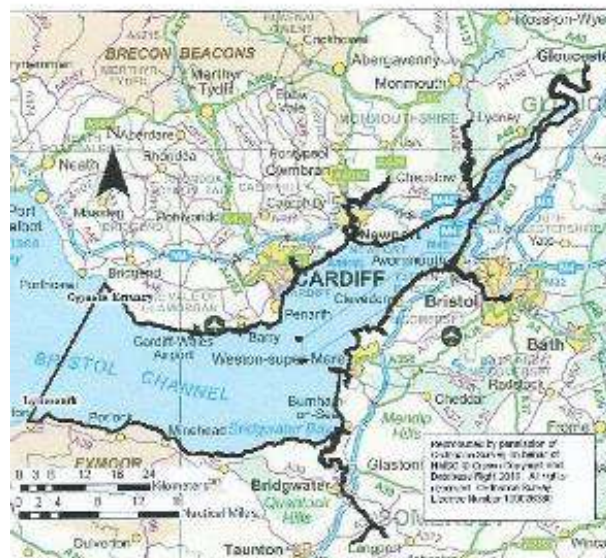
There are also anecdotal accounts from longtime residents of Porthcawl, who recall occasions during the second half of the 20th Century, when the top half of the town was regularly flooded, especially when Spring tides were at their peak. Some even remember occasions when coastal flooding was so bad that rowing boats were required to negotiate the top half of John Street and Well Street!

It is widely known that the Bristol Channel has the second highest tidal range in the world and Porthcawl's propensity for epic tides and storms has been a matter of fact for successive generations of storm-watchers and become an occurrence that the news media and the Internet, are quick to exploit. In what is informally interpreted as a tourist opportunity, when extreme weather conditions hit Porthcawl, crowds gather on the Esplanade. Then, although it is mostly frowned on, younger generations engage in wave dodging, almost as a rite of passage. Older or more cautious citizens, on the other hand, tend to simply watch successive waves crash into the sea wall and/or sea-shore. Inevitably, photographs are taken and images of a storm-tossed Porthcawl litter the Internet, as well as the national and international media as, for example, happened in January 2014. Shots of the familiar huge waves crashing over the Porthcawl's Pier and Lighthouse now even appear to have their own, ongoing slot as a backdrop to the B.B.C. weather forecast!

Notoriety aside, Porthcawl's dramatic weather conditions have a downside. There is a realisation that the geographical and geological configurations that were instrumental to Porthcawl's creation, also render parts of the town like Porthcawl Point and the Eastern Prom more vulnerable to coastal flooding and weather events. That is not to say that coastal flooding and erosion are new threats to this part of south Wales. Far from it. For example, several centuries ago, the medieval town of Kenfig, just north of Porthcawl, was overwhelmed by adverse weather conditions and still lies buried by sand, while the sand dunes at Merthyr Mawr require careful, ongoing management to protect their delicate ecology from damage.

Nowadays, sand seems to be disappearing from Porthcawl's beaches and being drawn back into the Bristol Channel and, locally, concerns about the levels of sand dredging in the Bristol Channel are adding to worries about climate change and coastal flooding. Though there is awareness about these matters at W.A.G. and B.C.B.C levels, it is not enough for many and anxieties about the dangers of climate change in this part of the coastline, and for Porthcawl in particular, are being magnified as a result. To allay these anxieties and for the town to have a future as a seaside destination of choice, to live in or to visit, there appears to be a need to strengthen coastal defences and responsive management of the coastline that clearly meets the challenges of the 21st Century (B.C.B.C. Shoreline Management Plan (S.M.P.), 2014).

Boundary between Inner and Outer Bristol Channel according to the B.C.S.E.G. (O.S. 2010)

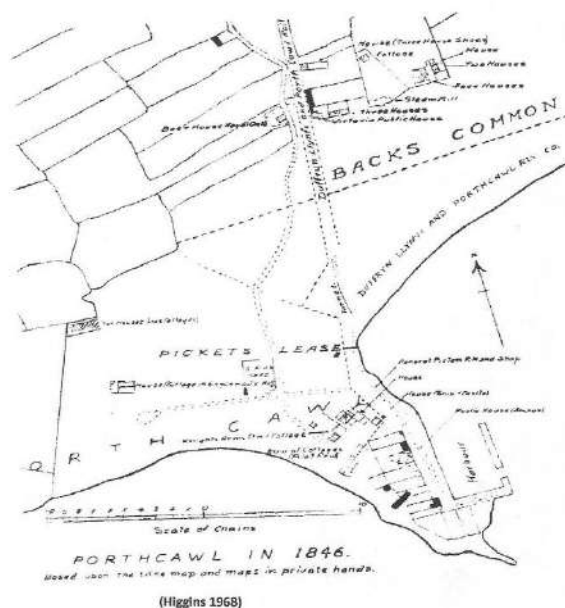


The changing topography of Porthcawl

In contrast to its unchanging geographical and geological foundations, Porthcawl's topography has undergone drastic alteration in the mere 190 years of the town's existence.

Modern Porthcawl presents as an urban conurbation with a relatively compact commercial centre, well-developed roads and residential areas. Yet the built environment of present-day Porthcawl rests on what was, by all reports, an undeveloped landscape with much of the land on which the town is built, once sandy and unenclosed (Higgins, 1968).

Before the advent of Porthcawl Dock and the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway (D.L.P.R.) visitors to the area would have been presented with the villages of Newton and Nottage, separated by only a few miles, together with occasional dwellings such as the well-known Colonel Knight's Cottage that appears to have been a bathing hut for his daughters, and some homes and farmhouses here and there, such as Grove, New Park, Mŵr Hutchwns, South and Shortlands. There was, in addition, a windmill on South Road and another on Newton Down (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).



(Reproduced from 'Newton Nottage and Porthcawl', Higgins, 1968: Appendix)

This landscape was transformed by the opening of Porthcawl Dock and the D.L.P.R. in 1828 or 1829 – the exact date is obscure (James, 1987). Shortly after their arrival, Porthcawl started to take shape as a town and, predictably, in response to the demand for habitable living accommodation for tram-road and harbour workers, buildings sprang up around the Outer Harbour Basin, the southern end of South Road and 3 cottages, eventually to become the Knight's Arms, were built in The Square (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

A large cottage in Esplanade Avenue (next to the present Lorelei Hotel) came later, as did Lias cottage (a forerunner of the Lias Cottages) and a steam mill at the bottom of the present Station Hill. A start was also made on Philadelphia Road but growth, as a rule, was random. As trade grew and Porthcawl Dock prospered, a second generation of workers and their families were drawn to the budding new town, then still called Porth Cawl. Warehouses, shops, hostelries, a succession of pubs and watering holes subsequently proliferated with the result that, by 1847, Porth Cawl was a burgeoning town and recognisable place in its own right (Morgan, 1987).

At that time, the terrain further inland to the, then, Porth Cawl or Pwll Cawl Point, remained undeveloped. Rural in character and mostly made up of common land, the town's hinterland was mainly comprised of Backs Common, Newton Down and Pickets Lease, together with some arable farms growing corn crops and root vegetables such as potatoes and turnips (Higgins, 1968).

The Newton Inclosure Award of 1864

The Newton Inclosure Award of 1864 brought significant changes to this bucolic scene as its passage noticeably altered the topography of Porthcawl and its environs. Representing a springboard in the onward expansion of Porthcawl, the Award, in effect, allowed the urban development of a large parcel of land then deemed to be of virtually no agricultural value, stretching from the present Ancient Briton pub and the Crown Inn in Newton (now a privately-owned Grade II Listed Building facing Newton Green), to the bottom of the present area usually referred to as '*old Porthcawl*' i.e. Victoria Avenue, Mary Street, Suffolk Place, Lewis Place and Westbourne Place together with the northern end of John Street and New Road (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1978).

As well as facilitating a growth spurt for the still rudimentary town of Porthcawl, the Newton Inclosure Award (1864) had the added importance of changing the shape, as well as the size, of Porthcawl. Instead of buildings clustered around the Harbour, developments occurred further afield and the boundaries of the fledgling town expanded inland and along the coastline. Just as significant, the Award also factored in a modicum of town planning into, what had been, the new town's ongoing, but haphazard, development (Higgins, 1968).

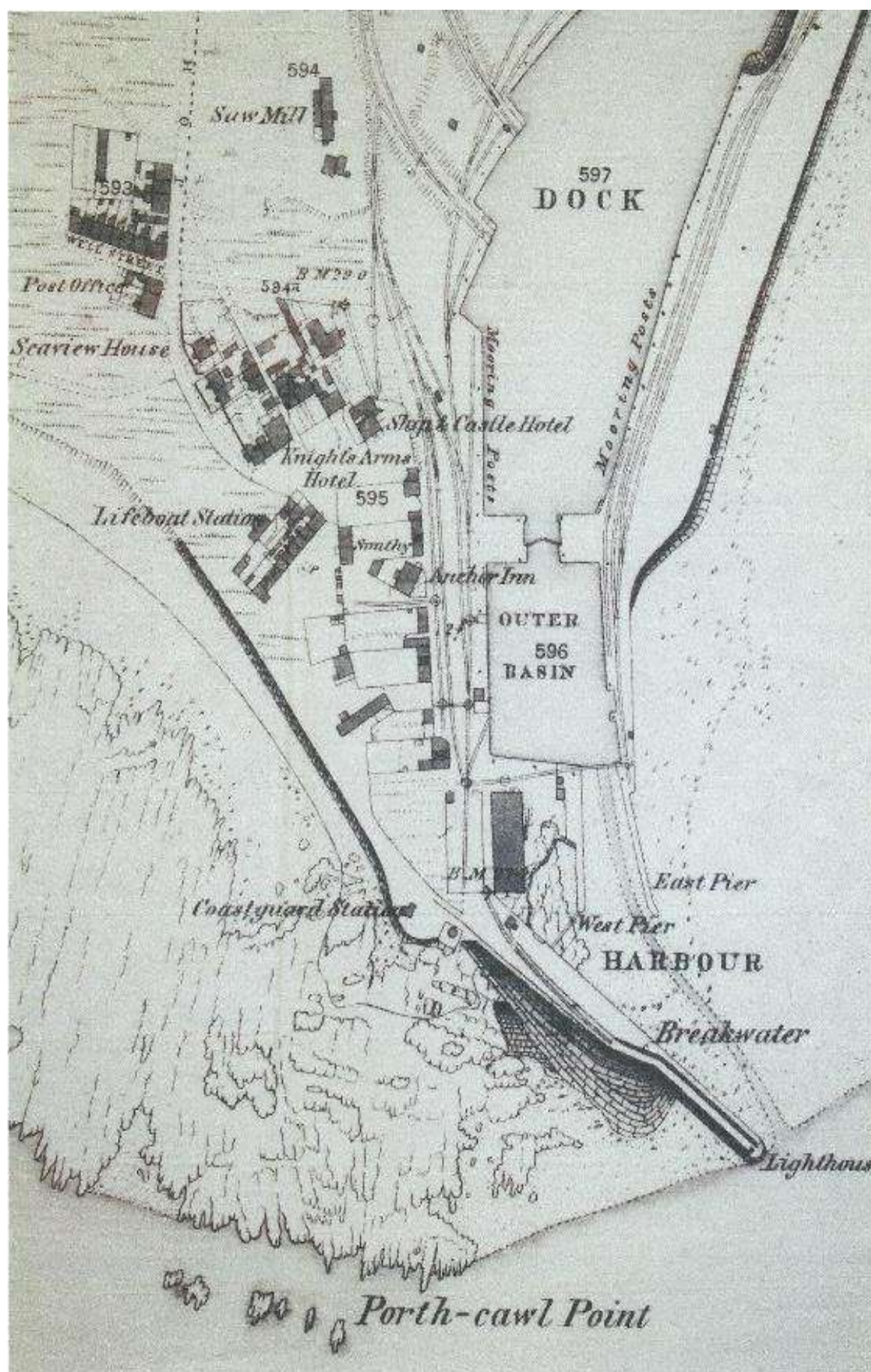
Consequently, between the Newton Inclosure Award of 1864 and the ultimate closure of the port in 1906, new developments mushroomed in Porthcawl and many people, like the Rev. Edward Doddridge Knight, Joseph Lill and George Dement, seized the opportunities inherent in the Award and contributed to this expansion. Having said that, much of the town's growth was down to the vision of James Brogden who, with the active support of his wife, Caroline, put much effort into laying the foundations of modern Porthcawl.

Research has not determined whether or not James or Caroline Brogden were swayed by the ideas of the Progressive movement and new thinking about urban planning that began to emerge towards the end the 19th Century. Possibly they were aware of the debate about the need for better appointed housing and more spacious environments for the working

population that preceded the '*garden city*' movement of the early 1900's. Whatever the truth, James and Caroline Brogden bought large parcels of land like Picketts' Lease and, enthused by the idea of Porthcawl as a seaside resort, had, within a brief period, developed the sea-front by building a wide Esplanade and carriageway, a modern hotel and 2 imposing streets off the Esplanade, Mary Street and Caroline Street, both named after Caroline Brogden, though Caroline Street later became Esplanade Avenue (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1978 & 1987).

Inspired by James and Caroline Brogden, others followed suit and, in response to the demand for habitable dwellings for residents and visitors, house-building continued apace. By the end of the 19th Century, Railway Terrace (now Hillsboro Place), the lower end of Victoria Avenue, part of Church Place and most of Philadelphia Road had all been completed. In the same space of time, more houses were erected in South Road and New Road between the old level crossing on Station Hill and the site of the current Catholic Church. The net result was that, by the beginning of the 20th Century, the nucleus of present-day Porthcawl had been created with the building of, amongst other developments, John Street, up to James Street, Cloth Hall, and Well Street. The Esplanade, Marine and the Porthcawl Hotels were all up and running as were the Comley's, White's and Evans's Temperance Hotels, and many private house-owners were encouraged to provide accommodation for visitors (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1978 & 1987).

Apart from domestic dwellings, hotels and a thriving commercial centre, by 1900 Porthcawl was well into the process of urban consolidation and had acquired the trappings of an established, orderly community in accordance with the accepted commercial, educational, social and religious mores of the day. It had a post office, a doctor, a chemist, an estate agent, a few good shops and a golf club. There were churches and chapels of all denominations together with a National School, and utilities were provided by Porthcawl Gas, Light and Coke Company, with a limited supply of water offered by the Brogdens to residents of their estate and some parts of New Road (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1978 & 1987).



Porthcawl 1884/1885 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)

PART 2

The Extent of Porthcawl's Maritime and Industrial Area

For most of the 19th Century, Porthcawl Dock was the only harbour outlet for the upland's sought after commodity of coal and associated goods, and Porthcawl's initial expansion and prosperity were heavily dependent on the Dock's industrial and maritime trade. That dependency was mirrored throughout inland mid-Glamorgan and, undoubtedly, at an important phase of growth, the port at Porthcawl played a pivotal role in the development, industrialisation and wealth creation for the rest of Glamorgan.

Despite its past historic, economic and urban importance, the Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl has been mostly overlooked by recent generations and subsumed into the town's later transformation into a seaside resort. For instance, apart from little known lanes and byways, the 2 main road entries into Porthcawl converge at Nottage roundabout and a dual carriageway, the Boulevard de Saint Sebastian sur Loire, then leads to Porthcawl town. This main approach to the town actually follows the route of the original tram-road and railway from the Llynfi Valley to Porthcawl Dock but this information is not publicised. There are no signposts indicating that it is a gateway feature and a heritage asset to Porthcawl and tourist information about the old tram-roaders route is non-existent. Road-users are consequently unaware that, in using that particular route, they are retracing the footsteps of the old tram-roaders coming to the end of their daily journeys (James, 1987).

Unfortunately, the failure to acknowledge Porthcawl's heritage assets is a familiar state of affairs although, within Porthcawl's present townscape, the old maritime and industrial part of the town still remains quite a large area. It encompasses Dock Street, Lifeboat Road, The Square, Pilot Row (now the Pier Hotel), Marine Terrace, Hillsboro Place, Hillsboro and Salt Lake car parks, Harbour-side, Cosy Corner and the Eastern Promenade. The old Inner Dock Basin (Hillsboro and Salt Lake car parks) alone is thought to cover 7½ acres, maybe more. All comprised the pioneering industrial and maritime complex servicing the transportation of coal and minerals from the old Glamorgan uplands to the rest of the U.K. and beyond (Higgins, 1968).

More positively, the road layout in that area remains much the same today as when Porthcawl Dock was a vibrant trading port in the 19th Century. It is worth noting, too, that some buildings within that part of town still reflect the mainly Edwardian style of building redolent of the Brogden era although, since the Dock was closed in 1906, there has been some infilling and many structures have been altered or been subject to replacement and decline. Hence, while still big, the old Maritime and Industrial Area lacks any coherence.

Furthermore, while the Harbour remains a place easily recognisable to most people, the term '*Maritime and Industrial Area*' is unfamiliar and not widely used in Porthcawl, almost as though the town has detached itself from the Harbour and its surroundings. Indeed, the term '*Harbour-side*' used at an official level, is often met with hesitation and some bewilderment. Nor can the Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl be readily identified by many of its residents, not even older citizens, even less by visitors. This is not surprising since books, maps, and general information about the town's maritime and industrial past are very scarce and extremely hard to track down, even on the Internet.

Yet, Porthcawl is a coastal town with a resilient maritime tradition. For instance, it has an active Royal National Lifeboat Institution (R.N.L.I.) presence and a well-decorated and respected, R.N.L.I. lifeboat team. In view of this, it is strange that Porthcawl's maritime history, if not the industrial significance of its past, is not acknowledged at the most basic level. As an example, nowhere in Porthcawl is there an information board identifying its maritime area or providing at least a potted maritime and industrial history of the town. In fact, although the Harbour is signposted in places such as John Street, overall, street signage is poor, badly maintained, dirty and sometimes non-existent, a practice hardly befitting the only seaside resort in B.C.B.C. and the third largest conurbation in the county.

This report will now proceed to outline events pertinent to Porthcawl's maritime and industrial past and provide a characterisation of the Harbour-side area.

Porthcawl Harbour-side defined

In this document, the term '*Harbour-side*' will be used to denote the present Porthcawl Harbour together with the structures and buildings in its near vicinity. Hillsboro and Salt Lake car parks together with the Eastern Promenade, which are situated on the site of the old Inner Dock Basin, will be dealt with separately later in the report.

Harbour-side comes within Porthcawl's Conservation area and, as such, is subject to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations, 2012. As it is, the boundaries of the town's Conservation area extend westwards as far as the Seabank Hotel on the Esplanade, northwards to the Porthcawl Hotel and eastwards to include Harbour-side itself. The Bristol Channel lies to the south (B.C.B.C., 2011).

The historic Porthcawl Harbour and its surroundings, has developed incrementally over a period of 190 years, and this particular part of Porthcawl owes its existence to a remarkable series of Acts of Parliament passed between 1825 and 1914. That volume of legislation impacted directly on the workings of Porthcawl Dock and its landward perimeter, and manifested itself in a cluster of structures and buildings that have endured over time, namely the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier (the Harbour), the Breakwater (aka the Pier), Porthcawl Lighthouse, the Old Customs House, the Pilot Look-out Tower, the Jennings Warehouse and Cosy Corner. In this report, the characterisation of Porthcawl Harbour and the old Maritime and Industrial Area will deal with the Harbour-side area in its entirety and consider the above structures/buildings in order. Other, more recent, buildings namely the R.N.L.I. station and the Harbour-master's office have also been alluded to.

Most of the above represent some of the earliest remaining structures and buildings in Porthcawl, albeit with some modifications, and the majority are Grade II Listed Buildings and Structures. They are valued separately, as well as collectively, as they have a special importance to the history and development of Porthcawl.

Railways and Transport

It is impossible to throw light on Porthcawl's continuum of growth from a 19th Century port to a 20th Century holiday destination, without first grasping the importance that transport has played in the town's rapidly changing environment. Porthcawl Dock was in the vanguard of interactive transport systems and legislation was the prerequisite to the introduction of the initial tram-road and its successor, the railway. That said, what transpired during the 19th Century and early 20th Century, amounted to a maze of complicated and confusing new railway enterprises, takeovers and legislation relating to Porthcawl, that is difficult to disentangle

The Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway

Probably the best known piece of legislation relating to the, then, Porth Cawl Point and, arguably, the basis on which Porthcawl is founded, was the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway Act which received its Royal Assent on 10th June 1825 (D.L.P.R. (Act) 1825). **(Please note: the Anglicised spelling of Dyffryn and Llynfi is retained throughout this report (when the titles of Acts of Parliament or the names of companies in which it occurs are quoted)).**

The D.L.P.R. Act (1825) was a precursor to the creation of the D.L.P.R. The Act's preamble states that its purpose was for the making and maintaining a railway or tram-road for the passage of wagons from a place called Dyffryn Llynfi in the parish of Llangynwyd in the Llynfi Valley, to Porth Cawl Point in the parish of Newton Nottage (Higgins, 1968).

The preamble to the D.L.P.R. Act (1825) had other repercussions as it allowed for extending and improving the bay at Porth Cawl Point by the erection of a pier, jetty or otherwise. Looking at Porthcawl Harbour today, it is hard to appreciate the true significance of this clause as the original Porthcawl Dock bears little resemblance to the present day version, especially since Porthcawl Harbour has been upgraded. Nevertheless, from the very outset, Porthcawl's Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier were integral to the route of the original D.L.P.R. in 1825 (Higgins, 1968).

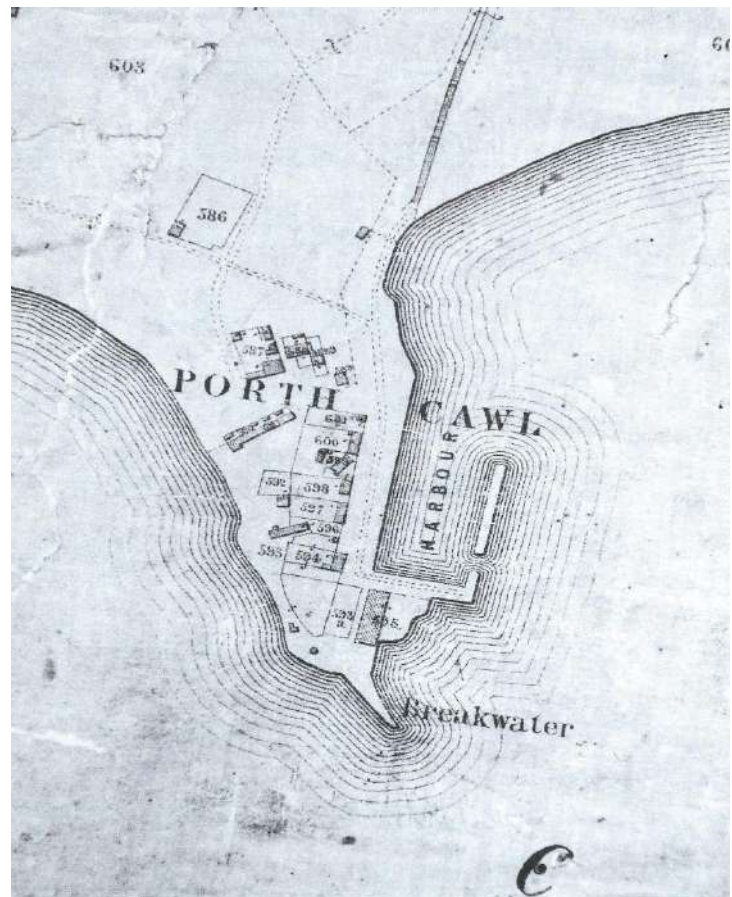
Ostensibly, the venture started out well. The D.L.P.R. Act (1825) had been long anticipated and had gained influential backing. The D.L.P.R. also had £40,000 available - a large sum of money for that time - as seed capital investment, raised beforehand by the sale of widely distributed shares, some being bought by luminaries of the day such as Disraeli. Moreover, as well as the D.L.P.R. having a management committee of 12 people, the tram-road itself was planned by John Hodgkinson of Newport, who had the supposed advantage of prior experience constructing other tram-roads elsewhere in south Wales (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).



Commemorative Plaque of the D.L.P.R.



Emblem of the D.L.P.R. (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)



Porthcawl Harbour in 1846 (Reproduced from 'Around Porthcawl Newton and Nottage', Morgan, 1996:20)



Map showing route of the D.L.P.R.
Map of Photo. B. James

Map showing the route of the D.L.P.R. (Reproduced from James, 1987, '1825 D.L.P.R. 1861', 1987, inside cover)

The Origins of the Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier

The D.L.P.R. and the Bristol Channel

Porthcawl Dock was built in the late Georgian period and, accordingly, reflects the ideas and notions of that era together with its methods of building and engineering. Given its exposed position and the inclement weather it has experienced over the past 190 years, it is a tribute to the skill and industry of our forebears that the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier have endured until the present day.

Unsurprisingly, the late Georgian construction and engineering trade did not have the same access to mechanised labour or heavy machinery such as exists today. Even so, it is known that Porthcawl Dock took only 3 years to build between 1825 and 1828, although doubt exists about the precise date when the new port at Porth Cawl Point opened. Some sources claim that the first large vessel to enter Porthcawl Dock was the ‘*William and Mary*’ sailing from Newport to Neath with a cargo of iron ore, which took refuge in the unfinished port on 18th April 1828. The report states that the Dock would be ready to receive trading vessels in the following May (James, 1987). Other press reports state that Porthcawl Dock welcomed its first ship in February, 1828:

The Tom Pipes of Neath, Wm. Howell, master was the first vessel to enter the new harbour of Porth Cawl, in this county, where she arrived on the first inst. With a cargo of slates from Carnarvon, and after discharging, took in fresh freight at the above port.

From ‘*The Cambrian*’, 16th February 1828:3

Whatever the truth, the original, possibly incomplete, Porthcawl Dock, was operational by 1830 as it was first listed in the ‘*The Cambrian*’ dated 2nd July, 1830 (James, 1987).

Basically, Porthcawl Dock was a small tidal basin built in the natural shelter of Porth Cawl Point. It consisted of a rectangle area of water with walls made out of huge blocks of stone that had been quarried locally. The harbour was enclosed by a short wall to the north, another short wall was added to the headland in the south, and there was an eastern wall

with a gap through which ships came and went (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987; James, 1987).

In accordance with the D.L.P.R. Act (1825), the construction of what is now the Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier was carried out in tandem with the construction of the rest of the D.L.P.R. (Higgins, 1968). Significantly, while Porthcawl Dock was conceived as an integral part of the D.L.P.R., its architects seemingly viewed the port as no more than just another holding area or stop-off before the movement of goods into the Bristol Channel. Crucially, although adverse weather had affected the supply chain and impaired the actual construction and building of the tram-road, no special thought or provision seems to have been factored into the building of the new Dock as a concession to its maritime location (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).

In the early 19th Century, this mindset was understandable as cavalier attitudes towards maritime concerns were commonplace. Society had scant regard for the dangers facing ships and their crews when transporting cargoes in the Bristol Channel or, for that matter, seafaring conditions generally. Then, as now, the Bristol Channel or the ‘*Severn Sea*’, as it was often called in the 18th and 19th Centuries, was a perceived gateway to western oceans and trade and, particularly in the days of sail, one of the busiest and most important of the U.K.’s waterways.

It is also a particularly dangerous waterway and, even in the 21st Century, the Bristol Channel is still approached with caution by experienced sailors. This is partly because it opens out on to the deep, heavy, rolling seas of the Atlantic Ocean with waves that have gained strength and momentum having travelled over 2,500 unbroken miles from the Newfoundland coast. The Bristol Channel is also a harder waterway to leave than to enter, mainly due to its prevailing westerly or south-westerly winds that, in severe gales, ensure that the Welsh coast is the lee shore, making navigation difficult, especially for sailing ships. And, as it is a relatively narrow waterway, the Bristol Channel’s extreme tidal range ensures that it has a much swifter tidal rate of flow than is usual elsewhere in the UK. Even in benign weather conditions, strong, fast-moving tides can arise without warning, adding further difficulties to navigation (Smith, 1991).

As if these are not problems enough, the vast, ever-present tidal flow that sweeps masses of mud, sand and sediment down the Bristol Channel creates precarious sandbanks making navigation even more problematic. Added to which, although the Welsh coast is marginally less daunting than that of Devon's, there are notorious '*black spots*' in the Bristol Channel that, near Porthcawl, are Scarweather Sands, Nash Point, Sker Point and the Tusker Rocks (Smith, 1991).

Understandable whilst it all may have been, the failure to realise or acknowledge such material dangers and adversities in both the design and construction of Porthcawl's new port, soon made itself felt and was to have a lasting bearing on the performance and development of Porthcawl Dock. Once opened, the Dock was quickly found wanting in operational terms. Vessels and their crews, having already negotiated ferocious gales in a hazardous Bristol Channel, then had to contend with Nash Point, the vicious two-pronged Sker Point, Scarweather Sandbanks and the Tusker Rocks, all of which made Porthcawl a difficult port to approach, or to enter and leave. Add to these problems, an absence of river shelter and incomplete harbour walls that left shipping exposed to the frequent Bristol Channel storms and it was, perhaps, inevitable that Porthcawl soon acquired a reputation as a fair weather port. As a result, trade failed to reach hoped-for levels which had a correspondingly negative impact on profits and dividends (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).

The Railways

This initial failure to comprehend the perilous nature of maritime trade in the Bristol Channel was critical to the output of Porthcawl Dock. Between 1829 until the Brogden family's arrival on the scene in 1864, there were piecemeal attempts at improving Porthcawl Dock's productivity and profit-making ability, which included further enabling legislation in the form of the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway Act (1829), and the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway Act (1840) (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).

Meanwhile, the U.K. fell victim to Railway Mania which meant that railway transport was

undergoing its own metamorphosis. Mid-Glamorgan became a microcosm of what was happening in the U.K. at large, with broad gauge railway tracks replacing narrow gauge, steam power replacing horse-power and traction, and new railway lines and junctions being created at a feverish rate. One company takeover followed another, for example the D.L.P.R. merged with the Llynvi Valley Railway Company in 1847. It, in turn amalgamated with the Ogmore Valley Railway Company and became the Llynvi and Ogmore Railway Company in 1866 (Higgins, 1968).

All told, the situation must have been bafflingly disruptive for everyone on the frontline actually working in Porthcawl Dock, literally battling the elements, let alone the hapless mariners trying to wrestle with the problems of transporting heavy cargoes up and down the Bristol Channel. Amazingly, since the opening of the D.L.P.R. in 1828 or 1829, horse-drawn trams had continued to make 5 regular trips every day, with each journey taking 6 hours travelling from Caerau at the top of the Llynfi Valley to the port at Porthcawl (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987).

The Brogdens

The Brogden family came on the scene in 1864 and their arrival made a real difference to Porthcawl Dock. Having established themselves in the Ogmore Valley, the Brogdens instigated the Llynvi and Ogmore Railways Act (1864) and, shortly after, the Llynvi Valley and Ogmore Valley Railways Amalgamation Act (1866) which enabled them to create a new railway, the Llynvi and Ogmore Railway Company.

Just before then, the Brogdens had embarked upon a vast expansion of Porthcawl Dock and transformation of the Outer Harbour Basin by constructing an entrance in its northern wall (now a bridge to the Eastern Prom) into a new Inner Dock Basin. The original entrance to the Outer Harbour Basin in its eastern wall was blocked up and a new one created in the shelter of a greatly extended Breakwater (aka the Pier). There were other improvements such as the building of a wooden jetty, new coal chutes and railway sidings. As a result, on the unveiling of the new Porthcawl Dock complex in 1867, profits and productivity

improved and matters looked to be on the up for the port of Porthcawl (Higgins, 1968).

Thereafter, Porthcawl Dock produced a miasma of fluctuating trading figures due, in part, to changes and developments in the iron industry. Initially, an increase in the coal trade took up the resultant slack in iron exports with shipments of coal reaching record levels in 1892. However, that led to an over-reliance on the coal trade and was to prove the port's eventual undoing as, at the very end of the 19th Century, coal exports from Porthcawl fell away (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1996).

The opening of new docks in Barry in 1889 and Port Talbot in 1898 augured the end for Porthcawl Dock. Both ports were larger, deeper and more up-to-date and, after they opened, the maritime trade in Porthcawl Dock that, by now, was almost totally dependent on the coal trade, went elsewhere. For instance, only 2767 tons of shipping, mostly coal, was handled in 1903 (Higgins, 1968). The formal closure of Porthcawl Dock followed in 1906, and, in accordance with, the Great Western Railway (G.W.R.) Act (1913), and the Porthcawl Urban District Council (P.U.D.C.) Act (1914), G.W.R. officially relinquished Porthcawl as a working port and the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier became the responsibility of P.U.D.C.

The Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier in the 20th Century

In the passage of time since that legislation, the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier remained *in situ* and the Outer Harbour Basin continued to receive vessels, usually of the fishing and pleasure kind, throughout the rest of the 20th Century. The only exception was from the outbreak of World War II (WWII) and for a period of 14 years after it ended in 1945, when Porthcawl Harbour again took on a working role as it became the base for a branch of the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.) Air Sea Rescue Service, which was based there until 23rd March 1959 (Mansley, 1994).

After the departure of the R.A.F. Air Sea Rescue Service, the Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier re-entered a quiet phase. Apart from minor remedial work and necessary maintenance, nothing of importance happened. It was in the final decades of the 20th Century, that the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier found themselves in the spotlight again as they became the focus of successive ideas revolving around the regeneration of Porthcawl, and Harbour-side and the site of the old Inner Dock Basin in particular.



Porthcawl Harbour-side, circa early 1930s (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)



Porthcawl Harbour, circa 1965 (Reproduced from an old postcard of Porthcawl Harbour)



Porthcawl Harbour circa 1965 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)



Porthcawl Harbour, circa 1965 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)

The Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier Today



Porthcawl Harbour, October 2014

These days, Porthcawl's Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier form the centre-piece of Harbour-side and the town's old Maritime and Industrial Area. In the past 2 years, the whole area has undergone a large-scale, £3.2 million programme of refurbishment and upgrading in a project backed by the European Union (E.U.), and funded by grants from Coastal Tourism led by Visit Wales, the Welsh Government and European Regional Development Fund. The project aims to develop and promote the Welsh coast as a place for water-sport activities. In particular, it intends to establish a Watersports Centre of Excellence in the Swansea Bay area to which Porthcawl belongs (B.C.B.C., 2014).

This refurbishment has also been the cue for the Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier to be re-named a marina by B.C.B.C., although for the sake of continuity and for the purposes of this report, they will continue to be referred to as the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier.

The Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier were listed on 17th February 1998 and have a CADW building ID of 19363. They rank as some of the oldest structures in Porthcawl, have a Grade II Listing and are regarded as very important historical markers in the town of Porthcawl.

Although the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier have taken on a new lease of life since their restoration, it remains clear where alterations have been made during their development. Taken together, the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier do really tell a story, especially at low water. For example, the original regularly-shaped limestone blocks remain intact on the south and west walls of the Outer Harbour Basin, with the addition of later rock-face and stone repairs. The northern wall, which was the location of the entrance to the old Inner Dock Basin, is of rock-face stone, and there is a visible infill where the lock gates into the Inner Dock Basin were bricked up circa 1926. Other features exist like the original steps at the north-west corner with 2 steps made out of each stone block, a buttress, culverts, and a blocked up arch on the west wall. The eastern seawall has decorative stones on its rock-faced seaward side with a raised parapet and the West Pier in front of the Jennings Warehouse is made out of large dressed blocks (Morgan, 1996; British Listed Buildings, 1998).

Whilst the Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier are undoubted heritage assets, they constitute many other things to the community of Porthcawl and to its visitors. Apart from performing the practical task of enclosing the Harbour and acting as landmarks, they are gateway features offering legibility for people arriving by sea and for those approaching Harbour-side from the Eastern Promenade and the Esplanade.

They both provide a quality and a sense of place to Harbour-side as well as acting as an obvious focal point for Porthcawl. Unless the weather is very bad, clusters of people can be found around the edge of the Harbour watching people *'messaging about in boats'*. The Harbour is also somewhere of interest to take visitors to the town, and it is fairly commonplace to see families out together, looking at the various comings and goings and boats moored in the Outer Harbour Basin with children asking questions and having things explained to them.



Porthcawl Harbour gate, March 2015

Importantly, as it is a designated leisure port, the Outer Harbour Basin has been newly kitted out with good-looking, practical walkways and pontoons catering for a mix of leisure, commercial and visiting vessels to a maximum of 70 berths (B.C.B.C., 2014).

When this major refit was ongoing in Porthcawl Harbour, it attracted a lot of interest in the town as it entailed the dredging of the Outer Harbour Basin to attain a permanent depth of seawater for the pontoons and boats, and also involved the fitting of very big new lock gates. The lock gates themselves are bespoke, and have been designed to ease the difficulties of entry and exit caused by the excessive tides and high tidal range specific to this part of the Bristol Channel. All told, the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier have been greatly smartened up and provided everyone with quite a show in the process. Sadly, the area is spoilt only by the appearance of a very large 2 storey container which presently acts as the Harbour-master's office.



Harbour-master's office on an overcast day, July 2015



Porthcawl Harbour, March 2015

The Breakwater in Porthcawl (aka the Pier)



THE BREAKWATER NEARING COMPLETION c1865 ZZZ03624
(Courtesy of Julia David/Porthcawl Museum and Historical Society)

Along with the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, the Porthcawl Breakwater (locally known and referred to as the Pier), has evolved over a period of almost 190 years. In truncated form, the Pier was first constructed in 1825, simultaneously to the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier. Then, the Pier was described as a minor wall added to the existing headland in order to create an effective tidal basin for the docking of vessels (James, 1987).

In realistic terms, the Pier failed in its task of providing adequate shelter for ships entering and exiting the original harbour entrance in the Outer Harbour Basin's eastern wall. Recommendations to rebuild part of the wall were made as early as 1843, but it was not until the 1860's, with Brogden family involvement in Porthcawl Dock, and the ensuing Llynvi and Ogmore Railways Act (1864), that a massive extension of 100 yards (91.4 metres) was added to the Pier, and the much-needed modification was carried out (Higgins, 1968; James, 1987; Morgan, 1987; Historic Wales Report, 1998).

When the Pier was eventually extended in 1865, the extension was constructed of very large dressed stone blocks on a wooden frame with wood reputedly from the Forest of Dean interspersed with smaller stone and other materials. In the 150 years since then, the Pier has seen much action and, over time, it appears materials like brick and concrete have been used for general repairs (Historic Wales Report, 1998; British Listed Buildings, 1998).

Given the harsh weather it is continually subjected to, it is hardly surprising that the Pier has needed large-scale repairs periodically. For example, in 1880 there was an incident when the strength of the wind was so great that it caused a crane on which 4 men were working, to blow into the sea, seriously injuring 1 man while another 3 had to be rescued from the water. In another weather event in 1880 (it is not known whether it was the same storm) the wind was so strong that the sea washed hundreds of tons of stone out of the south-east portion of the Pier, to the extent that the tide swept through one side of the Pier to the other and its timber framework '*...stood as if it was of open work...*' (David, 2006:42).

The Pier Today



The Pier, October 2014

The present Pier is a formidable, long-armed breakwater stretching roughly east to west from the headland at Porth Cawl Point into the sea. In company with the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, it is seen as a significant milestone in Porthcawl's development and was listed on 17th February 1998, the same time as the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier. In addition to being a Grade II Listed Structure, CADW Building ID 19362, the Pier is perceived to be a substantially surviving heritage asset dating from Porthcawl's main period of activity as a 19th Century maritime trading port.

Nowadays, the Pier is an amenity space and a popular venue for all ages in Porthcawl. It is frequently used for sea-water fishing, a vantage point for viewing and photography, or simply having a stroll on a warm summer's day. Having said that, in the winter and when it is stormy, the Pier is not always a safe destination due to the real risk of being swept away by overtopping waves. In fact, there have been several incidents and fatalities when people have been swept into the sea. For example, during WWII, a huge wave took the lives of an American soldier and his girlfriend, Hilda Cull (Mansley, 1994). And, in 2009, a young boy, Shady Reed, suffered a similar fate.

The seascape from the whole of the top tier of the Pier is particularly outstanding. Although less often now than the recent past, schools of porpoises can be seen swimming around Tusker Rocks heralding fine weather.

Occasionally, fishing smacks or, even rarer, sailing boats can be spotted. In past summers, the historic ship the *'Waverley'* used to dock at the Pier before sailing along the Bristol Channel, gathering onlookers as passengers embarked and disembarked. In a welcome development for the summer of 2015, the *'Balmoral'* has begun calling at Porthcawl Pier adding further interest.

To the east of the Pier, Ogmore-by-Sea can be seen and, when visibility is good, Dunraven and the Lias Cliffs, together with the Trinity House lighthouses at Nash Point and Marcross, are visible. The North Devon coast is southwards and the curve of Swansea Bay is westwards. Nearer to home, the far end of the Pier offers especially good panoramic views to the north of Newton Down and Porthcawl Sands (aka Coney Beach) and the funfair.

The Pier's landward side faces the Outer Harbour Basin. Structurally, the Pier is 3-tiered and, in contemporary Porthcawl, it functions as an effective sea wall and windbreak for the Slip and the rest of Harbour-side. Its main quay is made of stone blocks patched with concrete surface material covering an uneven original stone quay surface. The top tier of the Pier has no safety rails, is slightly raised in the centre and is reached via a flight of stone steps from the entrance to Harbour-side from the Esplanade, but these also have no safety rails, which is an important omission in rough weather. The seaward end section of the Pier has a concrete surface and, predictably, given its exposed

position, is rather weather-beaten in appearance.

At the seaward end of the Pier, there is another flight of stone steps, again without safety rails, which leads from the top tier of the Pier to its second tier and, ultimately, to Porthcawl Lighthouse at the very end of the Pier. There is also a short flight of stone steps with railings that does not appear to have any real purpose. Presumably, it was originally built to ease the embarkation and disembarkation of any ships anchored at the jetty, and dates from the days when the Pier was extended in 1867, and ships rode higher in the water (Historic Wales Report, 1998; British Listed Buildings, 1998).

On the seaward side of the Pier, the wall rises at roughly a 45° angle. There are no tiers on this side of the Pier but there is a steep slope of massive, roughly hewn, mortared boulders surrounded by 2 vertical courses of giant dressed blocks. A concrete walkway appears to enclose the structure and steps rise to a single width wall consisting of large stone blocks at its base and smaller stone blocks at the top (Historic Wales Report 1998; British Listed Buildings, 1998).

The second ramped and battered tier of the Pier has huge stone blocks but, apart from a few lifelines attached to the wall, there are no safety features such as grab rails which, given Porthcawl's capacity for storm-force winds and the propensity for waves to overtop the Pier, is another important safety issue.

At the beginning of the second tier of the Pier, a small plaque commemorating the D.L.P.R. is incorporated into the wall, below which is a surviving section of the D.L.P.R. tram-road embedded in the stone surface of the Pier. Incredibly, in view of the D.L.P.R.'s relevance to Porthcawl's inception and to the rest of the mid-Glamorgan area, this short and aged section of rail appears to be one of the very few reminders of the D.L.P.R. tram-road or any other of its railway successors, here at its point of origin or, for that matter, anywhere else in Porthcawl.



The seaward side of the Pier, March 2015

The Slip



The Slip, March 2015

The Slip deserves special mention although, officially, it fulfils the function of being the bottom tier of the landward side of the Pier and so shares the same Grade II Listed Building status as the Pier. In reality, it is more complicated than that as, in Porthcawl, the Slip has an independent identity of its own with a separate, similarly historic significance as the nearby Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, the Pier itself, Porthcawl Lighthouse and the Jennings Warehouse. Accordingly, many would regard the Slip as a landmark feature, a heritage asset and an amenity space in its own right.

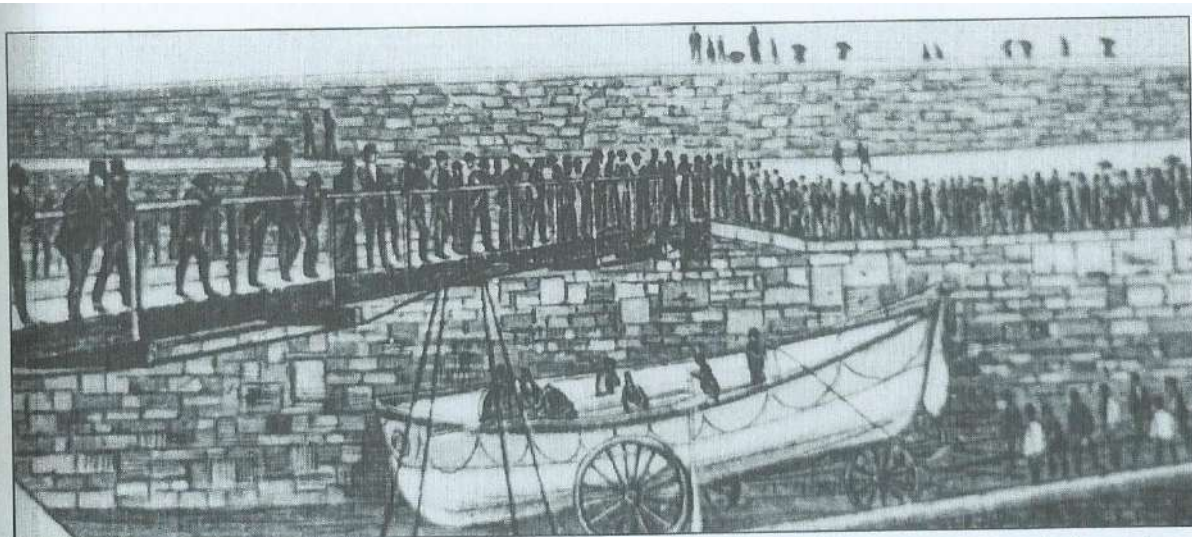
In appearance, the Slip is a long, wedge-shaped structure that abuts the 2nd tier of the Pier. Records indicate that it was constructed, if not at the same time as the Outer Harbour Basin, then very soon after, as the Slip features in the Harbour-master's records of 1830 (James, 1987).

Later in the 19th Century, the Slip was utilised as a launching pad of Porthcawl's first R.N.L.I. lifeboat, '*Good Deliverance*', which saw service between 1860 until 1872. This lifeboat was followed by the '*Chafyn Grove*' between 1872 and 1887, and its successor '*The Speedwell*', which was in service between 1887 until 1902, when the R.L.N.I. lifeboat station in Porthcawl was closed.

Interestingly, old photographs reveal that the Slip had an iron bridge that ran from the old, now demolished, wooden jetty on the eastern side of the Harbour to the 2nd tier of the Pier. Research has not yet unearthed the date of the walkway's removal, but it appears in a photograph taken in the 1930's so it was still in position at that point in time (see page 21).

It is known that the bridge or walkway prevented the launch of tall vessels so it was possibly removed during WWII. It is also known that the original Slip was much shorter and steeper than today's version. During WWII, it seems that the Slip had to be widened and lengthened and its slope eased so that it could be used to launch R.A.F. Air Sea rescue boats based in Porthcawl for the rescue of ditched aircraft and their crews. Witnesses have related that this was done by simply layering bags of sand and cement to the required shape and allowing successive incoming tides to do the work of setting it into concrete. In fact, the outline of those bags of sand and cement are still visible today.

Since 1945, the bridge has not been replaced and the Slip still retains the longer, more gradually sloping gradient that it acquired during WWII, though it is known that concrete reinforcement was added to the seaward end of the Slip sometime in the 1970's. Presently, to the naked eye at least, the surface of the Slip appears to be wholly constructed of concrete.



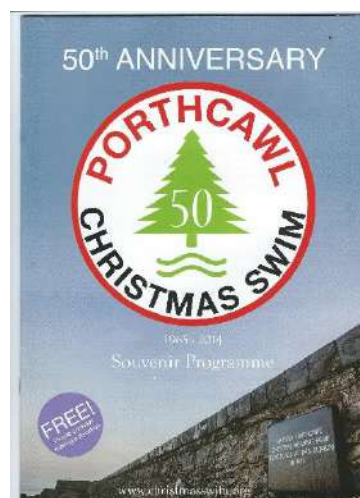
Prior to the formation of the Coastguards, surveillance along the coast was carried out by a 'Coast Waiter and Searcher'. Concerned with the number of shipwrecks and consequent loss of life that was occurring in the area, Mr Saunders of Newton, the Coast Waiter and Searcher at that time, wrote to both the Revd Robert Knight, Newton, and Colonel Knight, Tythegston, on 28 August 1815. His was a plea for a life saving boat to work up to four or five miles off-shore from Porthcawl. Following recent wrecks, the cause was taken up by the reverend gentleman who opened a fund in 1821 to purchase such a lifeboat, but nothing ensued. It took another disaster on 23 October 1859, when a boat was lost with all hands, to resurrect the matter. The RNLI Inspector recommended the purchase of a suitable craft and on 29 April 1860, the six-oared *Good Deliverance* lifeboat was inaugurated. This craft saw service from 1860 until 1872 to be followed by the *Chafyn Grove* (1872-87) and the *Speedwell* (1887-1902). This etching of the launching of the lifeboat at Porthcawl, also shows the bridge over the slipway. The bridge, which restricted launching at high water, was constructed in 1879 by the Dock Company.

(Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)

Worth mentioning is the almost covert role that the Slip had in the not so distant past, when it was adopted as an informal swimming-pool. A hardy few still use the Slip for swimming, although not many own up to it these days as the cleanliness and water quality around that part of the Harbour cannot be guaranteed!

Despite its flaws, many Porthcawl's residents brought up here between the wars and the aftermath of WWII, have fond memories of the Slip. Back then, when the tide was in and the water not too choppy, it was the source of a summer's evening entertainment. More daring individuals used to put on a show tombstoning and diving into the water covering the Slip and, sometimes, if they were good enough or clowned around enough, individuals even drew applause from the watching crowd! The ritual fell into disuse in the 1970's, after a tragic accident left a teenager with life-changing injuries.

The Slip was also the venue for Porthcawl's first Christmas Morning swim in 1965, and a plaque recording the date, is embedded in a wall nearby. The annual Porthcawl Christmas morning swim is still going strong but now at the safer venue of Sandy Bay, east of Coney Beach.



Christmas Morning Swim programme 2014 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Christmas Morning Swim Committee)

The Slip Today

Today, the Slip retains a very positive role and place in Porthcawl's community as a gathering place and a robust, hardworking area of Harbour-side. This is largely due to the fact that the R.N.L.I. Inshore Rescue Station was re-established in Porthcawl in 1965 being temporarily housed in a lean-to shelter at the side of the Jennings Warehouse. In January 1996, the Porthcawl R.N.L.I. took up residence in a permanent, purpose-built Lifeboat Station situated at the top of the Slip. While it is a comparatively new build, the Lifeboat Station is of a traditional appearance and has been successfully designed to blend in with the surrounding buildings in its Harbour-side setting.

In the case of the Slip, the wheel appears to have come full circle. These days, it continues to re-enact its vital historic role and official function as the launch-pad of the R.N.L.I. lifeboats, presently a D class '*Jean Ryall*' and the Atlantic 85 '*Rose of the Shires*'. In fact, when R.N.L.I. crews are training or, more dramatically, are called out on a rescue mission – and it is a very busy R.N.L.I. station -- the Slip often draws a watchful audience looking on at any lifeboat manoeuvres that the R.N.L.I. crews are engaged in.



The R.N.L.I. Lifeboat station, March 2015

The Porthcawl Lighthouse



The Lighthouse under repair, 1931 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C)

When the new port of Porthcawl came into service in the first half of the 19th Century, shipping was a highly precarious, largely unregulated trade, mostly carried out under sail. Admiralty charts had only made an appearance in 1801 and, realistically, there were few navigational aids and/or charts available, so navigation was often governed by the tide, the wind and the stars. Few lighthouses were in existence and there was only a smattering of lightships around the U.K. coastline. Here, in the Bristol Channel early in the 19th Century, there was a lighthouse at Flat Head on Holm Island, built in 1737 and another lighthouse at Mumbles Head, erected in 1794. Lundy Island lighthouse came into being in 1820, together with the lighthouse at Braunton, and Burnham's lighthouse-on-legs arrived in 1829. There was also what constitutes as another lighthouse, in the form of lights kept burning '*... like twinkling stars...*' by the priests in Ilfracombe, North Devon (Smith, 1991: 10).

Importantly for Porthcawl, despite the notoriety of the treacherous coastline near to Porth Cawl Point and the lethal Tusker Rocks, Nash Sands, Sker Point and Scarweather, there were no lighthouses near to Porthcawl Dock when it opened in 1828/1829 and hardly any lightships. Those that came into service did so in the second half of the 19th Century, for

example, the English and Welsh Grounds, Scarweather and Breaksea (Smith, 1991).

Porthcawl's unusual Lighthouse made its appearance in 1866, shortly after the Pier was extended and, although it was designed to improve facilities at Porthcawl Dock, it also signified the gradual shift towards ensuring greater levels of safety at sea throughout the 19th Century. Before then, the Bristol Channel had witnessed a successive loss of vessels such as the '*Delfin*' in 1813 and the '*Frolic*' in 1830 which, together with the accompanying loss of life, forced the reluctant authorities to recognize the Bristol Channel to be the perilous waterway that it is. In the meantime, in the period between the opening of Porthcawl Dock in 1828/29 and the installation of the Porthcawl Lighthouse in 1866, the Harbour-master at Porthcawl, Mr. Fitzmaurice, urged the authorities at Trinity House to allow him to '*...exhibit a light under his porch...*' as a safety measure (James, 1987:73). Whilst he was unsuccessful in his attempts for Porthcawl, the 2 Trinity House lighthouses built at Nash Point and St Donats in 1832, were largely down to Mr. Fitzmaurice's efforts (James, 1987).

Until its conversion to North Sea gas in 1974 and then to electricity in 1997, Porthcawl Lighthouse was the last coal-powered lighthouse in the U.K. Aside from its unusual size and position, the Lighthouse is of particular interest as it is manufactured out of cast iron and is one of only 2 surviving cast iron lighthouses in the U.K., the other being situated further west along the Bristol Channel coastline at Whitford Point, near Llanelli, Carmarthenshire (British Listed Buildings, 1991; Morgan, 1996; Historic Wales Report, 1998; B.C.B.C., 2012).

The Porthcawl Lighthouse Today



The Lighthouse, March 2015

Porthcawl's iconic Lighthouse is prominently situated at the end of Porthcawl's equally iconic Pier, which is itself positioned at the far eastern end of Swansea Bay. The Lighthouse is ranked as a Grade II Listed Structure, CADW Building ID 11370, and was granted listed status on 15th August 1991, shortly before the Outer Harbour Basin, West Pier and the Pier. It is hexagonal in shape and, as a lighthouse, it is comparatively small as it only stands at 9m (30') high. B.C.B.C. has responsibility for running the Lighthouse and, although it is closed to the public, the structure is accessible to sightseers by walking along either the top or second tier of the Pier.

The structure of the Lighthouse has a black band painted around its base and its lantern dome is white and has a focal plane of 10m (34') continuous light, white over the entrance channel and red or green to the sides (British Listed Buildings, 1991; Morgan, 1996; Historic Wales Report, 1998).

Given the outlying position of the Porthcawl Lighthouse in the Bristol Channel and the continual battering it receives from ferocious storms and high winds, it is not surprising that the Lighthouse has had to undergo periodic overhaul and substantial repairs in order to remain functional. Following storm damage in 1911, the Lighthouse required a replacement

lantern, while in 1931 it needed further major repairs. It is also understood that it required more remedial work sometime during the 1970's (Morgan, 1996).

Recently, alongside restoration work being carried out on the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, Porthcawl Lighthouse underwent its own programme of renovation, repair and repainting that was eventually completed at the end of January 2013. Apart from replacing weather-worn signage, the lantern housing was dismantled along with the lantern housing assembly, support platform and access ladder, so that prefabricated replacements could be installed (B.C.B.C., 2014).

The position of Porthcawl Lighthouse within the topography of the Bristol Channel and the weather patterns the Lighthouse has to endure, combine to make any programme of refurbishment and repair a challenging technical feat. Among the problems to contend with are Porthcawl's excessive tidal range, overtopping waves on the Pier, the narrowness of the Pier itself, together with its distance of 180m from the foreshore and the need to restrict access to a place well-utilised by the public (Griffiths, 2014; B.C.B.C., 2014).

Porthcawl Lighthouse more than justifies the time, money and effort spent on its maintenance and upkeep, however, as it is certainly not an idle monument. Even these days, it has a well-defined working role. For instance, in the extreme storms that affected the U.K. in January and February 2014, Porthcawl Lighthouse kept its red light on constantly for several days at a time to warn shipping in the Bristol Channel of nearby hazards. Furthermore, as well as averting danger for seafarers, Porthcawl Lighthouse fulfils an invaluable maritime role as a navigational aid at what is acknowledged to be, in certain conditions, a highly malevolent part of the Bristol Channel where the Tusker Rocks, shifting sandbanks and intense storms have claimed many lives over the centuries.

As well as its necessary function, aesthetically, the presence and unique appearance of Porthcawl Lighthouse also adds a characterful aspect and a quality of place to the Pier and rest of Harbour-side, particularly now that it has had a much-needed makeover.



The Porthcawl Lighthouse, March 2015

The Old Customs House

The Old Customs House is situated at the western end of the Pier, at the top of the Slip and in a corner adjacent to the Jennings Warehouse. Its CADW ID is 19358, and the structure was given a Grade II Listed status on 17th February 1998, along with the Outer Harbour Basin, West Pier and the Pier, all buildings forming a group in the Harbour-side setting. Unfortunately though, the Old Customs House has an elusive history in comparison with the other Grade II Listed Buildings in Harbour-side and, as yet, there appear to be virtually no records to confirm the building's origins, its date of construction or its original usage.

It is known that, by 1850, a Customs Officer was in post at Porthcawl Dock, although records do not confirm whether or not he (or possibly she) was based in the Old Customs House (Higgins, 1968). It is also understood that in 1863, when plans were drawn up for excavations in readiness for the construction of the Inner Dock Basin, there was already a building on the site of the present Old Customs House but whether or not it was the current Old Customs House cannot yet be confirmed. It is also thought that the Old Customs House may possibly have been built sometime after the passage of the Llynvi and Ogmore Railways Act (1864) and the opening of Porthcawl's Inner Dock Basin in 1867, when, allegedly, it had a role in collecting and levying duties on the imports of iron ore and timber for pit-props (British Listed Buildings, 1998; B.C.B.C., 2015).

The Old Customs House Today

Externally, the Old Customs House is in an obvious state of disrepair. It is a single-storey building, rectangular in shape, with a hipped timber shingle roof together with a sandstone block lintel and a gabled porch, without a roof and, as a structure, it is small in comparison to other buildings in the vicinity. Unlike other, surrounding structures, the Old Customs House is built of snecked rock face sandstone that has not stood up well to the harshness of its maritime environment and is showing signs of heavy weathering. At the time of writing this report, the building has 2 doors, one of which

is boarded up, plus 2 large window openings and 2 smaller windows on a curved wall facing the Pier, which have deep curved sandstone lintels and sills, all of which are blocked up. The rear wall has rubble and quoins at each end of the straight section suggesting that alterations and/or repairs have been carried out at some point in its lifespan (British Listed Buildings, 1998; B.C.B.C., 2015).

In all, the Old Customs House has a more derelict, quixotic presentation than the other Grade II Listed Buildings in the area. The building occupies a central position at the top of the second tier of the Pier near to the Slip and just below the flight of stone steps that lead to the top tier of the Pier. By virtue of its position, therefore, the Old Customs House has many passers-by visiting the Pier or the Slip. Even so, it is often ignored or dismissed as an irrelevance by many, whether they are residents or visitors to Porthcawl, possibly as, in contrast to the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, the Slip or the Lighthouse, the Old Customs House has no discernible role or function in contemporary Porthcawl.



The Old Customs House, February 2015

Funding for the repair of the Old Customs House has recently been acquired under the Townscape Heritage Initiative (T.H.I.) and, judging by scaffolding and other works now surrounding the building, the restoration of the Old Customs House is currently underway. Hopefully, once restoration and repair work has been completed, the Old Customs House can re-acquire a working role in Harbour-side and, once again, be of use to the residents and visitors to Porthcawl, maybe as a tourist resource and/or information centre or shelter.

The Pilot Look-out Tower

The Pilot Look-out Tower is another intrinsic part of the Harbour-side complex and, together with the Old Customs House, the Pier and the Slip, Porthcawl Lighthouse, the Outer Harbour Wall and West Pier, the Pilot Look-out Tower provides the public amenity area of Porthcawl Harbour-side with a very distinctive quality of place. The structure can be likened to a windmill without its sails, and along with Porthcawl Lighthouse, the Pilot Look-out Tower is a landmark feature. Whereas the Lighthouse defines the seaward end of the Pier, the Pilot Look-out Tower stands like a sentinel framing the landward gateway to the Pier, the Slip and the Harbour-side area from the Esplanade.

Along with its companion piece, the adjacent Old Customs House, the Pilot Look-out Tower presents as a bit of a curiosity though, unlike the former, the Pilot Look-out Tower is far from ignored. Quite the opposite. Its circular shape and position at the gateway to the Pier from the Esplanade, make it a standout structure and, as with the Pier and the Lighthouse, the Pilot Look-out Tower is instantly recognisable when it appears in the news media when stormy weather hits the headlines.

The construction of the Pilot Look-out Tower is believed to pre-date that of the Porthcawl Lighthouse in 1866, although the actual date of when it was built is obscure. Nevertheless, the building does have an intriguing provenance. It is known to have been used as a base by the ships' pilots of Porthcawl as they waited for vessels to signal for a sea pilot to bring them into Porthcawl Dock. It is also believed that the Pilot Look-out Tower originally had a chimney stack and '*traffic lights*' on its roof and, while the lights were not visible from its landward side, they could be seen from the sea. These lights were meant to guide shipping into port and, it is claimed, a modern version of these lights guided vessels into Porthcawl Harbour as recently as 1996 (Morgan, 1996; David, 2006).

Pilotage has a long history and tradition stretching back to the emergence of maritime trading in the Middle Ages. The principle purpose of a sea or a river pilot, is to provide Masters and their vessels, with a safe passage through harbours and rivers, and frequently through dangerous waters. By definition, therefore, pilots can be characterised as experienced mariners with an intimate knowledge of the local waters where they ply their trade. Generally, they are acknowledged to be a tough, hardy breed, most likely to be seamen or fishermen (Collins, 2002; Swansea Docks, 2015).



The Pilot Look-out Tower and coastguard station circa 1870
(Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl museum)

Briefly, at the time when Porthcawl Dock opened in 1828 or 1829, the port at Bristol was one of the 4 premier ports in the U.K. Under the auspices of the Society of Merchant Venturers, pilots operating out of Bristol had controlled nearly all pilotage in the Bristol Channel since 1611. In reality, matters were not that simple as the pilots, the charges they enforced, together with the sheer range of their operations, were very varied. Pilotage then was a rough, highly competitive trade, and it remained so throughout the 19th Century. The process of change was very slow and patchy, but the passage of the Swansea Harbour Act in 1791, lessened the grip of Bristol on the outer reaches of the Bristol Channel and gave Swansea Docks effective control of pilotage within the scope of the Outer Bristol Channel. The Swansea Harbour Act (1791) also ensured the compulsory licensing of pilots by Swansea Harbour Trust with the result that, by 1793, Swansea Harbour had 11 licensed pilots which, by 1803, had reached the permitted legal maximum of 24 (Collins, 2002; Swansea Docks, 2015).

The history of Porthcawl's sea pilots is hard to trace but, although it is not known whether or not the Pilot Look-out Tower was actually used as their base, there is firm evidence of sea pilot activity in Porthcawl Dock from the mid-19th Century. For example, James Pearce, John Jones and Thomas Pearce, of Porthcawl who won the R.N.L.I. Silver Medal in 1857, are all quoted as being sea pilots (Slater's Commercial Directory, 1880; Morgan, 1996).

The Pilot Look-out Tower circa 1960
(Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)



Similarly, whilst it is not conclusive evidence of sea pilot activity, it is known that, by 1846, the D.L.P.R., which was responsible for Porthcawl Dock, had built a row of residential houses, initially called Company Row, later becoming Pilot Row, which are now incorporated into the Pier Hotel (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

Tentative and undated it may be, but there is also evidence from the Harbour-master's memo book in Porthcawl Dock that the D.L.P.R., which ceased to exist after 1846, owned pilot boats that were painted black bearing the logo '*...PC in white on each bow...*' and exacted sea tolls that were operational when Porthcawl Dock opened in 1828/1829, or shortly after (James, 1987:72).

Of equal relevance were the rules and by-laws relating to the operations at Porthcawl Dock, which allowed '*...the management to appoint pilots and make pilotage charges...*' Included, too, was a definitive statement that Swansea rules for pilotage were to be used at the port and '*...all masters were to obtain a receipt for harbour dues at the custom house. Penalty £10...*' (James, 1987:72-73).

All-in-all, the Pilot Look-out Tower is a tantalising building and researching its history has proved just as tantalising. It is hoped that further research will throw more light on this unusual structure.

The Pilot Look-out Tower Today



The Pilot Look-out Tower, October 2014

The Harbour-side area contains several unique buildings and structures of individual shapes and styles, differing sizes and varying rooflines. In spite of this, within this public space and visual context, the Pilot Look-out Tower makes a strong statement of its own that can be ascribed to its flat-roofed, circular, slightly tapering shape and to its positioning at the *de facto* gateway to the Pier and Harbour-side area from the Esplanade.

Originally, the Pilot Look-out Tower was part of a 19th Century maritime guidance and rescue service at this treacherous point in the Bristol Channel, which has been the site of so many shipwrecks and loss of life. The structure was listed on 17th February 1998 and is currently ranked as a Grade II Listed Building, CADW ID 19359. The building forms part of a very distinctive group of structures and buildings in Harbour-side and is valued as a milestone in Porthcawl's transition from a maritime port to a seaside resort during the 19th and 20th Centuries (British Listed Buildings, 1998; Historic Wales Report, 1998).

The Pilot Look-out Tower long ago ceased functioning as a Look-out Tower and is presently closed to the public. The first floor

of the building is thought unsafe but, viewed from the outside, the Tower has 4 wide windows on its first floor which face the Bristol Channel and are thought to have replaced its original fenestration. Again viewed externally, the Pilot Look-out Tower has one door that is believed to open onto the ground floor with a lintel and a stone step. It is understood that, presently, the ground floor of the structure is used for general storage and for storing the batteries that run power to the Porthcawl Lighthouse (B.C.B.C., 2015).

Externally, a wooden flight of steps with handrails leads to a wooden platform on the first floor but the steps have a barrier preventing access. The rendered external walls of the Pilot Look-out Tower are painted white and are thought to consist of stone rubble. Unfortunately, the building appears to be suffering from weathering, which can be attributed to its position at a particularly exposed and buffeted point in Porthcawl. This, as well as the passage of time and the effects of water penetration, have caused the Pilot Look-out Tower to fall into an obviously poor state of repair necessitating urgent remedial work (B.C.B.C., 2015).

On a welcome note, funding for the restoration and repair of the Pilot Look-out Tower has recently been obtained under the Porthcawl T.H.I. scheme. Under the terms of a Community Asset transfer and direct grant streaming, plans are in hand for the ownership of the Pilot Look-out Tower to be transferred from B.C.B.C. to the National Coastwatch Institution (N.C.I.) (Smith, 2015).

Apparently, the N.C.I. intends to utilise the Pilot Look-out Tower as its base for future volunteer coast-watching activities in Porthcawl. In fact, following a successful planning application, restorative work has already begun on the reinstatement of this unusual building. In what will be another turn of the wheel, once completed, the Pilot Look-out Tower will be returned to its original purpose and working role overseeing Porthcawl's stretch of the Bristol Channel coastline.

The Jennings Warehouse



The Jennings Warehouse, October 2014

The Jennings Warehouse dates from 1832 when, it is believed, the Porthcawl Dock complex extended its footprint having gained more funding after the passage of the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway Act (1829).

James Allen was the proprietor of a smelter works in Dyffryn, at the southern terminus of the horse-drawn tram-road that ran between Dyffryn Llynfi and Porthcawl following the opening of Porthcawl Dock in 1828/1829, and it was he who was responsible for building the Jennings Warehouse. The Warehouse appears on the Tithe Map of 1846 where it is described in the apportionment as a warehouse of the Llynfi Iron Company, and leased to the D.L.P.R (CADW, 1998).

It is known that the Warehouse stored iron and iron goods awaiting shipment but questions surround its size as the Jennings Warehouse is a much bigger warehouse than other surviving examples of its type. It is thought that its exceptional dimensions can be ascribed to an expectation of higher trading levels than were actually experienced in Porthcawl Dock. Alternatively, as Porthcawl was effectively a summer port, its size could be also be due to an expectation of longer periods of storage than was the norm at that time (British Listed Buildings, 1991).

G.W.R. assumed ownership of the Jennings Warehouse in 1873, when it took over responsibility for Porthcawl Dock along with the Llynvi and Ogmore Railway. Following the official closure of Porthcawl Dock in 1906, the Jennings Warehouse is known to have had a myriad of uses but, even before then, it was used as a warehouse and sawmill under the direction of George Sibbering-Jones from 1875. In 1906, the 'old stores', as the Jennings Warehouse was then referred to, was leased to George Sibbering-Jones for a further 21 years, though that lease was later vested in Charles Jennings (C. Jennings & Co.) thus giving the Warehouse its present name (Higgins, 1968; CADW, 1998).

Jennings & Co. are believed to have terminated business in 1918, shortly after the end of the First World War (WWI). It is also understood that, in the interval of time between the official closure of Porthcawl Dock in 1906 and the termination of Jennings & Co., the Jennings Warehouse stored timber, much of which was utilised in the building of houses in the rapidly expanding town of Porthcawl.

Other than that, the actual ownership of the Jennings Warehouse in the first half of the 20th Century is not easy to decipher. Having relinquished Porthcawl Dock, it is known that in 1913, G.W.R. conveyed the surrounding area of Cosy Corner and other structures and buildings making up Harbour-side, to P.U.D.C.

under the provisions of Section 73 of the G.W.R. Act (1913).

'...the outer basin, the breakwater, the Cosy Corner site, and the strip of land to the east of the inner dock were conveyed to the Porthcawl Urban District Council...' (Higgins, 1968:84).

No specific mention is made of the Jennings Warehouse and, on the face of it, it would seem that the Warehouse was not included in these provisions. However, under Section 74 of that same Act, *'...the company was empowered to abandon those portions not conveyed to the Council, and to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of them, which it later did...'* (Higgins, 1968:84).

It appears that the Jennings Warehouse came within the second category as G.W.R. eventually conveyed the building to P.U.D.C. on 22nd June 1914, at about the same time that P.U.D.C. assumed responsibility for other areas and structures in Harbour-side. Subsequently, the lease for the Jennings Warehouse, as well as the Cosy Corner site, was passed to Michael Shanly in January 1930 (Higgins, 1968).

Michael Shanly was an amusement caterer and he used both Cosy Corner and the Jennings Warehouse for leisure and entertainment purposes for a brief period of time. After the liquidation of Michael Shanly's company, the lease of the Jennings Warehouse passed to Western Enterprises Limited, and P.U.D.C. eventually purchased its surrender in July 1948 (Higgins, 1968). A covenant relating to a transaction that took place in 1930 is attached at Appendix A.

It is a convoluted story indeed and confusion surrounds the actual dates of leaseholds and surrenders of leaseholders. In what turned into a detective trail, the only certainty that has emerged is that, physically, the Jennings Warehouse is a big, very adaptable, but mostly under-used, space.

Local word-of-mouth has revealed that amongst its numerous roles, the Warehouse has, sometimes, even been party to history in the making. For example, in WWI, the Jennings Warehouse was the base for a highly creditable Refugee Employment Scheme in

Porthcawl that was praised in the national press of the day. It seems that in 1915, the building housed a sheltered employment project for a number of Belgian refugees who had settled in Porthcawl. They were employed in the carpenter's shop of Jennings & Co., then located in the Jennings Warehouse, and earned a living making furniture which was then auctioned or sold. It is said, that the pews for All Saints Church in Victoria Avenue, Porthcawl, were made at the furniture workshop and they are still very much in use today. Any profit made out of the sale of the furniture when sold, passed to the refugees as a means of support: *'...Porthcawl was the only place in the Kingdom that had a self-supporting scheme...'* (*The Porthcawl News*, 11th March, 1915:2).

Chequered history or not, it was in the 1930's, partly under the stewardship of Michael Shanly, that the Jennings Warehouse assumed a new, more light-hearted identity and, to an extent, joined with Cosy Corner in offering a variety of entertainment in this part of Porthcawl. For instance, at that time, when roller-skating was a popular past-time, the Jennings Warehouse is known to have housed a skating rink (Morgan, 1987).

More seriously, from the early days of WWII and until 1959, the Jennings Warehouse became a base for Marine Craft Units and various elements of the R.A.F. Air Sea Rescue Service after the R.A.F. began operations at the nearby Stormy Down airfield. Anecdotal accounts also reveal that throughout this particular period of its history, the Jennings Warehouse was kept in an immaculate condition and had highly polished floors.

What is noticeable from the extensive research into the building's history, is that the Jennings Warehouse has not stayed empty for long. During the period from the late 1950s to the early 1960s, Porthcawl Arts Society used the building as a venue for their activities and, in 1965, the re-instated Porthcawl R.N.L.I. Lifeboat Station occupied a temporary extension added to the side of the Jennings Warehouse, until a dedicated R.N.L.I. Lifeboat station was commissioned in 1996.

More recently, in the 1990s, the Jennings Warehouse became a skate-board park, that

was mostly used by the younger generation in Porthcawl. Porthcawl Harbour Boat Club is also known to have used part of the building for about 4 years until 2013.

Latterly, though, in spite of its new roof, the Jennings Warehouse has been bereft of tenants and waiting to be allocated a new role in Porthcawl's very long-awaited regeneration.

The Jennings Warehouse Today

Outwardly, the Jennings Warehouse is a very large, grey, 2-storeyed building situated on the West Pier and Outer Harbour Basin. The building is 15 bays long and 5 bays wide and by virtue of its material, size and scale, the Warehouse visually dominates Harbour-side and the roofline in the Conservation area.

The Jennings Warehouse is a Grade II Listed Building, CADW ID 11369, and was listed on 15th August 1991, at the same time as the Porthcawl Lighthouse. It is perceived to be a rare example of a very early railway warehouse with important connections to the south Wales iron industry. And its significance to Porthcawl is that it comprises part of a group of the town's earliest buildings and structures in the Harbour-side setting that mark the founding of Porthcawl (British Listed Buildings, 1991; CADW, 1998).

The Jennings Warehouse is constructed out of limestone rubble with stone, brick dressing and rendering to 2 exterior walls, some of which has been replaced with concrete. The original corrugated asbestos roof has been replaced and the Warehouse now has a hipped slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles and skylights (British Listed Buildings, 1991; CADW, 1998; Newman, 2001).

The Jennings Warehouse has a regularity in its appearance as its windows on the first floor have brick and dressed stone sills and surrounds, together with cambered arched heads, and are spaced at uniform intervals. The ground floor Harbour frontage has a wide variety of openings with 6 smaller windows plus 3 larger arched openings that are said to be the former loading bays. The frontage facing the old Inner Dock Basin (now Salt Lake) has 1 arched doorway at ground floor

level and 2 further doors between the 2 storeys. The frontage facing the Pier has 2 large double doors which seem to have been inserted at a later date, and the frontage facing Cosy Corner and the Esplanade has an assortment of additions, including chimneys, walls and windows (British Listed Buildings, 1991; CADW, 1998).

The Jennings Warehouse now appears to be in a rundown condition with all its windows and doors blocked up and with no public access to its interior. In Porthcawl, the building is a controversial subject, certain to divide opinion. Many believe that it is too big, has no practical purpose and should be demolished, freeing up space for a more modern development. Others maintain, equally strongly, that the building has real potential and, with sensitive restoration could, once again, serve a useful purpose in the community. The structure should, it is argued, be preserved as it commemorates the past ideas and efforts of our predecessors.

Much indecision and confusion about its fate has surrounded the Jennings Warehouse for many years. That apart, during the preparation of this report, B.C.B.C. announced that the Jennings Warehouse is to be developed and is to get a new lease of life as a *'...theatre-style kitchen restaurant complete with a full height atrium, as well as further smaller café and food establishments with views overlooking the sea...'* (*Bolter, The Glamorgan Gazette*, 5th March 2015: 4).

In addition, it is the intention to create 13 units on the first floor of the Jennings Warehouse which will be suitable for living and working. All are expected to have loft-style bedrooms (*The Glamorgan Gazette*, 5th March 2015).

These plans remain in the pipeline and have a long way to go before they materialise. The hope is that, as well as putting the Jennings Warehouse to good use, the process of refurbishing the building will bring much-needed employment to Porthcawl and, in the process, revitalise the Harbour-side area. Another turn of the wheel, perhaps?



The Jennings Warehouse, 1977 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)



The Jennings Warehouse, October 2014



Cosy Corner prior to being landscaped in 1952 (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)



**Cosy Corner, 1952
(Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)**



Cosy Corner, October 2014

Cosy Corner

The Origins of Cosy Corner

Cosy Corner is a large sunken, grassed area adjacent to the Jennings Warehouse, Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, that is partly enclosed by a high curved quarried stone wall which slopes downwards to the entrance to Porthcawl Harbour just off the Esplanade. Its location in the Harbour-side setting ensures that it is exposed to the full blast of the Bristol Channel storms and high velocity winds, so it is anything but a cosy corner when bad weather strikes! That being the case, and whether the name was an attempt at irony or not, it is said that Cosy Corner was so named after a comfortable, well-appointed cinema was built on the site in 1923 by a local businessman, George Beynon, out of a recycled WW1 aircraft hangar (Morgan, 1987)

Prior to becoming Cosy Corner, the site formed part of the entire Porthcawl Dock undertaking. It is thought that the land on which Cosy Corner stands was first acquired after the enactment of the Duffryn Llynvi and Porthcawl Railway Act (1829) enabling the D.L.P.R. to raise funds and expand the footprint of Porthcawl Dock. Soon after the port was formally shut down in 1906, G.W.R. formally conveyed the area to P.U.D.C. under Section 73 of the G.W.R. Act (1913). Thereafter, P.U.D.C. was made responsible for the maintenance of Cosy Corner under the provisions of the later P.U.D.C. Act (1914).

Once the port was finally closed, this segment of Porthcawl came into its own as a recreational area. Maybe more than any other part of the town, Cosy Corner demonstrates how Porthcawl really embraced its new role as a seaside resort. No time was wasted and, even before formalities had been completed and the site became the legal property of P.U.D.C., summer shows were being advertised in Cosy Corner as early as 1910.

When George Beynon's Cosy Corner Theatre came on the scene in 1923, it put on newly released films and repertory company productions. In fact, its wide stage was the original venue of the still running, Porthcawl Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society

(P.A.O.D.S.). In 1930, the lease of the Cosy Corner Theatre passed to Michael Shanly, who later built a wooden roller-skate board park in front of the theatre, as well as several other wooden buildings along the western side of the site adjacent to the stone wall, one of which was occupied by the Porthcawl Sea Cadets (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

In 1939, the exigencies of WWII intervened and, along with many places in Porthcawl, Cosy Corner was requisitioned for the war effort. In the aftermath of WWII, it seems that the lease of the Cosy Corner Theatre was taken over by Western Enterprises Limited, before being purchased by P.U.D.C. in 1948. The area subsequently lay undeveloped until 1952, when Cosy Corner reinvented itself as a landscaped public amenity that included a grassed area, ample seating and 2 shallow ponds shaped in a figure-eight in which stood the famous '*bee-hive*' structures. Cosy Corner was a bit of a novelty then and young children were able to paddle and sail toy boats in these ponds until their later conversion into flower beds during the 1950's (Higgins, 1968)

People from far and wide, still hold warm memories of Cosy Corner, both in the interwar years and in the aftermath of WWII. For older children in the 1950's, who had a freer, more outdoor milieu without the intrusions of television or screens, Cosy Corner was the place to be. It had synergy. It was near to Porthcawl town centre as well as the action at Coney Beach, the Slip, the Pier and the, then, recently opened Eastern Prom. After the harsh restrictions of war and the grey, post-war '*Period of Austerity*', Cosy Corner's newly revamped public space became a destination of choice for many and a place for younger generations to hang out, whether they were residents of the town or visitors to Porthcawl.

As well as a very sociable space to be in during the summer season, especially during '*Miners Fortnight*' in the 1950's, Cosy Corner was the venue for street theatre of what would be classed today as the most elemental kind. No supportive evidence exists other than anecdotal accounts, but it is known that at the height of the summer season, Cosy Corner often drew crowds of people of all ages when it became the arena for performers and/or circus acts of very varying kinds.



Photographs of Cosy Corner circa 1930s (Reproduced by courtesy of the Porthcawl Museum)

The numerous amusements at Shanly's Cosy Corner during the past week attracted thousands of trippers who thoroughly enjoyed themselves and expressed their delight at the various items and what some termed 'The New City of Pleasure'. Tired children, with their parents, greatly enjoyed resting on the chairs outside the rink enclosure, and the Vita glass was widely patronised. The younger element found great fun on the little ponies and thorough was their laughter. The Children's Fairy Cycle Park has proved one of the great attractions and, in fact, so well is this being utilised that Mr Shanly has found it necessary to add an additional plot as another similar park. The number of skaters was far in excess of any other week and the skating, to the music of the powerful electric panatrope, was a pleasing sight. The popular dance on Wednesday was specially well attended, the dancing space being taxed to its limits. The Basement Café, which has accommodation for 600 diners, has well served its purpose and, should the necessity arise, the dance hall could be converted to seat one thousand people. Altogether, the programme has been one of 'mirth and joy' and it should be specially mentioned that the behaviour of the vast crowds that have visited 'The Cosy Corner' during the week has been exemplary, and no fault can be found in any way. At a very near date, electric light will be installed throughout the vast area and it is Mr Shanly's intention to also add other various attractions to those already provided.

A most select company was present at the fox-trot competition on Wednesday which resulted, after a keen competition, in being awarded to Mr and Mrs Grocutt, Porthcawl. Special attention is drawn to the forthcoming week's programme. Special bills announce the hymn community singing on Sunday next

The outside skating rink, after being resurfaced and polished, is now in perfect condition.

Reproduced from 'The Glamorgan Gazette', 11th July 1930:8 (as written)

Cosy Corner Today

These days, at the outset of the 21st Century, Cosy Corner has a different identity to the one that it had in either the 19th or the 20th Centuries. While it is situated in Porthcawl's Conservation area and was once part of the industrial and maritime footprint of the Porthcawl Dock, Cosy Corner does not have a Listed ranking, unlike some of the surrounding buildings and structures in Harbour-side. Even so, it can be said that Cosy Corner has gained a foothold insofar as it still retains the status of a public space and leisure amenity for Porthcawl that it acquired in the first half of the 20th Century.

Cosy Corner does not draw the same level of crowds of residents or holiday-makers that it once did in the inter-war and post-war years. 'Miners Fortnight' is no longer a part of Porthcawl's summer season and that pattern of holiday-making has long-gone, probably forever, along with much of the U.K.'s leisure and recreational customs and traditions.

Nevertheless, Cosy Corner remains an integral part of the Porthcawl townscape. What is more, it continues to be available as an open-air amenity area for various town activities, and remains an outdoor area for

residents and visitors to the town alike, albeit as a weather-dependent venue.

While the nearby Outer Harbour Basin and the West Pier, together with the Pier and the Porthcawl Lighthouse, have been successfully restored, Cosy Corner looks tired and abandoned and is showing the ill-effects of its use as a spill-over and storage area from the recent Harbour-side renovations. It is to be hoped that this is a temporary state of affairs. In addition, as previously stated, the container presently constituting the Harbour-master's office situated on Cosy Corner, does nothing to improve the overall appearance of the area. Again, it is to be hoped that this will be shortly replaced by a structure more sympathetic to its environment and its Conservation setting.

Part 3 of the report will now examine the Origins of the old Inner Dock Basin and the developments that have led to its contemporary appearance.

PART 3

The Inner Dock Basin of Porthcawl Dock

Hillsboro car park, Salt Lake car park and the Eastern Prom

All the above places in Porthcawl have their origins in the Inner Dock Basin of the old Porthcawl Dock. None of the 3 come within the Harbour-side setting as defined in this report, and none of the 3 currently have a Listed status within Porthcawl's officially defined Conservation area. Nonetheless, they are well-known, adjoining areas in contemporary Porthcawl with differing identities and characteristics, and all are regarded with mixed views in Porthcawl. As they all offer differing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Porthcawl's townscape, this report will characterise them separately.

Hillsboro car park

Historically, the land which now constitutes Hillsboro car park, is said to have once formed part of a tidal river estuary that ran from the inland village of Nottage to the coast at Porth Cawl Point until it was developed as the Inner Dock Basin in the 19th Century (Morgan, 1987).

The site on which Hillsboro car park is situated first came within Porthcawl's parameters when the Inner Dock Basin was created as part of the reconfiguration and improvement of Porthcawl Dock brought about by the Brogden family following the enactment of the Llynvi and Ogmore Railways Act (1864). After the opening of the Inner Dock Basin in 1867, larger vessels, many of them paddle-steamers, could berth in Porthcawl Dock, and the Dock could cope with bigger, heavier cargoes, thereby increasing the performance and profitability of the port and enabling it to regain its trading position and earlier prosperity (Higgins, 1968). (A fuller account of the construction of the Inner Dock Basin is contained in the characterisation of Salt Lake below).

The enlargement of Porthcawl Dock stimulated the growth of peripheral industries, such as a joinery and sawmill run by George Sibbering-Jones, which was situated within the boundaries of the Inner Dock Basin and

Railway Terrace (now Hillsboro Place). A fire destroyed the joinery and sawmill in 1905, but small industries like the laundry and bakery located between Railway Terrace (aka Hillsboro Place) and Dock Street remained in operation (please see the characterisations of Hillsboro Place and Dock Street below).

Despite all the effort and investment in Porthcawl Dock, its profitability did not last and the Dock's changeable fortunes at the end of the 19th Century are outlined elsewhere. Suffice to say that the additional facility of the Inner Dock Basin was not enough to stave off the port's decline. In 1906, when Porthcawl Dock ceased to be a working port, the majority of G.W.R. assets in the Dock, including the Inner Dock Basin, were transferred to P.U.D.C. under Section 73 of the G.W.R. Act (1913). Under Section 74 of the same Act, G.W.R. was also empowered to abandon, sell, lease or dispose of the assets not conveyed to P.U.D.C. Soon after, Part V of the P.U.D.C. Act (1914) empowered P.U.D.C. to maintain the Harbour and its surrounding land and buildings (Higgins, 1968)

With the cessation of maritime trading at the very start of the 20th Century, the front and centre aim of the still new, inexperienced P.U.D.C., became Porthcawl's reincarnation into a thriving seaside resort and it did not hesitate to pursue this objective. As industrial priorities faded, P.U.D.C. shifted its focus and pressed G.W.R. to make major changes to Porthcawl's railway infrastructure ('*The Glamorgan Gazette*, 28th May 1909; *The Cambrian*, 28th August 1909).

By 1914, Porthcawl was a burgeoning coastal destination, and fast becoming a dormitory town for commuters to Cardiff and other stops along the line. With the port as a working entity now closed, G.W.R.'s large railway sidings were no longer required for storage and the transportation of heavy freight. Moving people into and out of Porthcawl became the priority and the introduction of a new railway station to Porthcawl was uppermost in both P.U.D.C. and G.W.R. thinking. So, responding to demand, G.W.R. set about overhauling the rail network into Porthcawl and within the town itself.



New Porthcawl railway station, 1916/1917 (Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)

That was not an easy task as a considerable land mass was required if a new railway station was to be sited in Porthcawl. All the more so if the existing railway system into the town was to be altered as well, but land previously occupied by the now redundant Inner Dock Basin provided just such an opportunity.

In the event, G.W.R. was enabled to infill the area just behind Railway Terrace (now Hillsboro Place) that had been previously occupied by the Inner Dock Basin and its associated industrial paraphernalia, under the provisions of Section 74 of the G.W.R. Act (1913). As a result, Porthcawl acquired an extended railway line into the town together with the sought after, more modern railway station which came into service in Dock Street in 1916. The upshot was that Porthcawl was able to emerge from the end of WWI with a brand new, upgraded railway system which was well-equipped to deal with the town's new status as a coastal resort. This was, in no small part, due to the forward thinking of the P.U.D.C.

In the ensuing decades of the 20th Century Porthcawl, along with the rest of the railway network in Wales, experienced changes such as, the 'grouping' of the railways attendant on the Railway Act of 1923 and the post-war nationalisation of the railways in 1948. Throughout these changes, Porthcawl remained part of G.W.R., which was, by now, a major railway company, and the town continued to benefit from the railway infrastructure installed in the aftermath of the closure of the port in 1906.

More broadly, in the inter-war and Austerity periods, when car ownership was not so prevalent and had not increased to the levels of today, the railway station in Dock Street and its branch lines, remained the main tourist artery into Porthcawl. Eventually, Porthcawl railway station was closed to passenger traffic in 1963, under the railway cutbacks presided over by Dr. Beeching. Notwithstanding that, though officially closed, the railway line into Porthcawl continued to be used for freight traffic for another 2 years and the station platforms were not removed until 1970, with the remaining land mass becoming the Hillsboro car park familiar to us today.

Hillsboro car park Today



The Harlequin, October 2014

Only 2 buildings remain in Hillsboro car park, one of which is the Portway Surgery, which was formally opened in 1991. It is a very well-used and, many argue, an inadequately sized, medical health centre for a town the size of Porthcawl, especially during the summer months when the town's population swells enormously. The other building is the Harlequin, a single-storey structure that, unconfirmed reports allege, was built as the station-master's office. If so, the Harlequin dates from 1916 or possibly 1917.

The Harlequin was last used as a shop for an antiques and collectible business in the 1990's but the building has remained empty since the business closed some years ago. As matters stand, the Harlequin is not a Listed building, although in 2010, an inspector acting on behalf of CADW, declared that it is a building of special interest and should not be demolished.

Apart from those 2 existing buildings, Hillsboro car park is primarily regarded as just a car park. Although it is big in size and accommodates many cars, the surface of Hillsboro car park is rough and in poor condition. It once had a few benches for seating around its perimeter but, regrettably, they disappeared a little while ago.

As well as a place for car-parking though, Hillsboro car park is a public space with 2 very practical purposes. It has a vital role as a stopping off point for people who are often unwell or of limited mobility, who are visiting the Portway Surgery, and the removal of the benches has caused them some problems. The other, far end of Hillsboro car park adjoining Dock Street, is also the site for some recycling bins, and the storage of these essential modern necessities would be greatly enhanced by the addition of some discreet environmental screening.

Hillsboro car park is in constant use. In the summer, when Porthcawl is full of holiday-makers, the car park gets very congested in spite of its size and capacity. It is also a place of continual footfall and movement of both people and vehicles and, as a car park, it definitely has an important role in the town.

Aside from that, Hillsboro car park is also a *de facto* gateway into Porthcawl and many use it as a short cut into the town centre, Harbour-side, and the Esplanade as well as eastwards to Coney Beach, the funfair and the Trecco Bay caravan park. Unfortunately, while the raised flower beds around the car park are occasionally well planted, the standard of their upkeep is very inconsistent. They frequently appear neglected and overgrown, presenting an unnecessarily desolate and jaded impression of Porthcawl.



Hillsboro car park, October 2014



Hillsboro car park from the Portway, October 2014



Recycling bins at Hillsboro car park, May 2015

Salt Lake car park

Salt Lake car park (locally referred to merely as Salt Lake) is to be found alongside Hillsboro car park and is widely known to have been part of the old Inner Dock Basin. In Porthcawl, there is a firm belief that a stream runs south from Nottage to the coast through the wet-lands of Pwll-y-Waun and the Wilderness. This stream is thought to follow the route of the same tidal estuary that was a decisive factor in bringing the new harbour outlet to Porth Cawl Point in 1825 (please see the map on page 4). Nowadays, this stream is believed to have gone underground and, it is claimed, even at times of drought and low rainfall, water from the stream can be observed pouring out through the northern wall of the Outer Dock Basin in copious amounts (Morgan, 1987).

The Origins of Salt Lake car park (the Inner Dock Basin)

The Inner Dock Basin represented a bold and costly expansion of Porthcawl Dock and was brought about by the Llynvi and Ogmore Railways Act (1864), sponsored by the Brogdens. In the Victorian context, the construction of the Inner Dock Basin was a notable engineering achievement, and was supervised by the Porthcawl Dock engineer, Robert Pearson Brereton, Chief Assistant to the esteemed Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Porthcawl's Inner Dock Basin extended inland northwards from the existing Outer Harbour Basin approximately 7½ acres, with its depth on the sill 16' at neap tide and 26' at spring tide. It was accessible via a new entrance made in the northern wall of the existing Outer Harbour Basin which, although infilled, is obvious even today. The entrance to the Inner Dock Basin itself, was comprised of 2 large, very heavy gates, each about 35' wide and 40' high. The Inner Dock Basin had to retain enough sea water to fill approximately 7½ acres, at a depth sufficient enough for larger vessels to berth, so the entrance gates had to be of a considerable height, weight and strength in order to contain so much sea water. The disadvantage was that, as the gates were manually controlled, they required a great deal of physical effort to operate (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1996).

The construction of the Inner Dock Basin, resulted in increased activity at Porthcawl Dock to the extent that, in 1871, it shipped out 165,000 tons of coal, marking a big leap in trade compared to the period immediately prior to the Dock's re-opening. Trade was further enhanced by the Llynvi Valley and Ogmore Valley Railways Amalgamation Act (1866) creating a new railway hub of the Llynvi and Ogmore Railway, which terminated at Porthcawl Dock, making it an outlet for a new and developing industrial area inland. So successful were these mergers and modifications, at least initially, that, by 1889, Porthcawl Dock was handling more than 800 vessels and accounting for more than 227,000 tons of cargo, which was mostly coal (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1996).

Consequently, at the end of the 19th Century, the Inner Dock Basin was a typically Victorian, heavily industrialised scenario. The expanded railway system and increased port activity entailed an expansion of the Dock's footprint with the installation of more coal-hoists and chutes for loading and unloading cargoes. But profits and increased activity came at an environmental cost. The resultant atmosphere in the Inner Dock Basin must have been highly polluted, choked with dirt and coal dust with the air space constantly echoing with noise. If that was not enough, the skyline in the Inner Dock Basin must have been clouded with a network of bulky, dark machinery, ships' masts and paddle steamer funnels, with steam emanating from the comings and goings of the trains.

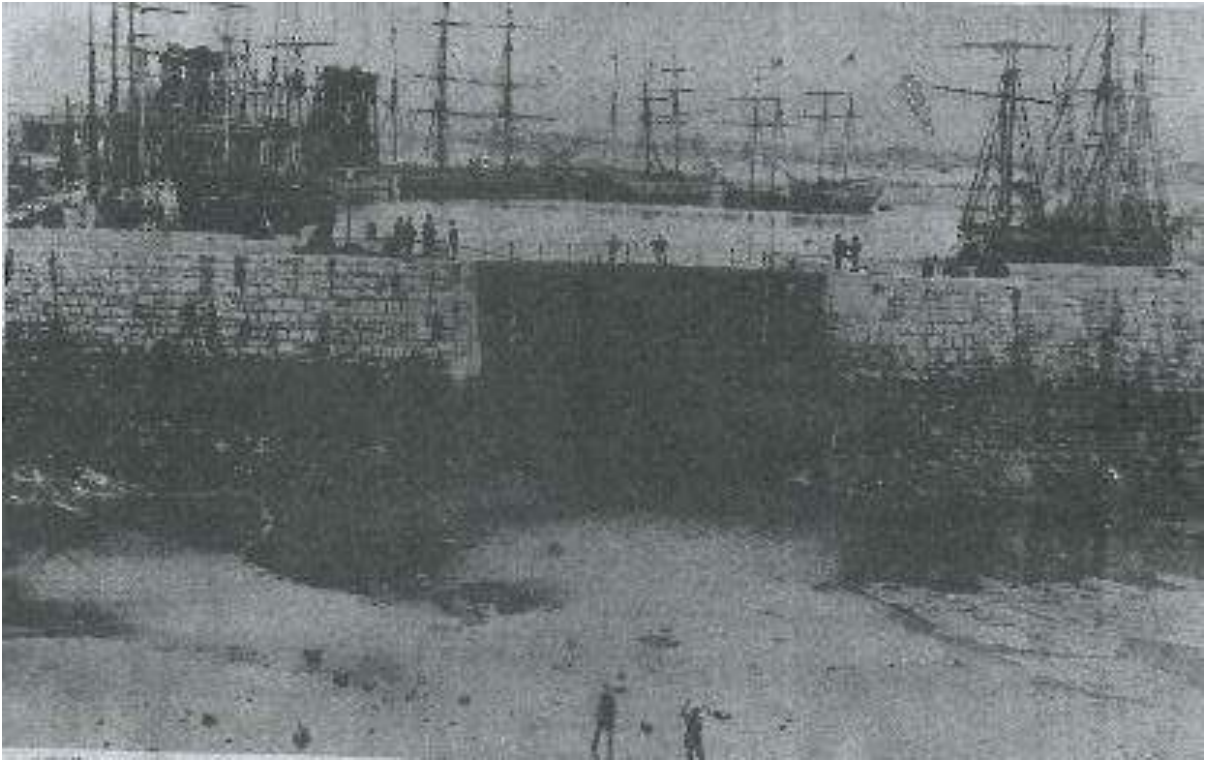
That is not all. The development of Porthcawl Dock spawned industries like shipbuilding and repair work, and maps of the period show that, by 1875, there was a shipbuilder's yard and smithy at the far north end of the Inner Dock Basin. In fact, there are newspaper reports of many ships being launched from Porthcawl before 1900. Even after the closure of Porthcawl Dock, and the partial infilling of the Inner Dock Basin in 1914, there are records of the remaining industrial facilities being used by Madden & McKee, and later by R. S. Hayes, as a ship-builders/breakers yard. It is also believed that captured German vessels were broken-up at the shipyard in Salt Lake and, between 1919 and 1926, there were at least 18 WWI ships sold by the Admiralty to Hayes of Porthcawl for breaking-up (Morgan, 1987; Morgan, 1996)



**Entrance to Porthcawl Harbour and the Inner Dock Basin,
June 1917 (Reproduced by courtesy of Tony Comley)**



**Porthcawl Harbour, Salt Lake swimming and boating
lake circa early 1930's. In the bottom right-hand corner
are the original wooden piers (Reproduced by courtesy
of B.C.B.C)**



**The Inner Dock Basin, Porthcawl Dock, circa 1870's
(Reproduced by courtesy of B.C.B.C.)**



**Robert Pearson Brereton (Reproduced
by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)**

Salt Lake in the 20th Century

In contrast to the Porthcawl Dock era, Salt Lake became a highly-regarded amenity space and focal point in Porthcawl during the inter-war period. Most of the available information about Salt Lake during Porthcawl's 'Golden Age' comes by word-of-mouth and little is actually recorded about how it came to be a 'Salt Lake' in the first place. Even so, it is known that the entrance to the old Inner Dock Basin was bricked up by P.U.D.C. circa 1926, thereby creating a lagoon, presumably after the closure of the ship-builders and breaker's yard in 1926, and possibly as part of the Eastern Promenade Development Plan (Morgan, 1996). For further details of the Eastern Promenade Development Scheme, please see the characterisation of the Eastern Prom below.

With the creation of a lagoon i.e. Salt Lake, more recreational and leisure facilities were on offer to Porthcawl's townspeople and the ever-increasing number of day-trippers and holiday-makers coming to the town. To date, it has not been possible to uncover whether the swimming and boating facilities that sprang up in Salt Lake in the late 1920's and 1930's were *ad hoc*, or inspired by international theories espousing fresh air and exercise as beneficial to good health that were very fashionable during that period of time (Drake, 2013).

The coal-mining industry has all but disappeared these days but, in the inter-war period, links between miners and their families in the heavily populated coal-mining Valleys and Porthcawl were very strong. Moreover, it is known that ideas about the promotion of better health for the working population created a movement that took particular hold in south Wales, earning the support of the 'Miners Welfare Fund', and sparking a trend for the building of open-air lidos and outdoor swimming facilities throughout the whole of the south Wales area (Drake, 2013).

Alas, it is so far unconfirmed whether these connections and/or ideas were decisive or not in Salt Lake becoming a swimming and boating lake. Either way, so important was the Salt Lake area deemed to be as a leisure park in Porthcawl, that in 1935, when P.U.D.C. was approached by the 'Cornelly Quarry Company' with a request to re-open Porthcawl Dock for

the purposes of shipping stone quarried locally, P.U.D.C. expressed concern that it would interfere with the bathing and camping facilities then present at Salt Lake ('The Glamorgan Gazette', 12th April 1935).

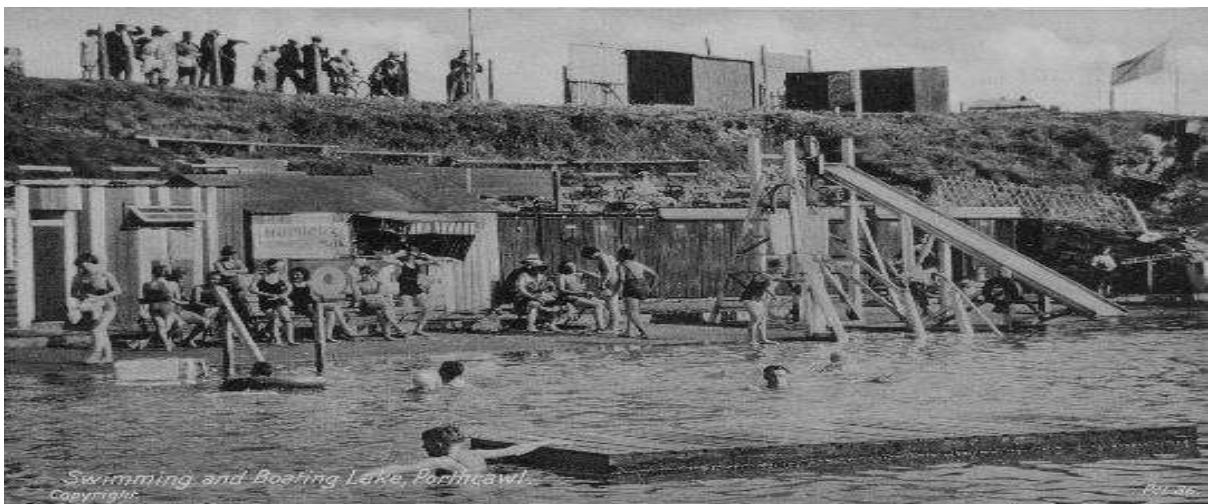
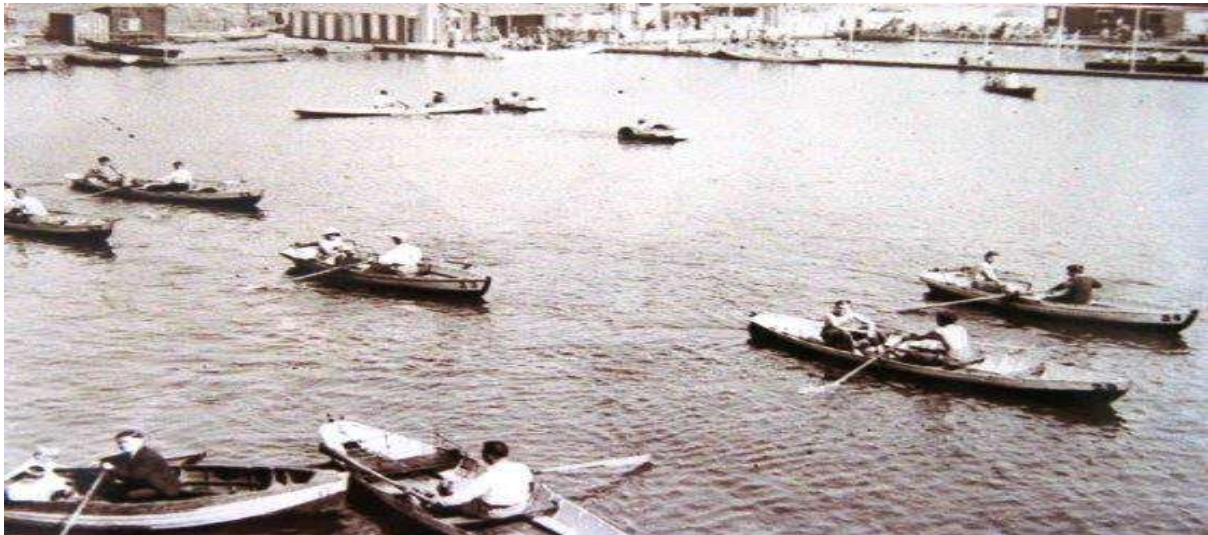
Again on a recreational note, Salt Lake became the site for a highly popular miniature light railway that ran from the early 1930s to, it is understood, the 1950s. Whether it remained operational in WWII is unclear, but the miniature railway gave generations of children (of all ages!) an enormous amount of innocent pleasure, and was almost a ritual for those living in or visiting Porthcawl.

With the advent of WWII, Salt Lake was commandeered for the war effort. Conventional wisdom maintains that Salt Lake was infilled in 1943, the rationale being that the American forces based in Porthcawl required the site to park a wide variety of their tanks and other military vehicles. That may be so, but further, unconfirmed information has recently come to light that suggests that firms from inland Glamorgan used Salt Lake to dispose of ballast as early as 1937. In the event, the American use of Salt Lake as a car park was fleeting as the American forces, together with all their heavy vehicles, left very suddenly sometime in 1944, by which time the infilling of Salt Lake had been completed.

Since the American departure, Salt Lake has continued to be used as a car park and, in the 1980's, was once again utilised as a parking lot for heavy vehicles. On these occasions, the British army used it as a stopping-off point for military vehicles and tanks *en route* to military training in the Brecon Beacons. This use of the car park had ceased by 1990 as, allegedly, the heavy weight of the vehicles was causing subsidence.



The miniature railway circa 1950's



Photographs of Salt Lake, boating and swimming, circa the early 1930s (Reproduced by courtesy of Porthcawl Museum)



Photographs of Salt Lake car park, October 2014

Salt Lake car park Today

Today, Salt Lake is a very sorry sight and can only be described as a waste-land. No-one without prior knowledge of its history, would credit it as once a place of great industry and of economic importance to the rest of mid-Glamorgan in the 19th Century. Not to mention its social, recreational and cultural importance to the town of Porthcawl and the surrounding areas in the first half of the 20th Century.

Sadly, as of this moment, Salt Lake can only be likened more to a scene from a '*video nasty*' than a site of significant historic interest or a tourist destination. The surface of the site is very rough, dusty, uneven and unkempt and, until recently, Salt Lake was surrounded by chain-link fencing in an extremely poor, worn state of repair. The actual chain-link fencing has now been partially removed leaving only the old concrete fence posts, not all of which are upright and some have rusty reinforcement poking rather dangerously through the concrete. Dependent on the time of year, tourist activity, and the all-important weather, Salt Lake is strewn with varying numbers of parked cars, buses, and burger vans with a travelling circus appearing every now and then. Salt Lake has occasionally been used for community activities such as dog shows, cub and scouts gatherings and, more recently was the site of a Guy Fawkes firework display in 2014. Mostly, though, the vast swathes of Salt Lake lie empty save for the gravel, tufts of weeds and grasses.



Rough surface and cement posts on Salt Lake car park, April 2015

There has been some welcome progress with restoration in Harbour-side, but Salt Lake remains a stubbornly outstanding issue, fully at the heart of local demand for regeneration in Porthcawl. Its sheer size, together with the abandoned, depressing void of its landscape, permeates the immediate vicinity, including Porthcawl's town centre, and saps it of any dynamism and appeal. Yet, Salt Lake has been the subject of a very prolonged and exhausting process of consultation for several decades, and there is almost universal agreement that the area is in the utmost need of reclamation.

Taking a more positive viewpoint, Salt Lake is a big parcel of prized waterfront land that remains hugely important to modern Porthcawl, as it was to our forebears. It is an entry point to the town and Harbour-side, and it is in very close proximity to Porthcawl's commercial centre. It is adjacent to a big, attractive, sandy beach and a long stretch of promenade that leads to the Esplanade and, ultimately, as far as the green, open space of Locks Common.

It is the views that are Salt Lake's real trump card, however. Setting aside the Coney Beach funfair, arrival at Salt Lake presents someone with a wide, open vista and scenes of Ogmore-by-Sea, the far distant Lias cliffs of Southerndown and Dunraven and the north Devon coastline. In more immediate sight, is a seascape and the structures of Harbour-side and Porthcawl's Lighthouse at the end of Porthcawl Pier.



The Eastern Prom, street lighting, April 2015

The Eastern Promenade

The Eastern Promenade (locally called the Eastern Prom) originally formed the long, seaward edge of the old Inner Dock Basin running alongside Porthcawl Sands (locally referred to as Coney Beach). A few days after the start of WWI in August 1914, close on the heels of the G.W.R. Act (1913) and the conveyance of G.W.R.'s maritime assets to P.U.D.C., the passage of the P.U.D.C. Act (1914) awarded decision-making powers to P.U.D.C, effectively enabling it to convert some of G.W.R.'s past maritime holdings, including the whole of the Inner Dock Basin, into attractions for the blossoming seaside resort of Porthcawl (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

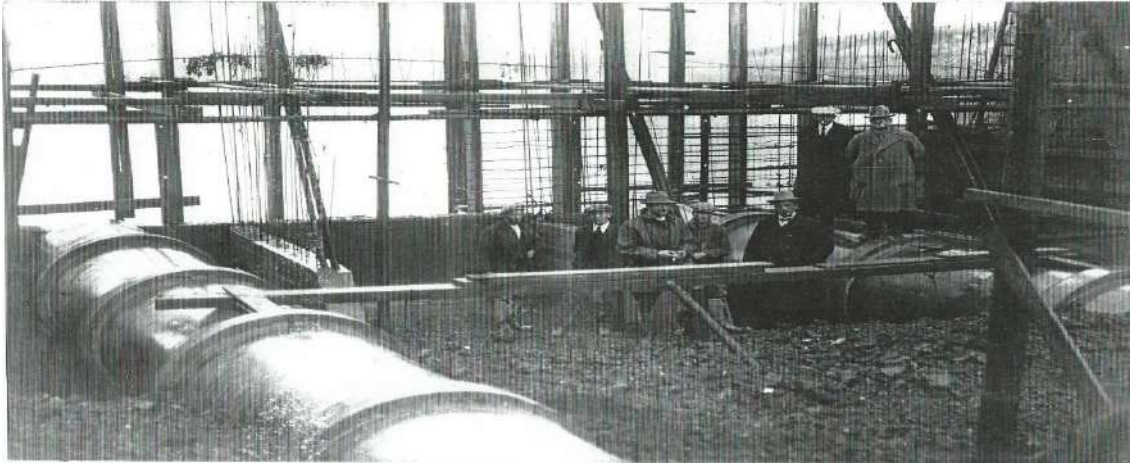
Approximately 22 years prior to this legislation, a railway siding had been constructed running along the seaward side of the Inner Dock Basin (the current Eastern Prom) from Porthcawl Dock to the Porthcawl Gas, Light and Coke Company. The Porthcawl Gas, Light and Coke Company itself, was located on the site of the present Griffin Park, and the railway siding linking Porthcawl Dock with the Company (to become the Porthcawl and District Gas Company in 1913) was, it is assumed, for the purpose of supplying coal. The Company had been formed in 1891, just before the formation of the P.U.D.C. in 1893, and the need for a company providing the utilities of gas, light and coal to the town, in itself, reflected Porthcawl's transition into an urban conurbation and its growth as a centre of population (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

The outbreak of WWI interrupted further improvements in Porthcawl but, with the ending of hostilities in 1918, local government consolidated its position by implementing the provisions of the P.U.D.C. Act (1914). Thereupon, P.U.D.C purchased the Porthcawl and District Gas Company and, having already acquired assets previously belonging to G.W.R., the local authority had cleared its way to begin the Eastern Promenade Development Scheme and make a start on developing the town's sea-front attractions (Morgan, 1987).

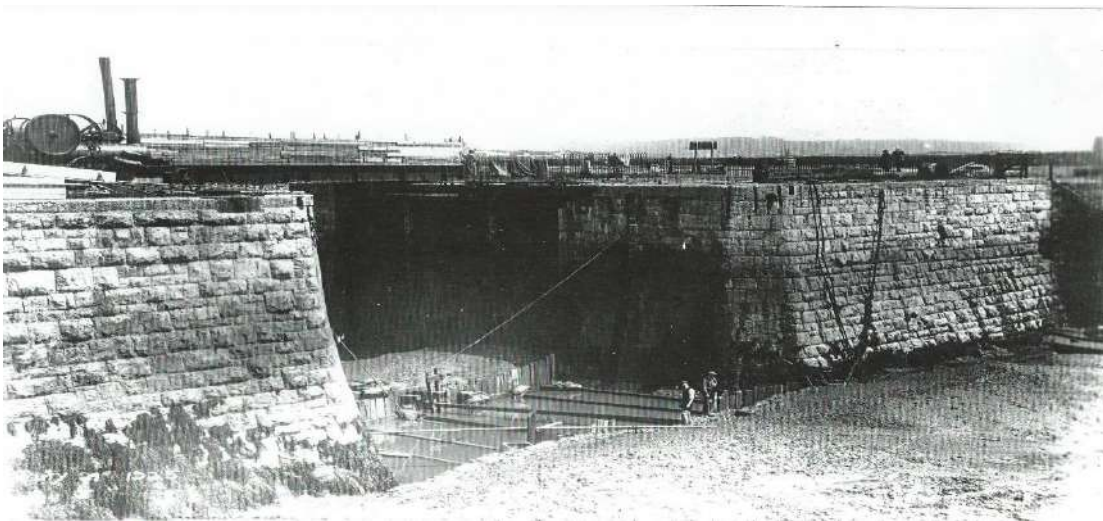
The Eastern Promenade Development Scheme had the additional aim of creating an alternative route into Porthcawl for the increasing number of vehicles bringing visitors to the town. The reasoning was that, by connecting the Esplanade to New Road, a new entry point into Porthcawl would be created, thereby minimising the detrimental impact that the bottle-neck of the Station Hill level-crossing was having on the tourist business coming into the town (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

The present landscape of the Eastern Prom makes it hard to envisage the patchwork of heavy industries that dominated the old Inner Dock Basin prior to the 1920's, and the seaward edge was no different in that respect. The Eastern Promenade Development Scheme was a complex project and the entrance to the Inner Dock Basin had to be infilled before work could begin on enhancing the sea-front. Once completed and Salt Lake had been created, a bridge was built over the old entrance gates from the Outer Harbour Basin to the old Inner Dock Basin. In effect, this new bridge linked the Esplanade to the Eastern Prom and, thence by a junction, to New Road. The bulk of this big project was finished in a relatively short period of time between 1925 and 1926 but further development was halted by the onset of WWII and post-WWII austerity. As a result, the Eastern Promenade Development Scheme was not completed until 1950, whereupon it transformed the area left derelict by the closure of Porthcawl Dock in 1906, creating '*...a pleasant and attractive extension to the sea front...*' (Higgins, 1968: 153)

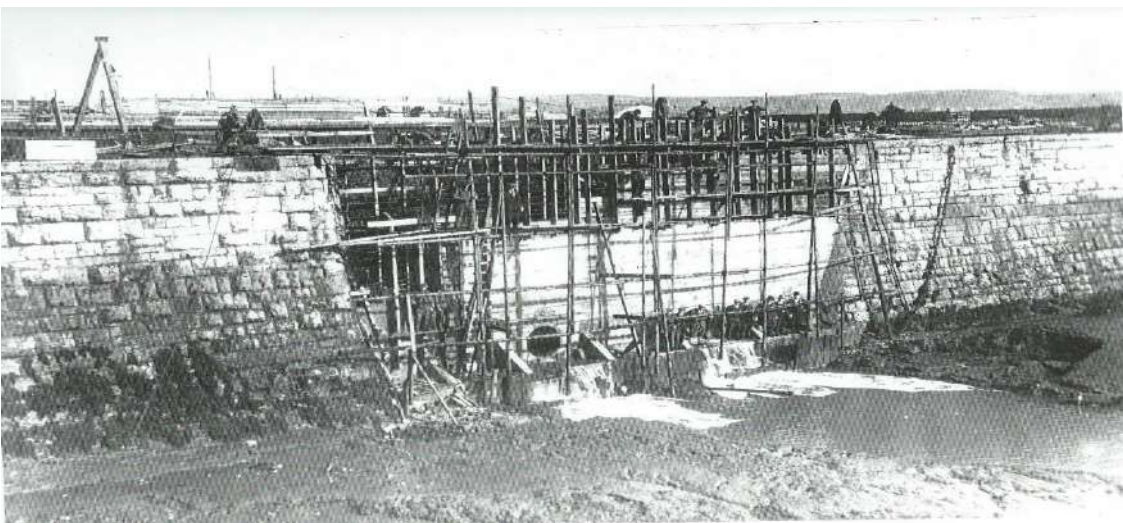
Anecdotal accounts verify that, when it was first opened in the 1950's, the Eastern Prom was a delight. It seemed to open up the whole town. It was near to the town centre, and was a gateway to an easy walk that took in Porthcawl's coastline around the Esplanade, Harbour-side and Locks Common. The Eastern Prom's smart pinkish flagstones provided a broad, flat, user-friendly surface for all, whether or not they had prams or wheelchairs. And, despite the difficulties of coping with salty air, the raised flower beds were well-tended, if not always full of flowers. There were benches dotted about at intervals, so there was always somewhere to sit down, soak up the atmosphere and have a natter! It was a very pleasant, sociable space to be in.



**Closure of Inner Dock Entrance 24th July 1924
(Reproduced by courtesy of Tony Comley)**



**Closure of Inner Dock Entrance, laying of drainage pipes 1925
(Reproduced by courtesy of Tony Comley)**



**Closure of Inner Dock Entrance 1926 (Reproduced by courtesy
of Tony Comley)**

The Eastern Prom Today

These days, the wide vista and open aspect of the Eastern Prom remain unimpeded as do the panoramic views eastwards to Ogmore-by-Sea, Southerndown and southwards towards Somerset and north Devon. The Eastern Prom still has a good deal of usage and its footfall is considerable. Families and people use it as a byway to and from the fairground, Trecco Bay, Harbour-side, the Esplanade and the town centre as well as making it part of a seafront stroll when the sun is shining. Lighting on the Eastern Prom is also of an attractive conservation quality and is in generally good condition. There are 2 spying glasses evenly spaced along the Eastern Prom which are appropriate added attractions.

There, the good news ends. The condition of the built environment makes a visit to the Eastern Prom a sad and depressing affair, especially for those who can remember those halcyon days when it first opened. Together with Salt Lake and Hillsboro car park, the area has the lingering air and appearance of neglect, probably due to the long-anticipated, and apparently abortive, plan for the regeneration of the area.

To one side, the Eastern Prom has a roadway from the Esplanade and Harbour-side to New Road. To the seaward side, it has a quarried stone wall of undulating height (mostly waist-high) which has obviously been subject to patch and repair over the years. On a historical note, one patched part of the wall which is faintly visible, is reputedly where American forces used to practice constructing Bailey bridges before the D. Day landings in 1944.

Other than at the Coney Beach end of the wall, where it is not very high and railings have been added, the wall has no safety rail which is a cause for concern, given that young children frequently use the Eastern Prom and there is a steep drop on to the rocks below.

Another great cause for concern is the condition of the surface of the Eastern Prom. Where it was once user-friendly, the flagstones on its wide, supposedly flat surface, are now in a very parlous state. Not only have they been randomly patched with paving stones of a different colour, sometimes singularly and

sometimes in groups of 2 or 3, but they are deeply cracked and extremely uneven. The actual ground on which the paving stones have been laid also appears to have heaved and subsided in many places (please see photos). So much so, that for a young child, someone of uncertain balance, with impaired sight or of limited mobility, a walk on the Eastern Prom could be the occasion for a very nasty fall.

The raised flower beds are a particular source of sadness too. There are 6 raised beds and 3 flat areas which are presumably meant to be flower beds. By and large, although they could do with cleaning, the raised concrete surroundings to the flower-beds seem to be in a fair condition, whereas the beds themselves are totally grassed over with weeds peeping through. No attempt appears to have been made to make them attractive by the planting of hardy or salt-air tolerant plants.

As for the benches, apart from 2 new benches, one commemorating Andrew Demaid - a fisherman - most are in an extremely poor condition, with some in an unusable state. They are not only worn, but very dirty. Anyone trying to sit on the ones with the most remaining slats, would find them very uncomfortable and would run the risk of soiling their clothes. Nowadays, the Eastern Prom is not a comfortable place to sit and watch the world go by, that's for sure!

The same deplorable condition can be said of the structures on the Eastern Prom. There are only 3 existing buildings on the Prom, none of which can be said to increase the ambience of the area in their present state.

From the Coney Beach end of the Prom, the first building to arrive at is a single-storey, rectangular-shaped public shelter resting on a shallow concrete plinth constructed about midway along the Eastern Prom. It has a rendered exterior, presently painted cream and a flat roof supported by 6 rounded pillars painted brown at their bases. The shelter is accessible on all sides, but there are only slatted wooden benches on the 2 long sides facing the sea and the road respectively.

Seen mid-afternoon on a sunny working day, the shelter was in a filthy state with the floor covered with some kind of liquid! In addition, there were 2 full black dustbin bags under the benches facing the sea.

Superficially, the structure itself seems in fair condition, although the rendering is dented and marked, and it badly needs repainting throughout as paint is peeling in many places.

The second structure is located just before the Outer Harbour Basin and is referred to as the Baden-Powell building as it was, reportedly, built to house the Porthcawl Scouts. Like the shelter, the building is unlisted, although it is believed to be about 100 years old and together with the shelter, appears on an aerial photograph of Porthcawl taken about 1929 (please see page 51). It is known that the Baden-Powell building was later used by the Girls' Nautical Training Corps and, following their merger with the Sea Cadets, was then used as a council store. It has remained empty for some years now.

The Baden-Powell Building is currently inaccessible to the public but there are credible reports that it contains public conveniences. Viewed externally, the structure is presently fenced off and in an obviously poor state of repair but it is built in a similar style to the public shelter referred to above. It, too, is single-storey and built on a plinth and, whilst not large, its columns, wide surrounding and approach make it appear somewhat imposing. Dating when it was built is difficult, but its style of construction and its position near to the Outer Harbour Basin and the bridge on the Eastern Prom, make it likely that it, and the shelter, originally formed part of the Eastern Promenade Development Scheme that was started in 1925/1926.

The third building situated on the Eastern Prom is the Sea Cadets Hall which has been in existence since 1946. Outwardly, the Sea Cadets Hall is nothing at all like the other 2 buildings on the Eastern Prom.

Externally, it is very basic in style and resembles a utilitarian construction which, as it was built immediately after WWII in 1946, is hardly surprising. The Sea Cadet Hall is fenced off in places, has a flag-pole and is outwardly tidy and invariably kept in ship-shape order. However, although it is still very much in use as a meeting place for an active branch of the Porthcawl Sea Cadets, it is also widely known to be damp and in extremely

poor condition, with few facilities such as toilets or running water.

Many fishermen also use the Eastern Prom as a base for sea-fishing when the tide is right. Sea-fishing is a very popular sport and many regard the Eastern Prom, along with the Pier, as an ideal spot to fish. Unlike some adjoining authorities, for example Neath and Port Talbot, B.C.B.C. make no charge for using the Eastern Prom or the Pier for sea-fishing. Nonetheless, it can be a health hazard, a social irritant and risky for pedestrians if fishermen are careless with placing or casting-off their lines, and disposing of their rubbish.

Rubbish disposal, as a whole, is a further source of irritation and the Eastern Prom could certainly do with more rubbish bins of a solid, durable, conservation quality. As it is, existing rubbish bins on the Prom are aesthetically displeasing, too few in number for their busy situation, are not emptied regularly and seem very flimsy for their purpose. Perhaps too, an arrangement could be arrived at with fishermen using the Eastern Prom, to dispose of their rubbish in a more socially aware, environmentally-conscious manner.

Overall, though still a popular destination, the Eastern Prom can be described as tired-looking to the point of exhaustion and badly in need of rejuvenation as do all 3 of the areas that once made up the Inner Dock Basin. Since the completion of the Eastern Promenade Scheme in 1950, little seems to have been done to the area and, generally, it can only be described as a worrying, uncared-for eyesore, especially for an aspiring seaside resort aiming to attract more tourists. Indeed, while visitors to Porthcawl accept the Eastern Prom as a necessary byway, with the benefits of good views and an open aspect, they quite often liken the adjoining Hillsboro and Salt Lake car parks to a bomb-site.

This report will now characterise the Early Residential Area of Porthcawl. Following that, the report will close with a section on specific proposals for the improvement and preservation of the old Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl and provide a summary and overview of this document.



The shelter on Eastern Prom, October 2014



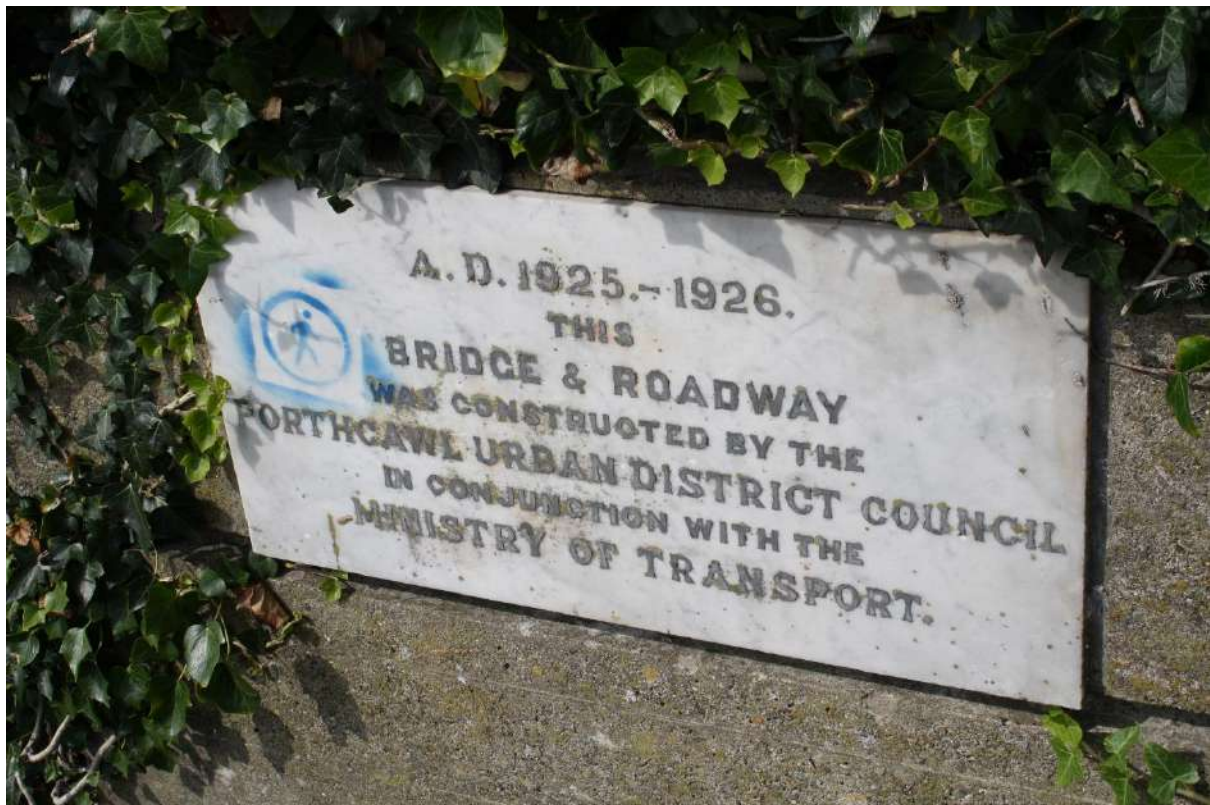
The Baden-Powell Building, October 2014



The worst example of a broken bench on the Eastern Prom, April 2015



The Eastern Prom, October 2014



The Commemorative plaque on the Eastern Prom



Broken paving stones on the Eastern Prom, April 2015



Surface of the Eastern Prom, April 2015

PART 4

Porthcawl's Early Residential Area around Porthcawl Dock i.e.

Dock Street, The Square, Lifeboat Road, Pilot Row and Marine Terrace



Looking north, the corner of John Street and Dock Street, circa 1900

The Origins of the Early Residential Area

The early residential area of Porthcawl lies within the town's Conservation area and counts as one of the oldest parts of the town. In fact, Dock Street appeared on a tithe map dated 1846 and another map of Porthcawl, dated 1884/1885, identifies several buildings in The Square (see page 14). On this evidence, it is reasonable to assume that those and other areas surrounding Porthcawl's Outer Harbour Basin and the rest of Harbourside which include Lifeboat Road, Pilot Row and Marine Terrace, developed around the parts of the town where the original industrial and maritime activities took place following the opening of Porthcawl Dock in 1828/1829.

Once the D.L.P.R. Act (1825) was passed, the pressure was on for the port to be opened as soon as possible and construction of Porthcawl Dock and the D.L.P.R. continued day and night. Porth Cawl Point became a hive of activity, although urban development and the built environment in Porthcawl were non-existent. At best, Porthcawl was just a reading on the map so, unless they were housed under canvas, the first wave of workers in the old Maritime and Industrial Area of the town, roughly estimated to be about 100

people in total, had to be accommodated in the nearby villages of Newton or Nottage (James, 1987).

There was minimal improvement as far as workers' accommodation was concerned, after Porthcawl Dock became operational in 1828 or 1829. In response to need, more permanent housing gradually made an appearance in the town, mainly around the Dock area but, despite that, by the mid-19th Century, there was only sparse living accommodation in Porthcawl for the working population and no civic amenities to speak of.

In post-industrial, 21st Century Porthcawl, the advantages of clean air, modern utilities, made-up roads and pavements are taken for granted. It requires quite a leap of the imagination to envisage what life must have been like for people who worked at, or lived near, Porthcawl Dock in the mid-19th Century.

In what was an undeveloped urban milieu, workers in Porthcawl Dock and associated industries, whether they resided in the town with or without their families, would have had a very rough and ready existence.

Water was drawn from the well, the roads and pavements were unmade, there were no public utilities and there was an absence of sanitation or street lighting. Obtaining necessities was difficult and, if it was available, public transport was infrequent and very basic.

As a result, unless someone chose to walk or ride from Nottage or Newton, or possibly from even further afield, living around Porthcawl Dock in whatever basic accommodation was available, was the only realistic option for people who worked there.

As Porthcawl grew and developed, there was some degree of improvement for second and third generation workers and residents of the town. Nonetheless, for that very first generation of the Porthcawl populace, living near to or working at the port, there was no escaping the rather primitive conditions and the heavy industrial scenario of Porthcawl Dock together with its fall-out, especially for those who found themselves living in the areas characterised below



An Aerofilm of Dock Street showing the railway station and bottom of Railway Terrace, circa 1929 (By courtesy of Brian Batters)

Dock Street

The Origins of Dock Street



Ocean House and two lock-up shops circa 1950's/1960's?
(By courtesy of Marilyn Smith)

Dock Street originally led to the Outer Harbour Basin and later, as the railways were developed, to the railway sidings. After the demise of Porthcawl Dock and the railway station's relocation from South Road to the end of Dock Street in 1916, the street became the main gateway to the centre of Porthcawl for railway passengers. This remained the case until Porthcawl railway station eventually closed in the early 1960s.

One of the first dwellings in Dock Street was Arctic House, now the Breaksea Residential and Care Home (known locally as the Breaksea). It was built in 1860 at an estimated cost of £2,000 by Porthcawl's then Harbour-master, Captain Buchan, who lived there with his 2 daughters. The quarried stone walls of the Breaksea are 4' thick and were, reportedly, originally built as sea-defence walls, not just boundary walls. Evidence of their thickness can still be seen in the archway at the foot of a short row of gated steps leading down into Dock Street from the Breaksea. It is said that Captain Buchan's daughters used to bathe in the sea that, when the tide came in, is believed to have reached as far as the walls surrounding Arctic House (*The Glamorgan Gazette*, 7th October 1910).

It is not entirely clear what was next to Arctic House, where the Job Centre now stands, or what was on the corner with John Street.

What is known is that there were once 2 or 3 wooden buildings, one being a shop selling buckets and spades and holiday ephemera to visitors. There may also have been a bank opening 2 days a week, although it is not known exactly what bank or when it opened.

Later, camouflage netting for military use in WWII was woven by women in a wooden shed in Dock Street, although, again, it is unclear whether this was one of the buildings already referred to. The aerial photograph dated September 1929, on page 65, shows that behind these buildings and facing Dock Street, there was a large house, believed to be Grosvenor House which, during WW1, was occupied by the Bush family. When, and why, this house was demolished remains unknown.

On the opposite side of the road, on the corner of John Street, the construction of a coffee house, later to become the Porthcawl Hotel, was started in 1883. This building was completed in 1884 and, as a hotel, was much enlarged in 1891. Next to the Porthcawl Hotel, is the entrance to the present Hillsboro Place and Ocean House (now the Coast Coffee House), which was then a private residence. In 1892, this house was occupied by Alfred Pettick, the green keeper for the, then, Porthcawl golf course. By 1910, this house had been converted into a hotel and, in the summer months, regularly had 10 to 12 people staying there. Next to Ocean House there were 2 lock-up shops.

Dock Street Today



Dock Street is a level road running west to east from John Street and is mainly used as an access road to Hillsboro Place, Hillsboro car park and the remaining recycling bins. The eastern end of Dock Street opens on to a vacant area of land which forms part of Hillsboro car park. It has an open vista with views across Coney Beach towards Ogmores-by-Sea and Southerndown. On one side of the road are the original shops, one of which is currently occupied by a taxi office and the road is used as a *de facto* taxi rank. The other shop is currently unoccupied.

On the same side of the street as the shops, is the Coast (originally Ocean House) which has only recently re-opened as a tea and coffee shop, and the side of the Porthcawl Hotel that faces John Street. On the other side of Dock Street, is the Breaksea (once Arctic House), the Job Centre, the entrance to Marine Terrace, and the side of the building now occupied by B&M which, again, fronts on to John Street.

There is no one defined architectural style to any of the buildings. All are different in both design and materials, ranging from the plain red brick side of B&M, the relatively new Job Centre, to the revamped first floor of the Coast Coffee Shop. As a result, there is no cohesion in the built appearance of the road.

All the buildings are noticeable in their own way but none can be said to be dominant or provide a keynote. There are a number of interesting features, including the windows of the Porthcawl Hotel (there are 21 windows in 7 different styles), the remaining elements of Arctic House and the design of the first floor of the Coast Coffee Shop. The one item that all

the buildings have in common, is their slate roofs.

The quarried stone walls are also a greatly significant feature of the area, and the wall around the Breaksea is an excellent example. While the roads and pavement are generally in good condition and buildings in a good state of repair, Dock Street has a rather forlorn look about it which is not helped by the dilapidated road sign that is partially hidden by a parking restriction notice.



The Porthcawl Job Centre, June 2015



The Coast Coffee Shop, June 2015



The Breaksea wall, June 2015

The Square

The Origins of The Square

Porthcawl's oldest building was to be found in The Square, in the form of a cabin owned by Colonel Knight, Lord of Lougher and Pembroke Manors. The cabin subsequently became a small public house - the Anchor - before its conversion into a coffee house and, later, it is understood, into an ice-cream parlour run by a member of the Fulgoni family. This structure was eventually demolished to make way for the Glamorgan Holiday Home, which was built in 1978.

The 1884/1885 map of Porthcawl identifies several buildings in The Square including the Knights Arms Hotel, first built in 1830 as 3 cottages. Seaview House (not to be confused with Seabank House) was also in place as was a small building, now Eastnor Lodge, which, it is believed, was the ticket office for ships of the *'White Funnel Line'* and later acted as Porthcawl's first post office. At the corner of this building, is a black stone bearing an indistinct date in the 1800's.

Originally, there were 3 public houses in The Square – the Anchor (referred to above), the Ship and Castle, which was first built as a private house, and the Harbour Inn (now the Pirates Club).

Some private accommodation was provided by a few cottages, one of which was occupied by the Harbour-master before Arctic House was built. It is claimed that this particular cottage was eventually separated into Eastnor House and Torrington Cottage. When the cottage was divided and building work was being carried out, original beams were exposed showing carvings of clipper sailing ships.

Where the Pier Hotel now stands, 3 other cottages, first known as Company Row, then changed to Pilot Row, had been built by 1845 and they were then joined by 2 other cottages in The Square. In its early days, The Square was unsurfaced and, as late as 1906, P.U.D.C. was asked to supply *'...cartloads of stone...to lie down over the area...'* (P.U.D.C., 19th February, 1906).

The Square constituted the centre of Porthcawl throughout the early phase of the town's industrial and maritime period. Even as late as 1959, it was still being used as the terminus for buses into and out of Porthcawl by bus companies such as *'Western Welsh'*. On a more recreational note, the Knights Arms became a popular meeting place for bikers in the 1960s and 1970s, who, by all accounts, livened up summer weekends considerably! (Evans, 2006)



The Knights Arms, June 2015

An Affray in Porthcawl. John Windsor, mate, and Patrick Fitzgerald and Robert Gill, seamen on board the 'Brazilian', were brought before Colonel Morse, under a warrant on Wednesday, and charged with unlawfully assembling in the Square at Porthcawl and making an affray, &c., on the 28th ult. Police-constable Danks said; I am a police-constable stationed at Porthcawl. On Monday last, there was a regatta there and a good many people were there – sailors, inhabitants, and strangers. There were some shows on shore. About ten o'clock, I was called by Mr Griffiths, a grocer, to a row that was taking place near the Knight's Arms public house, on the Square. I went there and found a good many sailors there and some others. The sailors were together and throwing stones. It appeared to me that they threw at everyone they could see. I went towards the sailors and spoke to them, and asked them to go on board. They took no notice of me, but they pelted me as well as the rest. The sailors kept together, and they threw stones at the townsmen and the townsmen threw at them. I don't know which began. I saw the three defendants with the sailors. I saw each of them throw stones. The defendants were remanded to Saturday next, bail being accepted for the sum of their appearance in the sum of £10 each.

Reproduced, as written, from 'What the Paper's Said Vol.8 Jan-Dec 1882', (The Kenfig Society, 2005: 22)

Alleged Affray at Porthcawl – John Winder, mate, Patrick Fitzgerald and Robert Gill, seamen on the ship 'Brazilian', lying at Porthcawl, were brought up on a remand charged with unlawfully assembling on the Square at Porthcawl and causing an affray on the 28th August, and James Hall, seaman on board the 'Rapid', at Porthcawl, was charged with assaulting Police-constable Danks while in the execution of his duty on the same date. The Bench committed the defendant to prison for a week. Mr Stockwood asked the Bench to mitigate the penalty to a fine, as there were friends present willing to pay the money. Defendant had lost his ship and also clothes. The Bench afterwards consented to fine the defendant £2 including costs.

Reproduced, as written, from 'What the Paper's Said Vol.8 Jan-Dec 1882', (The Kenfig Society, 2005:23)

The Square Today

The Square is dominated by 2 buildings, namely the Knights Arms, which has been unoccupied for some years and has fallen into a very poor state of repair, and, to the south-east corner, the rear of the Glamorgan Holiday Home which was built in 1978 (on the site of the Anchor). The large size, long frontage and wide spread of the Glamorgan Holiday Home ensures that it is a building that is dominant in its setting.

Moving in a clockwise direction from the Glamorgan Holiday Home comes the rear access to the car park of the Pier Hotel, 2 cottages, the Knights Arms, Eastnor Lodge, Eastnor House and Torrington Cottage. Then comes the Pirates Club, which was formed in 1938 and was originally the Harbour Inn, and the recently renovated Ship and Castle, which has had several name changes over the years.

The stone walls found in The Square are similar to those in Dock Street and are an important standout feature of the area. While, with the exception of the Knights Arms, the various buildings are in a good condition, the road surface is in a dilapidated state and, like Dock Street and the rest of this part of town, The Square has a neglected feel about it. The Square is largely residential area but it is used as a car park, much to the frustration of residents who, in consequence, have problems parking their own cars. At the time of writing, there are no street signs.



The Ship and Castle, November 2013



Cottages in The Square, June 2015



The rear of the Glamorgan Holiday Home, June, 2015



The Knights Arms, June 2015

Lifeboat Road

The Origins of Lifeboat Road

This dog-leg road runs from John Street to The Square and then extends from The Square to the Esplanade. As the name suggests, Porthcawl's original lifeboat station, built in 1860 and enlarged in 1872, was to be found at the Esplanade end of Lifeboat Road. Following the closure of the lifeboat station, it is believed that Lifeboat House was given permission to stage plays.

Lifeboat Road Today



Lifeboat Road, October, 2015



Houses in Marine Terrace, October 2014

One section of Lifeboat Road runs from John Street to The Square and comprises the rear of the buildings that front the Esplanade. On the opposite side are 2 quite large houses, one of which is 3-storeys high, and, again, the rear of the Knights Arms.

The extension of the road that runs from John Street to the Esplanade is mainly made up of the side of the building fronting the Esplanade, the exception being the entrance to a cottage facing The Square. Once again, there are no street signs.

Pilot Row (once Company Row)

Pilot Row was a short road linking The Square to the area once occupied by Porthcawl Dock and its surroundings. The road ceased to exist after the Pier Hotel was built on the Esplanade. The actual date on which Company Row became Pilot Row is not known nor are the dates when Pilot Row was demolished and when the Pier Hotel was constructed. It is thought both the latter dates were before 1920.

Marine Terrace

The Origins of Marine Terrace

Marine Terrace is a short, narrow road linking The Square with Dock Street. On one side, and on the corner with Dock Street, were the wooden buildings referred to above, together with the backs of the cottages that face The Square. To the other side of the road were 3 houses and the rear of the Knights Arms.

Marine Terrace Today



Marine Terrace from The Square, June 2015

Marine Terrace is a narrow one-way street leading from The Square to Dock Street. The road runs level for about half its length but, as The Square has a higher elevation than Dock Street, Marine Terrace runs down a fairly deep slope to complete its journey.

Currently, there are only 3 houses in Marine Terrace. All are well-kept, with some effort being made to add colour by the introduction of 2 raised flower beds. To the rear of Knights Arms is a very untidy vacant lot, which resembles a builder's yard.

General Characterisation of the Early Residential Area Today

This part of the Porthcawl is unique inasmuch as it reflects the historic link to the middle of the 19th Century, when Porthcawl life mostly revolved around industrial and maritime concerns.

At the last count, there are 20 properties, 9 commercial and 11 residential, which are, in the main, all different. It is this that gives this part of town a character that cannot be found elsewhere in Porthcawl – although there are other roads in the town that can boast properties of a similar age.

One striking feature of this area is the absence of trees and, apart from 3 gardens in The Square, little greenery. Interestingly, this was recognised as far back as 1905 when the then P.U.D.C. agreed to plant trees in The Square (P.U.D.C. minutes, 20th June 1905).

Trees may have been desired, but it is not clear whether any were actually ever planted! Moreover, much of the space in the early residential area is taken up with the backs of the commercial properties that face either John Street or the Esplanade. Thus, in spite of the well-kept state of the individual properties, there is an untidy, random, and unkempt look to the area. This is not helped by the lack of signage and the poor condition of the road surface in The Square.



Southern end of The Square, June 2015



Another example of the walls in the Early Residential Area, October 2014



Lifeboat Road from John Street, June 2015.

Hillsboro Place

The Origins of Hillsboro Place

When Hillsboro Place was originally built it was named Railway Terrace. It is not yet known exactly when the name changed but, while a news report in '*The Glamorgan Gazette*' dated 11th July 1935 refers to Railway Terrace, a further report in the same newspaper dated 29th April 1938, refers to Hillsborough Place (please note the different spelling). These days, though, Railway Terrace is locally referred to as Hillsboro Place and, for the purposes of this report, it will also be referred to as such.

Hillsboro Place dates from the last decades of the 19th Century and is one of the oldest streets in Porthcawl. At first glance, the street appears to be an ordinary row of terraced houses but closer examination of its idiosyncratic features reveals hidden layers of history and development, plus a special character that deserves recognition.

Hillsboro Place runs from north to south and was constructed on a slight rise, parallel to the, then, existing Inner Dock Basin of Porthcawl Dock to the east and in the shelter of a marginally higher piece of ground lying to the south, on which The Square, Marine Terrace and Lifeboat Way are situated. In its time, therefore, Railway Terrace was integral to the Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl.

It can be assumed that the road was given the original name of Railway Terrace, due to its immediate proximity to the railway sidings of the standard-gauge railway that had been extended from Tondy to Porthcawl by the Ogmore Valley Railway Company and taken over by G.W.R. in 1873. Certainly, when the first 12 houses were constructed at the southern end of Hillsboro Place in 1888, the railway network covered a sizeable area which, combined with the Dock, dominated the embryonic town of Porthcawl.

Apart from the main railway line which ran from Tondy to the northern tip of Porthcawl, rail tracks fanned out from the railway station, then sited in South Road, to the Outer Harbour Basin of Porthcawl Dock. This was an

extensive area that stretched down as far as the midway point on the eastern side of the street and included the large railway sidings in the Inner Dock Basin needed to store and transport coal, pit wood, iron, freight and ballast (O.S. Map, 1897; Higgins, 1968)

Hillsboro Place was built by James and Caroline Brogden in the initial wave of Porthcawl's expansion (Morgan, 1987). In view of its position adjacent to the Inner Dock Basin, the coal tips, and railway sidings, building a row of houses with their frontage facing west, away from such a heavily industrialised setting is very understandable. Hence, all the houses in Hillsboro Place face the rear of buildings in what became, and remains, the commercial centre of Porthcawl, John Street, named after John Brogden.

That aside, Hillsboro Place is conveniently situated between the, then, 2 main employers in Porthcawl i.e. the dock and railways on one side, and the main commercial centre of the town on the other. As such, the road can be interpreted as a sensitive bell-weather of Porthcawl's roller-coaster fortunes as the town moved through a process of being a 19th Century maritime trading port, its later decline and subsequent development as a seaside resort, until the present day.

By 1897, numbers 14 -26 had been completed at the northern end of Hillsboro Place, with a gap left between 12 and 14. Whether this gap can be ascribed to superstition or not, is not recorded but, in all probability, there was a need to leave a passage wide enough to allow horse-drawn carts access to the rear of Hillsboro Place.

It seems that the 25 houses in the road had their own outside space at the rear, albeit some being smaller than others. There were 2 other buildings, one a saw-mill and timber yard owned by George Sibbering-Jones, and the other being a laundry or storage sheds, located along the boundary wall between the backs of the houses and the railway sidings, and the Inner Dock Basin. The height of those 2 buildings is unknown, but their combined length equalled the length of the row of the first 12 houses at the southern end of the street. It

is thought that a narrow lane of about 12' separated those 2 buildings from the rear walls of Hillsboro Place (*'The Weekly Mail'*, 11th November, 1905; Higgins 1968).

When grouped together, maps, reports and photographs of the period show that residents of Hillsboro Place had an intimidating scene behind their houses. Apart from the joinery and saw-mill, there were 3 coal tips, again height unknown, and heavy lifting gear such as the coal-loading hoists and chutes in the Inner Dock Basin, along with ships' masts and rigging belonging to vessels at anchor there (O.S. Map 1897; *'The Weekly Mail'*, 11th November, 1905; Morgan, 1996).

Residents of Hillsboro Place were certainly well-placed for work at the height of activity in Porthcawl Dock, but those same residents had to cope with levels of noise, soot and grime attendant on an industrialised environment typical of the 19th Century. In addition, vessels coming in or out of Porthcawl Dock had to contend with the second highest tidal range in the world. With little flexibility in arriving or leaving, those vessels had to take advantage of the tides and, with only a narrow window of opportunity to enter or leave the Dock, noise levels must have been amplified still further as cargoes were loaded or unloaded and crews disembarked at roughly the same time.

The beginning of the 20th Century brought a kaleidoscope of change for Hillsboro Place, however. In 1905, there was a dramatic fire of such proportions that it totally gutted the sawmills and joinery, giving rise to fears for the safety of residents and buildings in the adjoining Dock Street and John Street (*'The Weekly Mail'*, 11th November, 1905).

After that catastrophic event, the saw-mill and timber yard at the rear of Hillsboro Place closed. Later, in 1909, having no further need for access to the saw-mill and timber yard, it is known that P.U.D.C. granted approval for the erection of another house in the road, presumably to close the gap between numbers 12 and 14. The gap was later infilled and by 1914, another house, number 13, had been built in its place (P.U.D.C., 13th July 1909; O.S.1919).

The closure of Porthcawl Dock in 1906, together with the fire in the saw-mills and joinery, transformed the skyline behind the houses in Hillsboro Place. Gone were the dust and noise of the saw-mill and joinery. Gone too, was the Inner Dock Basin with its industrial machinery, heavy lifting gear, the continuous traffic of vessels, their masts and rigging, paddle steamers spewing smoke, ships docking and disembarking at all hours of the day or night. Maybe by modern standards, dirt and noise levels remained high but, at that point in time, those changes to the landscape and skyline behind Hillsboro Place must have been very welcome for its inhabitants.

Added to those changes was a contracture and reconfiguration of the G.W.R. railway system in Porthcawl. As part of Porthcawl's adjustment to growth and its reinvention as a seaside resort, passenger need, rather than heavy industry and freight, became paramount. In response to this shift in demand, G.W.R., extended the railway lines further into town and relocated Porthcawl's railway station from South Road to Dock Street. All of which meant that, behind their houses, the residents of Hillsboro Place exchanged the heavily industrialised setting of the Inner Dock Basin and assorted light industries for the workings of a, then, modern, upgraded and, importantly, less dirty railway system (Higgins, 1968; Morgan, 1987).

13 Hillsboro Place, June 2015



DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT PORTHCAWL.

SAWMILLS AND JOINERY WORKS BURNT DOWN.

A fire occurred at Porthcawl just after midnight on Saturday, spreading in the south-east, and the timber yard of Mr. E. S. Jones being totally destroyed, the damage amounting to several thousands of pounds. The consequences of the conflagration might have been of a far more serious character, and for some time there were suspicions that the fire would spread to Railway-terrace and John-street. The works of Mr. E. S. Jones were situated on the western side of the sea, between Porthcawl beach and a road of not more than a score feet in width separating the timber yard from the back of houses known as Railway-terrace.

It was a few minutes to one o'clock when Porthcawl-Union Fire Engine, commanded by Porthcawl Fire Engine, arrived at the works, as he was approaching from the village of Neuton. He continued his journey with all speed to the police-station at Porthcawl, and in a few minutes the residents of the town were aroused by shouts of "Fire." Meanwhile Sergeant Thomas Jenkins had proceeded to the works, accompanied by Porthcawl-Union Fire Engine and a number of men. It was found that the fire had broken out in the northern portion of the mill, and had extended a long way. The flames were creeping into the air in tremendous columns to a great height, and huge showers of sparks and pieces of burning timber were being cast into the air. It was immediately reported to the police officers that the houses in the neighbourhood of the works were in jeopardy, and several men were dispatched to see that all the houses were evacuated. A short time afterwards were made to check the progress of the flames, but it became evident that such inferior instruments were useless.

NO FIRE BRIGADE.

The town of Porthcawl has no provision for such an emergency, and even if there had been, it would have been of little avail, owing to the severity of the weather in the latter part of the night.

In a brief space of time a large crowd had assembled in the vicinity of the works, and the fire could be seen for miles around. Gradually the flames spread and increased in height. It was impossible to get within a twenty feet range of the buildings, and as time wore on the difficulties of checking the conflagration increased. Dozens of willing helpers, who included most of the employees of the mill, proceeded to remove some of the great stacks of timber in the yard, and many more were taken away in time from the danger zone.

About half an hour after the discovery of the fire it was deemed to require the services of the Bridgend Fire Brigade, which would only have six miles and a half to journey to the scene. Considerable difficulty was experienced on all hands when it was announced that the reply needed over the telephone from one of the members of the brigade was in the affirmative. "The house is gone," Mr. Jones, the owner of the works, was seen of a week-end visit to Down-ville, where a relative of his had died last week, and on his return on official request was sent for the brigade, who, consequently, did not make the journey to Porthcawl.

About two o'clock the flames reached the shops on the northern side of the works, and there were anticipated that a better would be made. Fortunately, however, this did not occur. The roof of the sawmill fell in with a great crash, and the flames now reached a height of eight feet. The wind about the time varied from the south-west to south, and this had the effect of stimulating the flames. As the fire spread near the carpenter's shop, on the west side of the mill, a large pile of timber, standing in the back yard of Railway-terrace, became ignited, and also the back yards, clothes-press, and wooden outhouses of the outages in the locality. The flames were extinguished in this by means of buckets of water, but the work was attended by great loss. As particles of burning material were falling in all directions, the other side of the works there were many persons, as efforts were made to remove the timber from the works. The buildings which were formerly used as offices. These could be placed along the edge of a hillside.

ALARMING DEVELOPMENTS.

The crowd continued to increase, and those who took a great deal of active interest in the work of salvage being Mr. E. S. Jones, J.P., in front of the Town Hall, and other prominent gentlemen. The position became still more alarming, and shortly after two o'clock, when the wind increased in strength, a number of residents of Railway-terrace proceeded to remove their furniture to a place of safety. The furniture was now from end to end, and a number of people were seen to be running up the road to the mill.

The helpers then concentrated their efforts to preventing the flames spreading to Railway-terrace, and the back of the works, and to the station of Mr. E. S. Jones. The bridge, etc., was removed from the path, and the mill, and when the flames had reached it within a few yards, distant Police-sergeant Jenkins and a band of workers mounted the roof of a stone house, and cut away several feet of the stone roof with axes. All the inflammable material was removed from inside the buildings, and a large number of buckets of water were poured over them. The burning mill of the works fell in with a crash, and a large stack of planed planks next to it fell. The office in Railway-terrace was thought to be in danger, and all the books and papers were removed and stored up on the roof of the road. A hose belonging to the Great Western Railway was secured and connected with a hydrant near the docks. This hose was used with effect on the southern corner of the works by a number of young men for a couple of hours, by this means the fire was checked, and, succeeding, but, unfortunately, was largely nullified after one o'clock, and on Sunday there was nothing but a mass of smouldering debris where once had stood one of the chief industries of the district.

THE SCENE ON SUNDAY.

Hundreds of people visited the scene of the fire on Sunday. The boilers were found to be intact, but the machinery in all the departments was totally destroyed, including a dynamo. The machinery included several expensive machines of the latest pattern for joinery work. All the workmen of the mill, and in the other departments, were paid their wages, some of them in the value of £50, and portions of them were to be seen in the disordered mill. All the walls had fallen in, with the exception of the western one, and this was in an oblique position, leaving a gap in the wall. Mr. Jones was concentrated with on Sunday morning, but he was unable to proceed to Porthcawl until late in the evening.

CAUSE OF THE DISASTER.

The question of how the fire was caused is an extremely difficult matter to conjecture. The engineer is, however, to have carefully examined the premises before leaving on Saturday afternoon. It was the eye of Guy Fawkes Day, and fireworks were being let off in various parts of the district, but no information is, however, to hand as to any being fired near the works. This has been given as a probable cause of the disaster, but it is not generally accepted. It appears that Mr. Jenkins, foreman of the works, visited every department on Saturday evening, but saw nothing amiss.

WHY THE BRIDGEND BRIGADE DID NOT ARRIVE.

The reason why the Bridgend Fire Brigade did not attend the fire at Porthcawl, it appears, was that they did not consider the mill a permanent one. When on Sunday morning an inflammable material was found, it was sent to the Porthcawl Fire Engine, and that office, it is stated, subsequently communicated to Bridgend, and the services of the brigade would be asked, as there were no hydrants, and the fire had practically spread itself. The brigade is now formed of police. Some three years ago the Bridgend Brigade attended a fire at Porthcawl. Though they were unable to save the building, a very small one, it was, however, they, undoubtedly, prevented the fire from spreading. The premises destroyed have been built on the Porthcawl Urban District Council, the owners of the property, and the man who gave the mill all repaired liability, and the building, which was burnt to the ground, was not insured.

Mr. W. H. Gail, the captain of the brigade, explained to our reporter, and that had the brigade remained voluntary, with himself as captain, he should certainly have saved the mill, and the fire at Porthcawl.

The People & Houses of Railway Terrace (Hillsboro Place)

The first 12 houses at the southern end of Hillsboro Place at the corner of where it meets Dock Street were built as a single row of houses in 1888, and the 1891 Census shows that a total of 54 residents lived in those 12 houses. It is not possible to identify who lived where but the occupations of the heads of those households were an architect/surveyor, 3 masons, a carpenter, a clerk, a naval pensioner, a launderer and 3 or 4 landladies, all occupations distinctly associated with the adjacent docks, railway system and neighbouring buildings.

Although Porthcawl Dock was in decline, another 14 houses had already been added to the northern end of Hillsboro Place by 1897. The 1901 Census shows that only 2 of the original residents remained in the road that now housed a total of 73 people with 6 of the 25 houses left vacant.

By 1900, Porthcawl was well into the process of coming together as an urban conurbation, and the 1901 Census reveals that the occupations of the heads of the households in the road were more diverse than in 1891. Namely, there was a master mariner, a retired publican, a monthly nurse, a retired inn-keeper, 3 stonemasons, a letter press printer, a mason, a retired butcher, a brewer's traveller, a plasterer, a lodging house keeper, a railway plate layer, a steam crane driver, a collier and a retired tailor.

A laundry also seems to have been added to the houses already built in Hillsboro Place as, in 1910, an advert appeared in the *'Porthcawl News'* for a hand laundry based at '0 Railway Terrace'. In addition, both the 1891 and 1901 Censuses list 2 households with at least someone with the occupation of launderer.

Even more intriguing is that, apart from the houses built on the east side of Hillsboro Place, a small white single-storey building was constructed on the opposite side of the road that, it is believed, began life as a seaman's mission, although there are several unconfirmed reports that the church or chapel was of the spiritualist faith.

This building is still there and appears to have been fully integrated into the back of a shop in John Street but, if looked at carefully, it can still be identified by its irregularly-shaped external walls.



The old seamen's mission? October, 2014

Hillsboro Place (Railway Terrace) Today:

It is known that Railway Terrace had become Hillsboro (Hillsborough?) Place by April 1938. These days, the street still occupies a central position in Porthcawl's day-to-day activity. As matters stand, Hillsboro Place borders the town's Conservation area but it is not part of it, although the street has deep roots in the industrial and maritime phase of Porthcawl's growth and development.

Many people, residents and visitors alike, use Hillsboro Place as a shortcut into and out of John Street, Harbour-side, the Eastern Prom, the Portway Health Centre and Hillsboro car park. Heavy vehicles make daily deliveries to the goods entrances at the back of the shops in John Street, and cars and taxis use the small square made by the junction of James Street and Hillsboro Place as a turning circle and/or standing space.

Even large vehicles which frequently have obvious difficulty in turning their vehicles safely, and without risk to any pedestrians unlucky enough to be in their path, use Hillsboro Place with impunity. The net result is that, at certain times of the day, particularly in the summer months or when there is a special event in Porthcawl such as the Jazz or Elvis Festivals, the streetscape is busy, sometimes very busy, with lots of movement.

The Defining Architectural and/or Building Features of Hillsboro Place

Looking north to south in Hillsboro Place, the vista is framed by houses and buildings on either side of the street. Other features include the recycling bins at the back of the John Street shops and parked vehicles of some description.

There is no focal point or landmarks and no one dominant building. As to be expected in view of the period in which they were built, the defining architectural style of construction can be typified as late 19th Century, 2-storey, terraced houses with the earlier houses being more distinctive in style.

There are no trees or greenery in the street frontage except for the occasional tubs placed there by residents, and, as none of the houses have front gardens, their doors open straight on to the pavement. The pavement surfaces have been replaced with modern paviors and, although they are in relatively good condition, the pavements are narrow in width, so giving the street a narrow, cramped impression.

The road surface is potholed and uneven with some markings distracting to the eye. There is just 1 street sign and that is high up, above eye level, on the house facing James Street. There are also 4 standard street lamps of a modern design, one of which is positioned right next to the exterior wall of one of the houses.

Although 1 house operates as a dental surgery and a few seem to have been sub-divided into flats, nearly all of the houses appear to be domestic dwellings. The 12 houses that were built in 1888 at the southern end of Hillsboro Place, are of a more uniform appearance than those completed later at the northern end of the street.

Numbers 1-12 Hillsboro Place

These 12 houses are of a Victorian villa style with stone facing and, while a few of that group have resurfaced their exterior walls with a pebble dash finish or painted the exterior stone work, most seem to have retained the original stone finish. All appear to have been built with halls adjoining and canted bays which have been retained,

together with their tiled roofing, lead flashing and decorative brick edging, save 2, which have been rounded since their initial build.

All 12 houses have 2 high gables of alternate height facing straight into the street. Whilst the roof line remains aligned in all 12, most have replaced their roofs with a mixture of tiles of disparate colours and materials which, to a degree, interrupts the roof line. Unusually for bay fronted houses, the front doors open directly on to the street.

Given their age and the weathering they must have experienced, it is unsurprising that most of those 12 houses have had their wooden fascia and barge boards replaced by those made of uPVC. A few have opted to retain or replicate wooden fascia boards and finials closely resembling those found on houses elsewhere in '*old Porthcawl*' which were built about the same time as Hillsboro Place, for example in Church Place, Mary Street and the bottom part of Victoria Avenue.

Again, as to be expected with age and weathering, most, though not all, of those original houses have modern fenestration. Most have also replaced their front doors although some have chosen to retain and/or restore their front doors and bring them forward in line with the exterior walls of their houses, gaining space by absorbing their small recessed porches. A few of those who have not done so, appear to have kept the period tiling in the porches.

Back in the largely coal-fired era, terraced houses were frequently built with shared chimney stacks and Hillsboro Place is typical in that respect. What is surprising in view of their age and the adverse weather conditions in this part of the Bristol Channel coastline, is that 7 of those first 12 houses have retained, what looks to be, their original chimneys stacks topped by terracotta chimney pots, albeit in various states of repair. Those surviving chimney stacks have the same characteristic decorative pale brick edging as that found around the windows of the houses and at the base of the canted bay windows.

Number 13 Hillsboro Place

It is known that number 13 was built between 1909 and 1914, later than the other houses in Hillsboro Place. It has a lower roof line than elsewhere in the road and an exterior pebble dash finish, modern door and window fenestration which, together, give it post-1945 appearance. Interestingly, in spite of a lower roof line both to the back and front of the house, and a more modern presentation, number 13 appears to share a chimney stack with a similar appearance as the other surviving 7, suggesting that it was constructed around the chimney stack of number 12, one of the original houses.

Numbers 14 to 26 Hillsboro Place



Hillsboro Place looking south, September 2013

Unconfirmed reports suggest that the more diverse group of 13 houses at the northerly end of Hillsboro Place were built later in groups of 2 or 4. It is widely known that number 26 was demolished some years ago, and the remaining 12 houses have fewer architectural characteristics in common than the original 12, for example only one or two of the 12 have gabled roofs. Like the houses at the other end of the street, they have mostly been re-roofed with various materials such as slate and concrete tiles as well as having uPVC replacement doors and windows. Some have bay windows in differing styles - canted, rounded, full, or just curved uPVC - with casement windows, while a few are flat-

fronted and, as with those houses built circa 1888, some have recessed porches.

As a whole, though, owners of this group of houses seem to have made more visible attempts to personalise their buildings by painting exterior walls and highlighting lintels and/or architraves in different colours such as blue and terracotta.

What is noteworthy, is that the appearance of the very end house at the northern tip of Hillsboro Place bears the most similarity to those at the southerly end. It has the same stone finish to the exterior walls, and its chimney stack is like those of the first 12 houses as it has the same decorative brick edging as that around its doors and windows.

Very unusually, this end of the street forms a *de facto* gateway to Hillsboro Place for pedestrians coming into John Street and Porthcawl from Hillsboro car park. The end exterior wall of the last house has a pebble-dash finish in good condition with, what appear to be, 2 buttresses against the wall. Possibly, they were built when the adjoining house was demolished some years ago in preparation for a proposed regeneration of the Portway and Salt Lake car park that did not, in fact, happen.

The Western Side of Hillsboro Place

The opposite side of Hillsboro Place is primarily made up of the backs of the shops in John Street, though the first floor of 2 or 3 of the buildings have been converted into flats. The backs of the shops all vary in design, appearance and upkeep, with a mixture of gates and doors as entrances.

Some businesses have made room for parking cars at the rear of shops and, in addition, there is a limited parking facility along the length of the road, which can be utilised for loading and unloading vehicles but there is no parking for personal cars.

There are also a number of large, plastic rubbish bins, all of which magnifies the untidy and unkempt appearance of this side of the road. A number of shops with their backs facing into Hillsboro Place, could also benefit from a fresh coat of paint.

Open Space, Views and Vista

Adjacent to the end house at the northerly end of Hillsboro Place are 13 bollards, and a slightly raised, grassy area, that stretches north towards the Portway Health Centre, 3 private garages and the backs of some shops at the northern end of John Street. The rear of 2 or 3 of these shops have been personalised and converted into private dwellings with their own entrances and staircases.

It is here that Hillsboro Place probably sees the greatest footfall and pedestrian movement as most people use it as a short-cut to John Street, Hillsboro and Salt Lake car parks, the nearby Portway Health Centre, and the beach, fairground and caravan park to the east. Turning the corner here, one is confronted with a surprising contrast between the front and rear aspects of Hillsboro Place. While neither aspect has any trees or greenery and they share a streetscape of the continual movement of people, the rear of Hillsboro Place has a very open landscape and vista.

Part of the reason for this is that, in addition to their back gardens, the residents of Hillsboro Place have a private road of approximately 7 metres (22') at its widest, between their garden walls and the wall of Hillsboro car park. There are reports that this private road was donated to the residents of Hillsboro Place by G.W.R., for use as a children's playground. This has yet to be confirmed although the road does correlate with markings on O.S. Maps dating from 1897.

Moreover, at its southern end, there are concrete foundations which were, allegedly, G.W.R. holding sheds. True or not, the road is a useful outside amenity space for Hillsboro residents as well as an effective barrier between them and the many users of the public car park.

Those foundations of the railway sheds can only be seen in the private road, and they are one of the sparse reminders of Porthcawl's industrial and maritime origins. Other than those, there are no other material hints or indications in Hillsboro Place which point to the changes and upheavals that the road and the people who are living there, or who have lived there, have witnessed and undergone.

At the rear of Hillsboro Place, residents do have an immediate view of Hillsboro car park but as has been mentioned, beyond that, they have unimpeded, panoramic views to the east, replicating those seen from Salt Lake and the Eastern Prom that, some claim, are the best in Porthcawl. When tidal conditions are right and visibility is good, the Tusker Rocks can be seen as a black smudge on the seascape, just left of the Pier and the Porthcawl Lighthouse. Many current Hillsboro residents have chosen to maximise these outstanding and unique, visual aspects by enlarging windows, building balconies and generally enhancing their outside spaces overlooking Porthcawl Sands, better known locally as Coney Beach.

This report will now move on to offer proposals that the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** regard as desirable for the improvement of the old Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl.

Examples of personalised houses, July 2015





Top left: Different door designs

Centre: Finials and coping on the gables

Bottom Right: gable design

Bottom left: original tiled entry

Top right: yellow brick quoins

Centre left: Original tiled entry.

Centre right: original chimney

Bottom left: Rear of houses from Hillsboro car park.

Hillsboro Place looking north, September 2014



PART 5

Proposals for the future development of the Maritime and Industrial Area of Porthcawl

Clearly, as the 19th Century gave way to the 20th Century, Porthcawl consciously chose to carve out a new identity for itself. In doing so, the town turned its back on its maritime and industrial origins in the years after the closure of Porthcawl Dock in 1906. Viewed through the looking glass of historical perspective, Porthcawl, seemingly, erased all trace of its industrial and maritime phase from its collective memory while it established itself as a seaside resort.

At the outset of the 21st Century, attitudes have evolved. The outlook towards the built and natural environments has altered and more importance is attached to their harmonious interaction and the manner in which they impact on urban conurbations and the lifestyle choices they offer. Coupled with these factors, has come a heightened awareness and appreciation of local history and how it is reflected in buildings, townscapes and, in Porthcawl's case, seascapes. All told, it would appear that the old 'either/or' mindset has been replaced by a realisation that the past and present can co-exist to beneficial effect.

In south Wales, the 21st Century has begun with radical ideas concerning a new city region along the Bristol Channel coastline comprised of Cardiff, Newport and Bristol. It is envisaged that Porthcawl, though at the geographical margins of this venture, will be integral to a proposed metro system that will eventually service this new city region. If, in the fullness of time, the city region and the metro system come to pass and, more important, if Porthcawl is actually included, we will have come full circle. The town will be back on the transport map – which is how it came into being almost 2 centuries ago (*The Western Mail*, 14th February, 2015).

At a macro-level, the idea of a new city region and added choice in the means of travel is an exciting prospect but, unlike the Georgians who put Porthcawl on the map in only 3 years, it seems that the town will have to wait a projected 20 years to achieve this new idyll!

Meanwhile, there is work to be done if Porthcawl is to once again to shine as the 'Gem of the wild South Wales coast' (*The Glamorgan Gazette*, 30th August 1907 refers).

The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** believes that the old Maritime and Industrial Area of the town holds the key to the rejuvenation of Porthcawl. In the view of the Society, it is hard to escape the feeling that Porthcawl's underlying maritime and industrial heritage can, with thought and insight, be reclaimed and recognised as an important, positive and, indeed, proud part of Porthcawl's townscape and identity.

On a practical level, simply improving all aspects of signage and developing an interpretation scheme related to Porthcawl's past industrial and maritime significance as well as its links to inland Glamorgan, would provide a fundamental means to restore the industrial and maritime part of town. As well as smartening up the Early Residential Area, both measures would help to endow a positive idea of place and attach a sense of identity to that original part of town and mark its history.

Up to now, this report has assessed past events and milestones in Porthcawl's history and dealt with contemporary developments that have affected the Porthcawl landscape and townscape. The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** also recognises that there are many other possibilities and choices for the future of Porthcawl.

This extensive report will now put forward the following raft of ideas with which the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** believes the old Industrial and Maritime Area of Porthcawl can be improved, maintained, restored and perpetuated for future generations, thereby enhancing Porthcawl's unique coastal characteristics.

Proposals for the future development of Harbour-side



To date, the makeover in Harbour-side is a success story and the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** is pleased to have co-operated with B.C.B.C. in making a bid for the H.L.F. grant in regard to the preservation and restoration of Porthcawl's old Maritime and Industrial Area.

The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** also welcomes the resources that have already been invested in and made available for improvements, and the work that has been completed in terms of the Listed structures and buildings in the Harbour-side area. At the time of writing this report, the Pilot Look-out Tower and the Old Customs House are still undergoing repair and restoration, and the restoration of the Outer Harbour Basin and West Pier, The Pier and Lighthouse, has been completed.

Hence, Harbour-side has become a much improved area of Porthcawl, offering more opportunities for the leisure and recreational pursuits of the residents of the town and its visitors.

Also on the plus-side, the renovated Outer Harbour Basin is appealing to a greater number of the sailing fraternity, and is able to attract more income streaming for B.C.B.C. Taken as a whole, Harbour-side now provides a unique and attractive focal point befitting this historic part of Porthcawl.

- Even so, it is suggested that B.C.B.C. make additional improvements to safety features throughout the Harbour-side area. This part of town is very exposed to high winds, fierce gales and weather events. If future injuries and loss of life are to be avoided, safety features need to be enhanced as soon as possible
- It is also suggested that B.C.B.C. make further efforts to maintain and restore the remaining vestiges of the D.L.P.R. tram-road rail and the commemorative plaque in the second tier of the Pier
- Both are showing their age, especially the tram-road rail embedded in the surface of the Pier. There are very few remains of that historic, late Georgian transport innovation, and it would be a shame if they were to disappear altogether
- Extra seating in Harbour-side would also be very welcome. Many people visit the area during the year and an uncomfortable fact of life is that more of them (and of us!) are older and of limited mobility
- Seating in the form of a shelter did exist at one time, alongside the Pilot Look-out Tower. Unfortunately, replacement seating has not been installed since the shelter's removal some years ago.

Proposals for the future development of the Jennings Warehouse



An artist's impression of the renovated Jennings Warehouse

The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** has followed the fate of the Jennings Warehouse for many years and was instrumental in getting listed status for this unusual building. The Society has, therefore, noted with great interest, the recent announcement that the Warehouse is about to be restored and converted into a theatre-style, kitchen restaurant complete with a full-height atrium, as well as further smaller café and food establishments with views overlooking the sea.

The Society is pleased that, after protracted delays, the future of the Jennings Warehouse is looking more assured and plans have now been submitted for its restoration. Certainly, Porthcawl is in great need of a high-end restaurant. It is to be hoped that the combination of the history and background of the Jennings Warehouse, its position and the views that it commands, will ensure that the new restaurant will attract a lot of custom.

Nevertheless, the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** does have some concerns regarding the current proposals:

- Rather than the Jennings Warehouse being used wholly for commercial use, it had been expected that, at least in part, the building would be utilised as a town amenity, perhaps as a much-needed new library, possibly incorporating a liberal arts centre

- Porthcawl lacks such an all-weather facility as a liberal arts centre. The inclusion of such an outward-looking, community asset in the restoration of the Jennings Warehouse would not only be of educational value but would also be a welcome addition to the activities and choices that the town has to offer
- As the Jennings Warehouse is not just a heritage asset but an extremely large space, it was also expected that the redevelopment of the Jennings Warehouse, would incorporate some facilities for Porthcawl's flourishing voluntary and community sector
- At the last count, Porthcawl has over 100 different voluntary groups and organisations serving all generations in the town and surrounding areas. Unfortunately, the town has a dearth of venues where they can meet and base their activities. The Jennings Warehouse would have been ideal to fill that gap, and it is to be hoped that it is not too late to include facilities such as these that are of benefit to the community at large
- As matters stand, the current proposals for the Jennings Warehouse are for the creation of 13 units on the first floor to include office space suitable for small creative industries, together with loft bedroom space. The Society has concerns that, despite the good intentions, these could be eventually converted into 1 bedroom flats
- Whatever the outcome, the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** considers it important that the restoration of the Jennings Warehouse should not have a detrimental impact on the forward-looking plans for the new Maritime Centre in Cosy Corner that seem to be well-advanced.

Proposals for the future development of Cosy Corner



An artist's impression of the proposed Maritime Centre (By courtesy of Mark James)

By all accounts, this well-remembered amenity space in Porthcawl is about to experience another change in fortunes. Hopefully, with support from all sectors of the town, Cosy Corner will again fulfil a useful role in Porthcawl when the proposed new Maritime Centre is up and running.

Fundamentally, the Maritime Centre is a forward-looking concept that aims to be multi-functional. It is expected to incorporate an educational and visitors centre and, amongst other things, provide new and much-needed amenities for Porthcawl Sea Cadets, accommodation for mariners visiting Porthcawl, a restaurant, a wave machine and a small open-air theatre. It also aims to be a national centre for surfing excellence that should sit well with future, long-term ambitions for watersports in Swansea Bay.

Parallel to the main building, it is intended that there will be racking for small boats unable to make use of the Outer Harbour Basin. At the time of writing, planning permission has been agreed for this and a grant of almost £300,000 obtained from the U.K.'s Treasury Coastal Communities Fund in partnership with the Welsh Assembly and Big Lottery Fund.

The signs are promising. **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** is pleased to note that the Porthcawl Harbour-side Community Interest Company (C.I.C.), which is responsible for developing the Maritime Centre, has already asked for volunteers for the first of its Coastal Science and Discovery Outreach events ('*The Gem*', 28th May 2015).

That said, **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** believes that, even if at this late stage, the Maritime Centre does not come to fruition, Cosy Corner should be firmly designated for the future leisure and recreational use of the people of Porthcawl which, historically, has been the case and for which it is so well-suited.

Car parking

Increasing road usage is an unavoidable reality of the modern world, especially for Porthcawl since the demise of the railway system into the town in the 1960's. The inescapable fact is that the only way into and out of contemporary Porthcawl is by road.

Regrettably, those roads links are of limited capacity. It is not unusual for roads in and out of the town to be grid-locked or closed at the height of the summer season, or when an exceptional volume of traffic is being experienced such as when Porthcawl is a venue for sporting events like the British Seniors Open Golf Tournament at the Royal Porthcawl Golf Club. As well as benefitting the residents of Porthcawl, it is widely appreciated that an adequate and realistic car parking strategy is needed if Porthcawl is to cope with the increasing amount of tourist traffic that is being attracted to the town.

At a general level, the beaches each have their own car parking arrangements and there is limited provision for car parking along the Eastern Promenade and the Esplanade. At times of heightened demand, residential areas like Victoria Avenue and the surrounding streets, also serve as unofficial car parks to the very considerable inconvenience of residents. There is also a short-term car park at the back of John Street which can become particularly congested when demand is high or there is an event in the town.

Car parking in Porthcawl, is problematic and subject to quite sharp peaks in demand. If it is to be successfully resolved to the satisfaction of both Porthcawl residents and its visitors, **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** is of the view that the entire issue of car parking in the town needs to be given special attention in the context of Porthcawl being a unique and popular, seaside destination in B.C.B.C.

Proposals for the future development of Hillsboro car park



In this scenario of generalised car parking difficulties, Hillsboro car park obviously has a vital role to play in any future car parking strategy for Porthcawl.

As mentioned earlier in this document, Hillsboro car park has a dual-purpose function inasmuch as it is officially a long-term car park while also serving as a *de facto* entry and exit point to the town for both eastwards and westwards moving pedestrian traffic.

Hillsboro car park is, therefore, central to many elements in the town. The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** suggests that its function and appearance could be further improved by:

- First and foremost, making entry into the car park safe for pedestrians. As things are, pedestrians entering the car park from Hillsboro Place, step straight into the path of moving traffic in the car park
- Displaying warning signs of moving traffic that are prominently situated. Better still, a pedestrian walkway should be clearly marked out along the wall separating the rear of Hillsboro Place from the car park itself
- Resurfacing and marking out the car park, and landscaping the perimeter flower beds to make them more attractive, maybe by using sponsorship
- Improving directional and information signage in a legible and understandable format and positioning the signage appropriately in an easily seen, prominent place
- Upgrading and improving the pedestrian access linking Hillsboro car park with Porthcawl town centre, Harbour-side, Eastern Prom, leisure facilities and Salt Lake
- Upgrading the entrances to Dock Street and Hillsboro Place from Hillsboro car park
- Positioning legible, easily seen signage indicating the main thoroughfares and venues in Porthcawl at the entrances to Hillsboro Place and Dock Street
- Improving and upgrading the steps and sloping walkway into Hillsboro Place so that it is easier to negotiate and more suitable for those with limited mobility
- Widening the sloping walkway into Hillsboro Place to enable at least 2 motorised wheelchairs or mobility scooters to pass each other with ease. The **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** considers that there is sufficient land available to implement this change
- Exploring the possibility of removing the 2 bollards at the bottom of the slope into Hillsboro Place as they impede the passage of wheelchairs and mobility scooters
- Upgrading the railings alongside the present steps and slope in Hillsboro car park. One size does not fit all and, as there are many more people and children with mobility issues in society, the railings should be graduated so that they are suitable for children and people of varying heights
- Restoring the Harlequin building and making it available for some suitable purpose such as an office or shop, information centre, or, possibly a tourist resource with a display of the history of that part of Porthcawl and the addition of a seating area
- Reinstating the benches around the perimeter of Hillsboro car park as soon as possible for users of the Portway surgery and those with limited mobility.

Proposals for the future development of Salt Lake car park



The whole of the old Maritime and Industrial Area in Porthcawl is in dire need of restoration and renovation but, as stated earlier in this document, it is Salt Lake that is the main focus of local demand for regeneration and/or restoration in the town.

At present, Salt Lake is no more than a big area of derelict land that lies vacant for a greater part of the year. As such, it is a gateway feature of the unwanted kind – an eyesore.

In view of its crucial importance, the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** would like to re-iterate the earlier point made in the section on the character of '*Salt Lake Today*', page 56 of this report refers:

'...Taking a more positive viewpoint, Salt Lake is a big parcel of prized waterfront land that remains hugely important to modern Porthcawl, as it was to our forebears. It is an entry point to the town and Harbour-side, and it is in very close proximity to Porthcawl's commercial centre. It is adjacent to a big, attractive, sandy beach and a long stretch of promenade that leads to the Esplanade and, ultimately, as far as the green, open space of Locks Common.

It is the views that are Salt Lake's real trump card, however. Setting aside the Coney Beach funfair, arrival at Salt Lake presents someone with a wide, open vista and scenes of Ogmores-by-Sea, the far distant Lias cliffs of Southerndown and Dunraven and the north Devon coastline. In more immediate sight, is

a seascape and the structures of Harbour-side and Porthcawl's Lighthouse at the end of Porthcawl Pier...'

- There should be a recognition of Salt Lake's past importance and historic significance to both Porthcawl's industrial and maritime era and to the town's leisure and recreational industry during the inter-war period
- For the best part of 100 years, Salt Lake has been an economic and social amenity for the Porthcawl populace
- From discussions with both members and non-members of the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society**, together with letters to the press, it is believed that there is considerable, probably widespread, opposition to any proposal to build on Salt Lake
- There should also be a generalised recognition of Salt Lake's outstanding views and its intrinsic value as an area of special scenic interest
- Accordingly, Salt Lake should be given an officially protected designation of some kind and retained as an amenity space in Porthcawl, accessible to the local community
- In place of the sometimes uncertain and precarious 'fencing' presently surrounding Salt Lake, the area should be properly and attractively enclosed
- Salt Lake itself could then be grassed over and creatively landscaped, perhaps incorporating picnic areas, to become Porthcawl's civic gardens and, possibly, offer community involvement and/or work experience in the project (please see photographs of examples of coastal civic gardens below)
- The area could then be left available for recreational and leisure purposes, - which, historically, has been the case
- There are many advantages to such an approach. Utilising Salt Lake for a housing development would bring in immediate

revenue for B.C.B.C., but would also incur indeterminate long-term costs of varying kinds

- Much depends on the density of any building work proposed but added infrastructure would undoubtedly be needed to cope with the greater influx of cars
- The extra number of people moving into the area would burden the already strained health, education and social services, quite apart from any other aspects of the public sector
- On the other hand, designating Salt Lake to be a public amenity space would be a do-able, comparatively low-cost course of action to take
- As a public amenity space in Porthcawl, Salt Lake would become a focal point and a source of social investment for the people in the town
- As such, it could function as a community hub and act as a venue for such events as festivals, town occasions and gatherings in Porthcawl, all of which could be enjoyed by the town's inhabitants and visitors alike
- A spillover car park could be incorporated into the design of the civic gardens and made available on occasions when demand is high
- Such a strategy would have the additional advantage of preserving the outstanding panoramic views eastwards, which are a particular feature of that part of Porthcawl, for the whole of the population
- An information board giving full details of the varied, colourful history of this area of Porthcawl – its industrial and maritime heritage as well as its leisure past -- could form part of the design of the Salt Lake civic gardens
- Alternatively, Salt Lake could be converted into a Lido as it was in all but name in the 1920's and 1930's. Or, as Salt Lake is a very large area, such a public facility could also be built into the design of the civic gardens
- Similarly, a boating lake such as that of the 1920's and 1930's, could be integrated into the civic gardens
- If Salt Lake were to be adapted in the manner suggested above, children's play facilities could be included, preferably sited near to the Outer Harbour Basin and the proposed Maritime Centre
- Cycling facilities could also be incorporated
- Such a scheme could also include dedicated facilities for all-weather activities of a multi-functional variety, which are so sorely need in Porthcawl.



Gardens and seating on the seafront at Aberavon, July 2015



Photographs of gardens and public art on the seafront at Aberavon, July 2015

Proposals for the future development of the Eastern Prom



As it is adjacent to and within the Eastern Prom's line of vision, any development of Salt Lake is bound to influence and have a direct bearing on the Eastern Prom. Indeed, it would be advantageous to both parts of Porthcawl, if any future improvements and developments to Salt Lake and the Eastern Prom were conceived with each in mind and carried out in parallel.

- As with Salt Lake, the Eastern Prom was part of the old Inner Dock Basin and so has a past historic importance to Porthcawl, and its development from a port to a seaside resort. It, too, should be given a designated protected status of some kind compatible with Salt Lake
- It has already been mentioned that the surface of the Eastern Prom is in immediate need of repair. It is, therefore, suggested that the surface of the Eastern Prom be given the highest priority and repaired as a matter of urgency
- Safety features on the Eastern Prom such as the addition of railings to the seaward wall, also require immediate attention if future accidents are to be avoided
- There is a shortage of public toilet facilities in Porthcawl and, for a tourist destination, this is a very serious shortcoming. Urgent consideration should be given to restoring the Baden-Powell building and converting it into a public convenience
- The restoration and repainting of the shelter on the Eastern Prom should also be given a

high priority. As it is, the shelter affords useful seating at a prominent point in this public area and needs to be preserved

- Even so, **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** acknowledges that the shelter is frequently used as an unofficial public convenience and consideration should possibly be given to its conversion into a public toilet. Either way, the building should undergo remedial work and be given a formal function as a clean place to sit **OR** as a public convenience
- The Eastern Prom remains a very well-used thoroughfare. Unfortunately, although the original benches have lasted well - over 50 years, in fact - they are now well past their sell-by date and should be replaced.
- Leaving aside the desirability of suitable seating on a seaside promenade, as the population is ageing and becoming more infirm the need for seating in public places has increased, not diminished. Replacement benches of a sturdy, attractive, conservation quality should, consequently, be installed on the Eastern Prom as soon as possible
- Many recall that the raised flower beds were a very pleasing part of the Eastern Prom when it was first opened and for some time afterwards. Fortunately, the hard landscaping surrounding the raised beds has survived the passage of time fairly well
- As well as being appropriate to a promenade in a seaside resort, it would be good to see these raised beds planted up once again, perhaps with wild flowers as is already the case with some of the roundabouts in Porthcawl
- Possibly, sponsors could be found to plant up the beds in the same way as roundabouts are sponsored throughout the rest of B.C.B.C. Perhaps too, the restoration of the flower beds could be part of a community or work experience scheme.

Proposals for the future development of the Early Residential Area around Porthcawl Dock:

The Square

NO ROAD SIGN

Porthcawl Civic Trust Society suggests that there are several measures that could improve the appearance and function of The Square. It could be made a more congenial place for its residents by:

- Achieving a practical design scheme for The Square that makes sensitive use of hard and soft landscaping, seating, lighting, public art and signage
- Introducing a street sign together with simple directional and information signage that would reinforce the sense of The Square as both a real place and a destination
- Integrating adequate car parking provision in The Square's design scheme
- Prioritising resident's car parking provision in the design scheme
- Reinforcing links between The Square and Hillsboro Place car park, the Esplanade, Harbour-side and Porthcawl town centre
- Achieving an acceptable new use for the untidy lot at the rear of the Knights Arms, for example car parking provision
- Protecting heritage features. Walling in The Square is a standout feature and efforts need to be made to maintain and improve this walling as it is a major aspect of this part of Porthcawl's townscape
- Auditing and protecting such walling that presently exists within a Conservation area management plan and relevant examples of such walling should be proposed for listing
- The Square and its surroundings should be part of a series of town walks with signage and interpretation boards.

Rear of the
Knights Arms,
April 2015



Hillsboro Place



Like The Square, **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** believes that Hillsboro Place should have a design scheme. It is suggested that Hillsboro Place should also come within Porthcawl's Conservation area and:

- Road markings should be removed or reduced and adequate control of parking and/or unloading through new entry signage should be introduced
- The link from James Street to John Street should be reinforced by improving surface treatment, pedestrian signage, landscaping and public seating
- The link to Hillsboro car park should also be improved as part of a more formalised gateway to the traditional town centre in John Street
- The western edge of Hillsboro Place should be softened by introducing a planting scheme and properties to the rear of John Street should be screened
- Pavements should be widened with the possible provision of public seating
- Conservation grade street lighting should be installed
- Service arrangements should be reviewed to mitigate the impact on residents of heavy goods traffic
- Hillsboro Place should form part of a series of town walks/trails through appropriate signage and interpretation boards
- Advisory leaflets for residents on property repair and maintenance should be available in order to safeguard any remaining original details.



The northern end of Hillsboro Place, June 2015

In summary:

What has been learned?

Porthcawl has quite a story to tell but, so effective has been the process of editing out Porthcawl's maritime and industrial origins, that it has made this a difficult and challenging report for the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** to research and prepare. Indeed, unearthing many of the facts relating to Porthcawl's early history has been akin to discovering a treasure trove!

There is a sadness that Porthcawl has allowed the past, and the efforts of its forebears, to be so overlooked but there has been inspiration too. One has only to look at the photograph of the abandoned Inner Dock Basin in 1917 (see page 51) to realise the size of the task that confronted the town after the port officially closed in 1906. To Porthcawl's credit, the town and its leaders were not intimidated. They stepped up to the plate and took on the daunting job of turning the town into a coastal destination of note. With great prescience they caught the crest of a wave and, with no real template to guide them, they moulded Porthcawl into a seaside resort that gave respite and enormous pleasure to people in the Depression-hit Twenties and Thirties, whose lives were otherwise grim, oppressed and blighted by poverty. The same can be said for the war-weary who came to Porthcawl in their droves during WWI and WWII. Even today, Porthcawl is spoken of with great warmth by many, some from far afield, who hold fond memories of the town and its people.

Every age has its problems and every generation has to find its own solutions. Now, in the first quarter of the 21st Century, Porthcawl finds itself at another watershed in its development. There are echoes of the past in Porthcawl's current situation and the town should take heart from its predecessors as they, too, faced such a moment. They had such a choice. They could have regarded the closure of maritime trading at the port and the wasteland they were left with as the death-knell of Porthcawl. Or they could have regarded it as a springboard into a brighter future. They choose the latter and the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** thinks that this is what Porthcawl should do in the 21st Century. Not by closing the door on the town's past though. Porthcawl's story is not a secret to be hidden as there is much to be proud of in Porthcawl's comparatively short history as a seaside resort.

The here and now

Porthcawl remains blessed with many natural environmental assets. As **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** has said previously in this report, there can be few better places to either live in or visit when the sun is shining. With excellent beaches, a wide promenade that stretches for miles around an interesting, scenic coastline, the western end of Porthcawl can hold its head up high. The old maritime and industrial centre of town - Harbour-side - with its pleasant, historic Harbour is being revitalised and, looking ahead, there are exciting prospects for the Cosy Corner area. Future plans for water-sports in the Swansea Bay area, together with ongoing

improvements and T.H.I. investment in The Square and elsewhere, all signal an encouraging, positive change in mind-set from past negativity and a failure to protect and preserve Porthcawl's original townscape and heritage assets.

Notwithstanding these developments, there is still a requirement to nurture and protect Porthcawl's quality of place, its built environment and its form, lest the town's buildings and structures will be pushed down a crowded agenda at a time of competing needs. For example, the dilapidated state of the once pristine Eastern Prom needs attention and rectifying as soon as possible. Sufficient resources should also be given to a reliable system of publicising, as well as auditing and monitoring, the town's heritage assets. In addition to registering and safeguarding previously ignored heritage assets such as the sea walls in the Early Residential Area i.e. Dock Street, and the stone walls in The Square, Marine Terrace and Lifeboat Road there is a continuing and pressing need to further emphasise the town's essential characteristics, discover other aspects of its heritage, its quality and sense of place and, yes, its varied, colourful history, before they all are lost forever.

The way forward - perhaps?

During the 100 plus years that Porthcawl has been a coastal resort, much has changed. At a societal level, there have been significant shifts in demographic factors such as longer life-spans, higher living standards and varying patterns of recreational and leisure usage.

All are things to be celebrated but they raise significant issues that Porthcawl has to address if it is not to be permanently stuck in a time warp of the mid-20th Century. People now want and expect more from their recreational and leisure time. Part of Porthcawl's success in delivering holidays in the first half of the 20th Century was that townspeople and their leaders listened to the needs and wants of residents and visitors alike, and ensured that the town offered people what they were looking for. With some all-weather activities, Porthcawl became a place for all seasons and **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** believes that there are lessons of history here that everyone involved in contemporary Porthcawl should learn from.

While not advocating that Porthcawl should ever aim to be an uber smart destination, the **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** is of the view that, if the town is to become the '*premier resort*' that B.C.B.C. aspires it to be, Porthcawl cannot afford to ignore the bigger picture and these widespread changes in expectations and lifestyle. More specifically:

- There are more people facing decades of retirement. It is an ongoing trend and many retirees are active. Their needs and wants are more nuanced, more sophisticated than earlier generations
- Younger age groups on the other hand, are broadly looking for more vigorous recreational and leisure pursuits

It has been mentioned earlier in the report but another vital issue that cannot be ignored is the proposed City Metro Scheme for south-east Wales, albeit that Porthcawl will be at the end of the line. Plans for this integrated transport system appear to be well under-way and major capital investment has been made available. Hopefully, these plans will include a dedicated, purpose-built transit station in Porthcawl in place of the shabby, make-shift bus shelters that we have now. This is a golden opportunity for Porthcawl to put itself back on the map, but when the transport links are physically in place, the 2 interconnected questions that have to be asked are:

- Will Porthcawl actually be a place that people want to live in or to visit?
- What will Porthcawl have to offer those who choose to live here or to visit?

As stated in this report, Porthcawl's destiny is inextricably linked to Salt Lake - it has a really vital role to play in this debate. **Porthcawl Civic Trust Society** firmly believes that, although the area needs to be reclaimed, Salt Lake should not be built on. Apart from spoiling outstanding panoramic views, it is not clear how building flats and houses on, most would say, a crucial plot of land and a prominent gateway into Porthcawl, will benefit residents. And, how will a building development add to the good work already completed in Harbour-side or encourage more people to visit and stay in Porthcawl? What exactly will be Porthcawl's gain in terms of tourism?

Leaving aside the already stated difficult car-parking situation in Porthcawl, people, nowadays, expect more from their holiday destinations than sight of large, densely-developed housing estates, especially when they are situated in prime waterfront settings like Salt Lake, where holiday-makers are more accustomed to finding space and resources suitable for leisure or recreational purposes such as civic gardens, picnic areas, boating lakes or swimming pools. Just as relevant, how will a building development enhance Porthcawl's quality and sense of place, its legibility and its amenity areas? How will it protect the town's heritage assets in the old Inner Harbour Basin and the Eastern Promenade Development Scheme? How will they be marked and respected in such a development? Ultimately, what exactly will be Porthcawl's overall civic gain from the urbanisation of Salt Lake?

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# APPENDIX



# Appendix A

## This Deed of Conveyance made the

day of April One thousand nine hundred and  
ninety Between The King's Most Excellent Majesty  
of the first part The Board of Trade acting in  
exercise of such of the powers conferred by the Crown Lands  
Act 1852 and the Crown Lands Act 1852 or any other  
Act as were transferred to the Board of Trade by the  
Crown Lands Act 1866 and in exercise of any other  
relevant powers of the second part and The Urban  
District Council of Porthcawl in the County of  
Glamorgan hereinafter called 'the Grantees' (which expression  
where the context so admits shall include the successors  
in title of the Grantees) of the third part.

Witnesseth and it is hereby agreed as follows:

I In consideration of the sum of Ten pounds (£10)  
paid by the Grantees to the Assistant Secretary for Finance  
of the Board of Trade (the receipt whereof is hereby  
acknowledged) the Board of Trade on behalf of His  
Majesty do hereby grant unto the Grantees ~~and~~ those  
two pieces of land being part of the foreshore below high  
water mark situate as to one piece adjacent to the West  
Pier and as to the other piece One thousand four hundred  
feet north east of the West Pier at Porthcawl in the  
Parish of Llanelli in the County of Glamorgan  
and containing together an area of One rood thirty  
pikes which said two pieces of land are delineated  
on the plan annexed hereto and are thereon coloured  
red and are together with any building or work to be  
hereafter erected thereon (unless the context otherwise  
requires) hereafter referred to as 'the premises hereby  
granted'.

Except nevertheless and always reserving to the  
King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors out of the premises  
grant full and free right for Him and them and for all  
persons by His or their permission (which permission  
shall be deemed to have been granted unless the same  
is shown to have been expressly refused withheld or  
withdrawn) to ride drive walk or otherwise pass to and



Photo  
Copy

for men and to fish and bath upon and to gather sea-weed or ware from the premises hereby granted and to land thereon goods and passengers from vessels and boats and to embark therefrom goods and passengers in vessels and boats but so that erections or works constructed or placed on the said premises with the consent and approval of the Board of Trade as hereby provided shall not be prejudiced or interfered with by reason of this exception and reservation. And also except and always reserving as aforesaid all rights of way and access to or over the premises hereby granted now existing by means of any public road foot-path bridge or other means or by means of any road foot-path or bridge shown on the said plan hereto annexed as made or intended to be made.

And also except and reserving to the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors and to the Board of Trade and any other body or person duly authorized in right of the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors full right to enter on the premises hereby granted and to remove therefrom all buildings works materials or erections which may have become dilapidated or abandoned or which may have been constructed erected or placed thereon without the consent or approval hereby required or which may in the opinion of the Board of Trade be injurious to navigation or the public interest and to remove the site or premises to the former or proper condition thereof and to erect or construct thereon or elsewhere any buildings or works which may in the opinion of the Board of Trade be required for the purpose of navigation or the public interest.

To have the premises hereby granted unto the Grantees in fee simple.

II. **Rent and Rating** (and there is hereby reserved in fee simple) unto the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors the yearly and charge of £100 pounds issuing out of and charged upon the premises hereby granted and payable on the first day of January in every year.

III. **The** Grantees do hereby covenant with the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors in manner following (that is to say):  
1. To pay the said rent and charge at the times and in manner



- hereby provided:
2. That no building, erection or work shall at any time be constructed, erected or placed on the premises hereby granted without the consent in writing of the Board of Trade first obtained.
  3. That in case the Board of Trade shall consent to any building, erection or work being constructed, erected or placed on the premises hereby granted the same shall be constructed, erected or placed according to such plan and under such restrictions and regulations as may be approved of in writing by the Board of Trade and not otherwise.
  4. That in case any such building, erection or work shall have been so constructed, erected or placed on the premises hereby granted the same shall not be altered or extended at any time without the like consent and approval of the Board of Trade having been first obtained.
  5. That except with the consent in writing of the Board of Trade first obtained no materials shall at any time be placed and neither shall at any time be done on the premises hereby granted which may in the opinion of the Board of Trade prejudice or obstruct navigation or be or become injurious to the public interest.
  6. At all times to keep the premises hereby granted in a good and proper state of repair and in proper condition free from all defects injurious to navigation or the adjacent lands or the public interest.
  7. During the whole time of constructing, altering or extending any work upon the premises hereby granted and also after the completion thereof to exhibit and keep burning every night from sunset to sunrise such lights (if any) as the Board of Trade shall from time to time require.
  8. That it shall be lawful for the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors and the Board of Trade and any persons duly authorised by Him or them from time to time and at all seasons to enter into and upon and inspect the premises hereby granted and the state and condition thereof and of any want of repair or of any defect to give notice and to place such notice in some conspicuous position upon the premises hereby granted and that the grantee will on receipt of any such notice or upon any such notice being placed in some conspicuous position on the premises hereby granted forthwith and within three months from the giving or placing of such notice restore the premises hereby granted to a proper state and condition and satisfactory



and properly execute the repairs and amendments and remove the defects specified in such notice.

9. To pay to the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors on demand all expenses incurred by the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors or the Board of Trade or any persons duly authorized as aforesaid of and incidental to any inspection of the premises hereby granted and the preparation of any notice mentioned in the last preceding sub-clause and of and incidental to the superintendence or supervision of the execution of the repairs and amendments and removal of defects when the premises hereby granted are found on such inspection to be out of repair and notice has been given or placed as mentioned in the last preceding sub-clause.

10. To pay to the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors on demand all expenses incurred by the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors or the Board of Trade or any persons duly authorized as aforesaid of or incidental to a survey of the premises hereby granted preparatory to the erection or construction of buildings or works or of or incidental to any contract or approval hereby required to be given, granted or which may be incurred in removing buildings works materials or erections which may have become dilapidated or been abandoned or which may have been constructed or placed on the premises hereby granted without the consent or approval hereby required or which may in the opinion of the Board of Trade be injurious to navigation or the public interest and all expenses incurred in restoring the site or premises to the former or proper condition thereof.

11. It all times to give full facilities for and not in any way to hinder or obstruct the due access and enjoyment of any rights or privileges hereinafter accepted or reserved.

**IV. Provided** always as follows:

1A. If the said rentcharge shall be unpaid for twenty one days after the same shall have become due and been legally demanded or if default shall be made in observance or performance of any covenant or provisions in Clause III. heretofore contained then and in any of such cases it shall be lawful for the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors by notice in writing given to the Lessee or

(at His or their option) by re-entry onto and upon the premises hereby granted (or any part thereof in the name of the whole) to put an end to the grant hereby made and thereupon the grant hereby made shall become void accordingly without prejudice to any remedy of the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors under any covenant by the Grantees herein contained.

(B) Nothing contained in this deed shall extend to or affect any beds seams or veins of coal or stone or any metallic or other mineral substance in or under the demised premises or any mines or quarries thereof or shall affect any of the rights or powers mentioned in Sections 22, 23 and 24 of the Crown Lands Act 1893.

(C) The King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors or the Board of Trade may at any time or times put an end to the grant hereby made in respect of the whole or any part or parts of the premises hereby granted by giving to the Grantees three months notice in writing in that behalf and thereupon the grant hereby made shall become void accordingly in respect of the property comprised in such notice (without prejudice to any remedy of the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors under any covenant by the Grantees herein contained) but so that there shall be payable to the Grantees the fair value of such property (to be ascertained on the basis of the continuance of the grant hereby made) which value shall in default of agreement be fixed by some person to be nominated by the President for the time being of the Surveyors' Institution.

(D) The rights privileges and powers (including all rights of putting an end to the grant hereby made) which are hereby reserved or given to the King's Majesty His Heirs and Successors and the Board of Trade respectively shall be exercisable only during the period from the date aforesaid until the expiration of Twenty one years after the death of the survivor of the aforesaid now living of His Late Majesty King Edward VII and for such further time (if any) as the law may allow for the exercise thereof respectively.

(E) If and so far as necessary or proper for giving full effect thereto the rights specified in sub-clause (C) of this clause



shall operate as an option of purchase (at a price equal to the fair value aforesaid) and the Grantees shall at the request and cost of the King's Majesty His Heirs or Successors or the Board of Trade execute all such Deeds of Conveyance or other Instruments as may be required in that behalf

V This deed shall be deemed sufficiently enrolled by the deposit of a duplicate thereof in the Office of Land Revenue Records and Enrolments and the filing or making an entry of such deposit by the Keeper of the said Records and Enrolments

VI The Grantees hereby declare that they accept the grant hereby made as extending only to such estate right or interest in the premises hereby granted as may be vested in the King's Majesty at the date hereof.

In witness whereof one of the Assistant Secretaries of the Board of Trade hath hereunto set his hand and seal and the Grantees have caused their common seal to be affixed the day and year above written.

Signed, sealed and delivered by  
George Edwin Baker, Esq.,  
Assistant Secretary to the Board  
of Trade in the presence of

*[Signature]*

George Edwin Baker  
of Trade.

The Common Seal of the  
Portsmouth Urban District  
Council was hereunto affixed  
in the presence of

*[Signature]* Chairman  
*[Signature]* Clerk

Received from the above named Grantees the amount  
of the consideration money above mentioned } £16. 0. 0

*[Signature]*  
An Assistant Secretary for Finance  
Board of Trade



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