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PEMBROKESHIRE NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION

**NEWSLETTER No.58
Autumn 2025**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Since the Spring, the Association has enjoyed a wide range of trips, talks and visits and of course the successful North Wales Tour organised by Andrew and Annie Weaver. I believe another is on the drawing board, so thanks to all the PNTA enthusiastic committee for their organisation. It is always a delight on these events to learn about the efforts of our hardworking Pembrokeshire National Trust staff around the County. I personally enjoyed the walk in the North of the County strolling on the newly acquired Cilau Ganol Farm and the coast path near Goodwick, and the memorable coach day trip to Llanelly House. It is pleasing that thanks to all of you, our Association members, the PNTA were able to announce donations to the National Trust for the year ending April 2024; £500 for replacement hurdles at the Tudor Merchants House, £1500 for footpath improvements at Little Milford and £1000 for a bench and footpath improvements at Southwood. The PNTA's anniversary donations for the willow sculptures at Stackpole have been

very well received so thanks to you all for supporting the PNTA activities.



Committee Members at the Willow Sculptures.

Your committee has been busy! The National Trust asked all Associations to update their policies for data protection, safeguarding, equality and diversity and complaints. This took a lot of work to bring all this up to date and thanks to those involved; the results are under the heading policies on the PNTA website. Graham and Sandra Wright have put together an interesting Winter programme of speakers (see later in the newsletter), so we look forward to welcoming you to our first talk on October 2nd.

The National Trust are undergoing another period of change with reducing staff nationally by 6%, and there will be some effects locally. Our Association committee of volunteers is too experiencing

change, as a lot of us have served on the committee for many years. Graham Brace who has organised our excellent summer day trips for the last two years, has resigned for personal reasons and Sheila Ashton, our membership secretary for many years, is stepping down at the AGM in November. Sheila has worked quietly and diligently over the years to keep us all together and we both have been busy over the last few months bringing the membership list and excel spreadsheet up to date. The Membership Secretary role is not an onerous one, but crucial to our organisation. If you feel you might be able to take this on please contact me on jmason@fastmail.com.

It has been a glorious summer in Pembrokeshire and hope you have managed to enjoy some different National Trust locations around the County.

Jane Mason
Chairman

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL SPRING TOUR MAY 2025

This year we went to North Wales. The slightly shorter travelling time enabled us to maximise our time by slotting in a visit to Penrhyn Castle on the way before arriving at The Imperial Hotel on the Esplanade, in Llandudno, in time for a rather nice supper.



Penrhyn Castle photograph AndrewWeaver

There were 51 of us souls. There were some new faces among many old friends. The new faces quickly blended in and became friends too. Caernarfon castle was our first port of call. Two guides had been engaged to fill in our knowledge

gaps and turned out to have been quite different in their style of imparting their historical perspective.

A boat trip had been booked, in Beaumaris, for later in the day, but a brisk northerly wind put a tin hat on that. Instead, we wandered around Beaumaris and its partially completed castle. We had a gentle quiz that evening that had a degree of competitiveness woven into it.

Tuesday found us on Anglesey once more visiting Plas Newydd and we had the opportunity to wander around their woodland gardens which are gradually being replanted with azaleas and rhododendrons.



Plas Newydd photograph Andrew Weaver

We sought lunch at the Plas Cadnant Hidden gardens and became very impressed by the foresighted farmer who had purchased a derelict garden twenty or so years ago and transformed it into a lovely place to savour.



Plas Cadnant photograph AndrewWeaver

Wednesday was all about Snowdon or Eryri for some.

A few of us spent the morning trying to get to Conwy in the coach but failing miserably as our driver failed to find the way in. We ended up taking

the service bus into the centre of Conway where we visited the castle and Tudor house. While a large number went off to take the train up a large mountain, a few of us explored the Great Orme and the pier.



*PNTA members enjoying the view from Eryri
Photograph Andrew Weaver*

On our returning day we spent a lovely couple of hours at Bodnant garden, before arriving at the Osprey Centre near Machynlleth for a late lunch in time to see newly hatched youngsters being fed too.



Rose Garden Bodnant Photograph Andrew Weaver

All in all, another successful trip. Everyone remained healthy, a couple became a year older and lots of people asked where we are going next year!

Report by Annie Weaver

Tour 10-14th May 2026

It's that time of year again when we think of where some of us may be going next May. The destination is to be **South Devon**, with our base in **Torquay**. A recce has been done and lots of things are planned including a visit to Hestercombe, a boat trip in Plymouth harbour, a visit to Britannia Royal Naval College or a river trip up the Dart to Agatha Christie's house Greenway, conducted tours of Exeter Cathedral and Buckfast Abbey which amazingly was built by seven monks in 32 years last century. Interspersed with these are visits to National Trust properties including Sir Francis Drake's home Buckland Abbey, Killerton and Tyntesfield on the way home. (Two other properties that we saw were unable to accept coaches)



Tyntesfield House Photograph Andrew Weaver

There will be a booking form with further details towards the end of this newsletter.
Annie Weaver

REPORTS OF EVENTS - SUMMER 2025. WALKS

The Port of Haverfordwest – An Interpretive Walk with Dr Simon Hancock, MBE Wednesday May 14th

The group gathered close to the Old Priory, at the lower end of Union Hill. After the usual introductions, Simon led us on a fascinating and very detailed tour alongside the Cleddau river, explaining the history of the port which is fundamental to an understanding of the location of the town and how it evolved over the centuries. The port was on the W bank of the river until the 19th Century – there were no bridges until then. In

the Middle Ages the wine trade was very important with wine being shipped in from France and Iberia. Wool was the backbone of the trade, because of the Flemings. (cf. surnames like Dyer and Fuller). Flemish migrants came here because of the flooding of their lands. They were already in England and Wales and were encouraged to come here. Trading through the port was mainly in wine and wool, but there was also trade in spices and sugar, possibly in slaves. Bristol was the key partner trading port.

Originally, there more warehouses along the W bank of the river but these were demolished in the 1950s. Also, the river was previously a lot wider with marshy land on the E bank.

Haverfordwest was already the largest town in Wales. Wales was very sparsely populated and the port of Haverfordwest was the lifeblood of the town

There were already 3 parish churches – St Mary’s, St Martin’s and St Thomas’, reflecting the importance of Haverfordwest – it was on the pilgrim route to St Davids. Haverfordwest was very prosperous and cosmopolitan – the river brought people here as it was the main artery for transport – roads were very poorly maintained and often impassable in winter conditions. There were Jewish money lenders – Thomas the Welshman was unusual – as it was essentially an English town at the time.

The priory was founded in c.1200 by Tancred, and suppressed by Henry VIII in 1536

The Union Workhouse (on Union Hill) was established in 1839

In 1479, Prince Edward granted Haverfordwest a charter, which gave the town the status of a county. Hence in 1536 it was recorded as the county town of 2 counties – of itself and of Pembrokeshire. In 1889 Pembrokeshire County Council came into being.

In 1405, Owain Glyndwr had sacked the town, but not the castle.

Quay St was the rough part of town, known as Ship St in the Middle Ages. The town was culturally diverse. There was a tannery in Quay St and six pubs. The Bristol Trader dates from 1748. A Tudor Merchant’s House which formerly stood close by was painstakingly dismantled many years ago and taken to the museum at St Fagans near Cardiff, where it can now be seen, fully restored.

(Walking past the Bristol Trader.)

The Wool Market building near the modern-day Job Centre dates from 1748 and it was restored in 1777. Onion men (from Brittany) used to stay in the warehouses and walk all over Pembrokeshire, selling their wares.

The former Crown Post Office building dates from 1936 and now houses the very successful and thriving *Haverhub* community centre.

County Hall, seen across the river, opened in 1998. The North Wing, retained from the former Preseli District Council offices, sits on the site of the old County Theatre.

A wooden swing bridge was established by Charles Norris in 1825. Previously, the local militia stood on this bridge and it collapsed.

In the early 19th Century, the town was imbued with a strong spirit of improvement – the stone bridge was built in 1833, along with a Grand Avenue and Castle Square. William Owen was the architect who also funded the new bridge. Tolls were levied to cover the ongoing maintenance. Tolls were lifted in 1878, thereafter only being levied on one day per year with the proceeds going to war charities. William Owen was a workaholic, involved in the design of Scolton Manor, Avallenau and the Shire Hall. Ideally, he should be commemorated with a statue or a decent memorial, not merely the name of a Wetherspoons!

(Crossing the road, next to the New Bridge on Victoria Place.)

Skinners’ Quay (on L.) once housed a leather works. It was here that Samuel Frolic fought a famous duel. The building of the New Bridge inevitably sealed off the upper reaches of the river to tall craft and hence reduced the extent of the port warehousing on the W bank. However, it opened up potential for more activity on the E bank.

(Walking on to the former Ocky White site, now Waldo Lounge.)

When excavations took place on the Ocky White site, commencing in 2022, a huge archaeological discovery was unearthed, exposing the remains of a Dominican Priory dating from 1245. (The Black Friars owned the whole of the riverbank as far as the Old Bridge.) Thirty-nine friars were there originally, but by 1538, when the Priory was forced to close down at the Reformation, only 8 friars remained. The dig revealed some 307 skeletons which are still undergoing detailed analysis, but initial DNA results show many genetic links to continental Europe.

Solomon Marychurch set up a major Iron Foundry, which made wrought iron goods, including railings and milestones (still extant in many parts of the county.) He was a benevolent employer who took his workers for a day's paid holiday to Broad Haven each year. The foundry closed in 1901 after a major explosion.

(Walking on to the Old Bridge.)

The site now occupied by the Old Bridge was the original fording point where livestock could cross the river. In 1485, Henry Tudor crossed here, having landed at Mill Haven, en route to Bosworth Field where he was to be victorious against Richard III and to become Henry VII.

Formerly there was a wooden bridge on this site which was destroyed in a catastrophic flood in 1725, when a number of people were drowned in their own beds. In 1726, Sir John Philipps of Picton Castle paid for the stone bridge as a replacement.



PNTA Members alongside the River Cleddau.

Report by Steve Drinkwater

Cilau Ganol Walk – led by NT Countryside Manager, James Roden 24th July 2025

The group met at Cilau Ganol farm, where Jane Mason, PNTA Chair, gave a brief introduction to the current activities of the PNTA, before introducing James Roden who led the interpretive walk.

Ten of the group were local residents from Llanwnda, the adjacent hamlet, who were keen to find out the NT's plans for the farm. They had enthusiastically joined PNTA, prior to the walk.

James explained that the NT had bought the farm holding in 2024, as it had come on the market and provided an opportunity to join up existing NT ownerships on both side of Cilau Ganol, thus enabling a more holistic management regime for the three contiguous parcels of land. Prior to the sale the previous farmer had conducted an organic dairy business.

The three Cilau farms had historically been farmed by local families, probably going back as far as mediaeval times. The original Cilau Ganol farmhouse had been sold off separately many years ago and is in private ownership. Since the NT took over the Cilau Ganol site, the various slurry tanks have been removed and the worst of the farm sheds, demolished. The modern bungalow is being extensively refurbished for rental. A wall will be built at the lower edge of the farmyard and the remaining sheds may be made available for rental by other farmers.

James stressed that the main aspiration for the future of the farm would be to move gradually to a more nature-friendly land management regime, reducing the nutrient levels in the soil and moving to farm in a less intensive manner. In due course, a farm tenant would probably be sought, to operate the farm in accordance with NT conservation policies.



Cilau Ganol photograph Jane Mason

Walking on through the fields, down towards the coast path, James explained how the high “nutrient load” existing within the fields’ soils would be gradually reduced by taking off successive crops of hay and allowing the dormant native plants to flourish and re-establish. This would be a slow process, (over several years), because, although the dairy regime had been organic, slurry had been regularly spread, and some nutrient build-up within the regolith had inevitably occurred. Artificial

fertilisers had probably not been used by the previous farmer, but the use of slurry would have taken effect on the nitrogen levels in the soils. Grazing by ponies was one remedial option, as they can help to encourage desirable native plants to re-emerge. The joining up of the adjacent landholdings would facilitate grazing over a wider area, possibly removing some existing fences and using “virtual fences” as currently being executed at NT Southwood, near Newgale.

James pointed out the moorland on the adjacent NT land to the SE, indicating the need for the ecological management of that habitat to be kept free of unwanted nutrients, another reason for the Cilau Ganol purchase.

The group walked on downslope to join the Coast Path, where we admired the views towards Dinas Island and along the coast, some of the early mist having dissipated by this time. James explained that the route we had followed so far was not open for public access, but that the remainder of the walk would be on the Coast Path and on another route which he was hoping to open up to replace a very wet permissive path back to the farm, which currently exists. More new footpaths across the farm may be introduced in due course.

Upon returning to the farmyard, James answered many questions and was warmly thanked for his detailed explanations and enthusiastic delivery of the walk/talk.

Steve Drinkwater

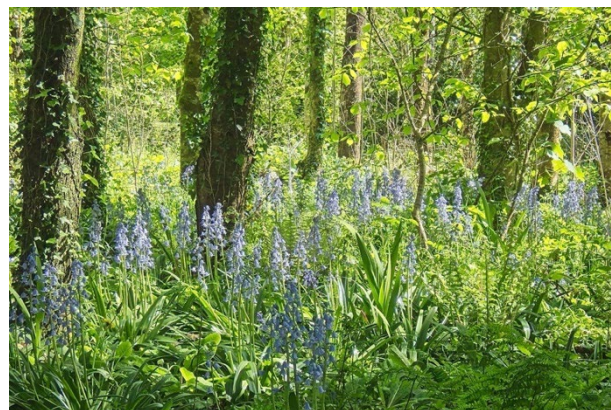
Thursday 16th October. Visit to Stackpole Walled Gardens, Gather at the Mencap cafe between 10.30am and 11.00am for coffee and chat. Wander round the gardens or join a walk to see the willow figures and views of the ponds. Return to the cafe for lunch, which can be ordered and paid for at coffee time. Please register with Lyn Humphries at lynb.humphries@gmail.com or on 01646 621159.

DAY TRIPS

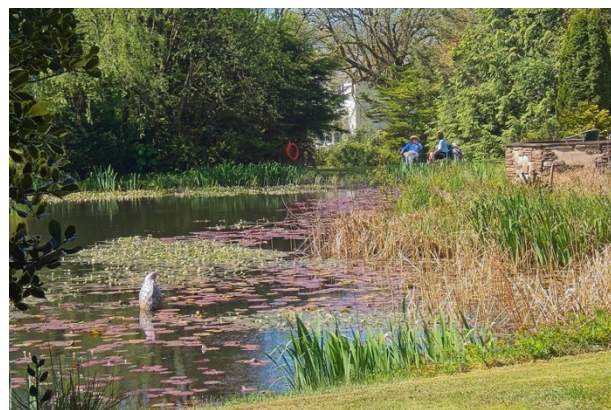
Hilton Court Wednesday 30th April

What a beautiful day, not a cloud in the sky. I think everyone enjoyed the view of the sea from the lane to Hilton Court. We met for coffee outside the cafe, overlooking the lovely gardens. We walked round the grounds at our own pace and had a little sit

whenever we felt the need. Little chats were held at various points. Listening to the stream as it flowed under the bridge and visiting the peaceful private garden were other treats and then we all met up again for lunch, mostly outside. Cheryl showed us some 'before' photos and we were able to visit Mark, the potter, perhaps for the last time before he retires in September. Whether we had been there many times or were experiencing the peaceful atmosphere for the first time, it was a good trip out.



The Bluebell Wood Photograph Miles Huthwaite



The Pond photograph Miles Huthwaite



Old, gnarled tree and wooden house. Photograph Miles Huthwaite

Report by Lyn Humphries

19ALL ABOARD FOR A TRIP BACK IN TIME ON THE GWILI RAILWAY

Thursday 12th June.

We set out from home for Abergwili in glorious sunshine, with clear blue skies – which continued while we ate our picnic lunch in the lush green grounds of the Bishops Park outside Carmarthen Museum....Whoa, wait a moment, let's rewind! – that was our 'recce', a few weeks before the official PNTA day trip. On Thursday 12th June, the allotted date of the Gwili Railway visit, we set off in our shared cars to overcast skies and ever-increasing raindrops.

By the time we arrived at the station car park, a steady downpour had set in for the day. But did it dampen our spirits? – certainly not!

In an excellent introductory talk by one of the volunteers, we learned how the original Gwili Railway went from the market town of Carmarthen to the seaside town of Aberystwyth.

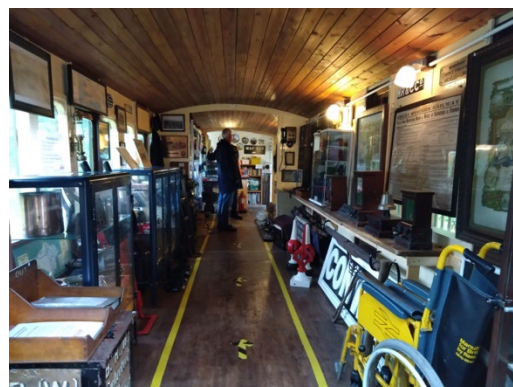


All Aboard

There was a buzz of excitement as we boarded the train and settled at our tables which were ready laid for our morning 'elevenses' of delicious bara brith, Welsh cakes and, of course, Welsh butter. Smartly uniformed waiters brought along as much tea and coffee as we could drink. First class service in a second-class carriage – not sure what extras the first class passengers were getting in the first class compartments, though the linen tablecloths and serviettes looked snowy white through the windows. (On the afternoon journeys you can order full afternoon tea. Worth a thought for birthday

presents = and there's always the Santa Express for children at Christmas.)

Along the route there were two stops for photographs and a stroll along the platform.



Railway Museum

At the second, on the return journey at Bronwydd Arms station, we visited the impressive Gwili Railway Museum and also took a look inside the restored Mail Van. Some of us had a go at sorting postcards and envelopes with some famous Welsh addresses – Dylan Thomas at the Boat House, Laugharne, Anthony Hopkins at Margam, Port Talbot. We could only imagine the speed the mail men must have worked at, rocking to and fro on a night express.



The Mail Van

Outside on the platform we once more ignored the relentless rain...

Back at Abergwili station where we disembarked, there was more to explore – second hand books and maps to buy, a snack bar and more.

Then we simply went over the road (well, one roundabout and car park away) to the Carmarthenshire Museum and its friendly lunch café *Y Caffi* – another welcome refuge on a rainy day. Run by Carmarthenshire County Council both

are housed in the former Bishop's Palace, a fine 700-year-old building, part of a group of five major county museums. The residence of the present Bishop of St Davids is just next door. There was time to explore the history of Carmarthenshire and much of Wales, well displayed exhibits from all walks of life. A special treat was the Egyptology exhibition relating to local artist and archaeologist Howard Jones.



Frieze of a battle scene

All in all, a highly recommended day out – and if it's sunny, you can also enjoy a walk – even a picnic - in the well-kept grounds of the adjacent Bishop's Park.

Report and photographs by Margaret Brace

A VISIT TO LLANELLY HOUSE and KIDWELLY CASTLE

14th August



Llanelly House photograph Andrew Weaver

The day dawned very fair but instead of languishing in a seat towards the back of the coach, it found us sitting in a very familiar place in the front near the microphone. Graham Brace had planned the day but was sadly unable to follow it through and had asked us to carry the baton a little further for him.

It was lovely to see lots of friendly faces come aboard.

The staff at **Llanelly House** were there to welcome us and we were led into a rather echoey oak panelled room for our elevenses and the first part of our tour. One wall held a lot of hand painted china from the 1700s that had been commissioned by the Stepneys who lived in the house at that time. Over the years it had been split into 3 lots two of which have vanished into the ether. This particular portion had been tracked down to the USA and purchased with various grants. It's now worth about £750,000 and comprises around 130 pieces.

When the house was built 300 years ago it was situated, as it is now, a stone's throw from St Elli's church, but in the middle of a green and pleasant land, that was yet to be scarred by the Industrial Revolution. In fact, the Stepneys, the original owners and rather far-seeing entrepreneurs were instrumental in changing the character of the area completely. Today many streets are named after the family, in the town.

Somewhere in the middle of the time the house was inhabited, the Chambers held sway. They were significant benefactors to the town creating schools and improving the welfare of the townsfolk. However, they have left no trace and no street name bears witness to their patronage.

Our host was a very hearty chap with a loud voice which bounced at will between the oak panelling. He regaled us with the history of the house and the people who had lived there. In several rooms technology suddenly brought paintings to life and also the characters we heard about downstairs. The house was charming although the tilting floors and wobbly windows took a bit of adjustment. We were reassured that it was now structurally sound since the restoration about 15 years ago



Imposing view of Kidwelly Castle Photograph Andrew Weaver

After a jolly preordered lunch, we headed off for **Kidwelly Castle**. Some of us approached via a footpath through the moat which was novel. It's not often one gets the chance to see what would be attackers were up against.



In conversation with the Time Travelling medicine man at Kidwelly Castle. Photograph Andrew Weaver

One of the high spots for me was the medical historian who had pitched his stall inside the outer ward for just two days. He had an array of authentic medical tools through the ages and several skulls very adequately demonstrating the effects of arrow injuries and other. He explained how Prince Hal had survived an arrow injury with the aid of a canny surgeon and an elder twig bound in linen and soaked in honey. Really good stuff and good to know if you find yourself far from an A and E.

We all enjoyed a fine cup of tea, brewed to perfection with the aid of a multicoloured egg timer in the pub close by and then we came home.

All in all it was a good day despite the fact that we did miss Graham

Report by Annie Weaver

AUTUMN WALKS & TALKS 2025-26

ALL TALKS START AT 2.30PM IN CRUNDALE VILLAGE HALL - There is no need to book to attend the talks. Refreshments will be served. Please note that entry fee will be £2 for members and £3 for non-members, to help cover speaker fees and hall hire.

October 2nd, 2025. Ant Rogers. Biodiversity - The state of nature in the global, national and local context.



Ant has worked in environmental protection and nature recovery in various roles since 1996. For the last 13 years he has been the Biodiversity Implementation Officer for the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership – promoting collaboration to deliver nature recovery actions across the County and beyond.

Ant will talk about the state of nature in the global, national, and local context; why that matters to our society; and what we can do to promote nature recovery.

November 6th. Nicola Davies Wild Books, writing about nature for children.

Nicola Davies is a zoologist by training and is the author of more than 80 books for children and young people, most of them with a focus on the natural world. Her work has been translated into more than 12 languages around the world and has won awards in the UK, Japan, America, Germany and France. Her novel 'Skrimli' won Wales Book for the Year in the children and young people's category in 2024. She is Professor of Practice for

the University of Wales School of Illustration in Swansea and lives near Solva and from September 2025 is the new Children's Laureate for Wales.

In this talk by author and illustrator Nicola Davies, Nicola will explore why a connection with nature is so vital to children and the various ways she has approached making that connection with her work, for children of all ages.

December 4th, 2025. Linda Asman. ' Promoting Pembroke's Heritage'



Linda Asman is Chair of the Pembroke & Monkton Local History Society, a registered charity which aims to research and raise awareness of the heritage of Pembroke and district.

In her talk she will outline the ongoing projects and achievements of the Society since its inception in 2010.

Initially the Society prioritised the creation of a photographic and oral history archive, which was subsequently published as a DVD with accompanying book. Then, in 2013, Pembroke Town Council set up its Regeneration Committee to bring together local organisations to work on projects to enhance the town. Linda describes how this was the catalyst for more ambitious projects. The History Society took a leading part in developing a Town Trail (with Pembroke Civic Trust), a Digital Town Trail and most ambitions of all, a statue of Pembroke's most famous son, Henry VII which was unveiled in 2017. The Society took this forward with a further statue of William Marshal unveiled in 2022 and is working on plans to develop a statue trail, working closely with the Town Council and community.

January 8th, 2026. Angela Jones. Gumfreston Church

"With a long career in education behind me, I have always maintained a deep interest in history, literature, and heritage. My enthusiasm for exploring 'old and interesting' places has been a lifelong passion—perhaps, as my late husband often joked, because I failed my 'O' Level history! After retiring from teaching abroad in 2010, we returned to Pembrokeshire, and I was delighted to join the team at the Tudor Merchant's House in Tenby. It has been a privilege to contribute to a site that brings the past so vividly to life.

Working in a historical setting has allowed me to combine my love of storytelling, learning, and community engagement. They say if you love what you do, you never work a day in your life—and I feel that every day in this role."

Synopsis of talk

"Gumfreston two miles from Tenby is a quiet parish on the road to Pembroke Dock - usually passed by without thought.

However, on research it has many facets that make it 'interesting,' and this talk aims to highlight some of them. Links with Darwin, a clerical apiarist and a suspected witch all add to the history of Gumfreston to bring it alive."

February 5th, 2026. Melanie Knapp & Mair Coombes Davies. Tudor Merchants House and Garden

Melanie Knapp and Mair Coombes Davies will provide a joint presentation. The talk is made up of two 20-minute presentations on the 'Tudor Merchants House and Garden'.

March 5th, 2026. Lisa Morgan. Warden Ramsey and Skomer Islands: History, Wildlife and what lies ahead.



Starting out as a summer volunteer on Skomer and Skokholm Islands, Lisa soon moved into seasonal jobs as Assistant warden on Skokholm, moving to Skomer Island in 2004 as the seabird field assistant, seal fieldworker and interim Assistant warden. In spring 2006 she moved north to Ramsey, where I was the RSPB warden for RSB Cymru for 14 years, a role which also included seabird monitoring on Grassholm and Orkney. In 2020, Lisa moved back to the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales as Head of islands and Marine Conservation, looking after islands including Skomer and Skokholm and the marine research team based in New Quay, Ceredigion.

Ramsey and Skomer Islands: History, Wildlife and what lies ahead – this talk looks at the similarities and surprising differences between RSPB Ramsey Island and WTSWW's Skomer Island. Just 6 miles apart across St Brides Bay we'll explore the natural history and human influences on the two islands and the challenges they face in a rapidly changing Celtic Sea.

April 2nd, 2026. Howard Rudge. The 'Wogan Cavern' (Pembroke Castle).

Howard is a Guide at Pembroke Castle. He also gives talks on the results of the archaeology being conducted in the Wogan Cavern. The results so far are both exciting and of national importance. Howard is an experienced public speaker and talks in verbal pictures.

Howard's talk covers the background to the digs from the first visit by Archaeologists in 2014 to the results of the most recent developments. He tells about the anticipated future digs and what we hope to find. The story begins, just under one million years ago. It reveals links to the visits of Neandertals, Homo Sapiens and the wide range of animals discovered to have lived in Pembrokeshire through millennia.

FUTURE EVENTS

Annual Pre Christmas Lunch

This year our Annual November Lunch will be held on Thursday 20th November at Wolfscastle Hotel. There will be a very brief AGM at noon and lunch will be served at 1pm. The cost will be £37 for 3 courses, £33 for 2 courses

First course

Seafood quiche.

Heritage Tomato- olive tapenade, bocconcini, basil and pesto salad.

Terrine- pressed ham hock, mustard mayonnaise and pickled vegetables.

Main course

Beef Wellington-braised beef brisket, Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, dauphinoise and seasonal greens.

Chicken- stuffed chicken ballotine, dauphinoise, mashed carrots and seasonal greens.

Risotto- butternut squash, sage, mozzarella risotto cake, courgette, aubergine, red pepper coulis.

Pudding

Dark chocolate fondant, raspberry purée and pistachio ice cream.

Mango soufflé, banana ice cream and passion fruit sauce.

Cheeseboard- 3 cheeses, crackers, grapes and chutney.

If you would like to come, please let me know your menu choices via email annielweaver@gmail.co or via mobile phone message 07890756063.

You can pay via BACS Barclays Bank sort code 20-37-82 Pembrokeshire National Trust Association account number 90390992 quoting reference "lunch".

Or send me a cheque if you prefer, to Annie Weaver, Larks Rising, Kiln Park, Burton.

SA73 1NY

PLEASE LET ME KNOW ANY DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AND FOOD ALLERGIES

Don't forget the seasonal raffle too. If you can bring gift wrapped items that would be really appreciated.

NATIONAL TRUST NEWS

National Trust staff have provided reports on activities and changes at the local NT locations. It demonstrates the tremendous amount of work being done to enable people to enjoy them.

Rhian Sula General Manager for Pembrokeshire.



September has certainly seen a change in the weather, with strong winds, lots of rain and the leaves falling off the trees and even though I am having to wear wellies and waterproofs, instead of flip flops, I am eternally grateful to the beautiful weather that we had this summer.

We have welcomed hundreds of thousands of happy visitors as they have trudged down to our beautiful beaches or tried to get some shade in our woodlands. We had a very successful Summer of Play season at Colby and the Tudor Merchants has been super busy too. Our holiday cottages had 97% occupancy, Gupton farm campsite was full and the St David's shop and Boathouse tearoom have had roaring sales.

Our teams have worked exceptionally hard and are now looking forward to a slight breather before October half term. From the outside we have had a fantastic summer, but internally we have been in a bit of turmoil. On the 10th July the National Trust announced that we would be going through a consultation, which would potentially directly impact some of our valued members of staff.

As you can imagine this has been a very stressful time for all concerned, but I have been incredibly proud of how the team have handled this and I have been very impressed with the amount of feedback that we have received from our staff and volunteers on the proposals, which have fed into the consultation. Over the coming weeks and months, we will be sadly saying goodbye to some of our

staff who have taken voluntary redundancy, which as you can imagine will be a very sad time for all, but we are eternally grateful for all their hard work. From the proposals it is looking highly likely that we will become a 'Restore Nature' portfolio, which we are exceptionally well placed to do and over the next few months we will find out what this means for Pembrokeshire and how that will look over the next 10 years.

Even though it's been a challenging summer all round, I have still managed to get outside as much as possible and have loved getting out on the water at 6am on my paddleboard, camping at the weekends and swimming almost every day in the sea.



Rhian paddleboarding at Broadhaven

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and are now enjoying this autumnal weather, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

With very best wishes
Rhian

Rebecca Evans – Community and Participation Project Officer



Hello, I'm Rebecca, the new Community and Participation project officer. I have spent my first six months getting to know the projects at

Stackpole, Southwood and Freshwater West, and making connections with local schools, community groups and community councils in each area. For Stackpole we've run sessions for the local community to share the results of the public consultation carried out by Pobl Tir Mor in summer 2024. Their work was valuable in capturing public opinion and feelings towards the lakes, as well as awareness of the challenges facing the lakes. We also held events on World Otter Day, with Sue Burton from Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation Officer, including a family otter detective walk, an afternoon walk and photo and finally an evening talk about the Pembrokeshire otter project



Field of Marigolds photograph Rebecca Evans

As I write this in mid-August, it's shaping up to be a very busy summer. The car parks have been very busy, with lots of visitors making the most of our coast and countryside. At Stackpole the car parks have been filling most days and the Welcome team have really appreciated extra support from our volunteers, supporting them in providing a warm welcome to visitors and directing traffic safely. It's also been great to see the Tramper mobility vehicle being well used, allowing more people access along the lakes, to Stackpole Court, Lodge Park woods, and to Broad Haven South and Stackpole Quay. The new willow sculptures (thank you!) are settling in nicely, and we now have new benches in the summer house where people can sit and admire the sculptures.

At Stackpole the regular volunteer group is back up and running with the rangers and they've been doing a variety of tasks twice a month. The Stackpole Centre has been busy too. We hosted the

society of National Parks conference, welcoming around 100 delegates from National Parks all over the UK. We've also welcomed many schools and university groups this year, as well as the regular summer group of young people from Action for Conservation. We've also had a few unwelcome visitors – with wasps making themselves at home in some of the walls!



Wellbeing stand Lamphey Show. Photograph Rebecca Evans

We enjoyed our day at Pembroke Town & Country Show in Lamphey, where our stand highlighted the wonderful wellbeing opportunities some of the lesser-known National Trust places can offer, as well as information about woodland restoration on the Colby Estate as part of the TWIG (Trees and Woodland Investment Grant) project, and a chance for people to enjoy old photos of the Stackpole Estate and share their memories.

Countryside Management Reports

South Pembrokeshire Countryside Alex Shilling Lead Ranger South Pembrokeshire.



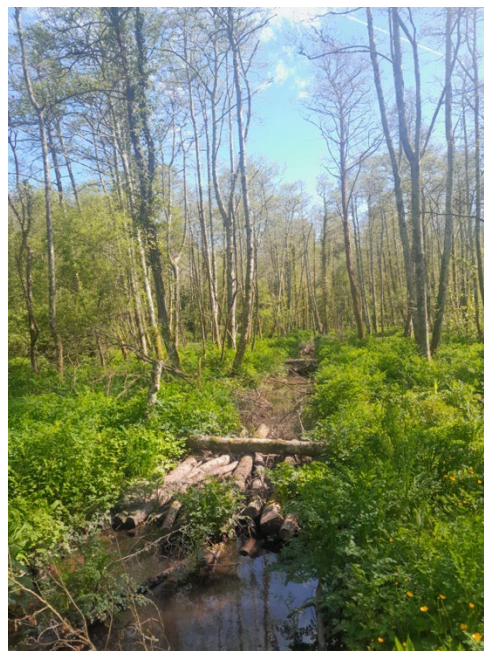
We have had another busy summer in south Pembrokeshire, with new members joining our team and some unusual wildlife successes. In June, Natasha Doane joined the ranger team for the next year to take the lead on delivering the Colby TWIG (The Woodland Investment Grant) project. This Welsh Government grant will help us to deliver improvements to access and management of the woodland for wildlife across the wider Colby woodland estate. Some of the key areas that the grant and Natasha will help us to work on include removal of Invasive Non-Native Species of plants, thinning woodland to improve its structural diversity, installation of fencing and infrastructure to allow grazing and creation of wood pasture and installation of natural flood management along the stream in Craig y Borion wood.

Natural flood management has also featured this year at Stackpole, with leaky wood dams installed in Caroline Grove last autumn functioning as we had hoped and helping to maintain a moist, humid atmosphere in the woodland surrounding the stream channel this summer. With this success in mind, and with efforts ongoing to mitigate the quantity of silt and nutrients reaching the lake system, we are planning further installation of leaky dams along the Cheriton stream this autumn. It is hoped that this work will be delivered as part of a coordinated approach involving the National Trust and some of our neighbouring farmers via the Ffermio Bro grant, which is focused on collaborative landscape scale conservation projects.



Green Winged Orchid at Lydstep Photograph Alex Shilling

Elsewhere, we have seen some positive signs for nature recovery across our sites, with some highlights including the coastal flora on the clifftops at Lydstep, new ponds covered with dragonflies and damselflies at the Mount and Barn fields woodland creation site near Colby and the first recorded successful nesting attempt by Marsh Harriers in Pembrokeshire.



Leaky wooden dam at Caroline Grove Stackpole Photograph Alex Shilling

Report by Alex Shilling

North Pembrokeshire Ranger team update

Update from Alys Chapman, Lead Ranger

Southwood footpaths:

Thanks to the very generous donation from PNTA, we are planning some improvements to the Southwood footpath network. We've known for a little while that one of the things we are lacking on the Estate is any short walking routes. To try and rectify this, we are planning to install two new sections of path, both about 0.5 km in length. Using these to link up with existing routes around the Estate will create two new loops, roughly 1.1 km and 2 km in length – or longer, should you wish. We are hoping this will make our little corner of Pembrokeshire more accessible and encourage more people to come and enjoy Southwood. We aim to have this up and running by Spring 2026.



*Signposts on the Southwood estate
Photograph Alys Chapman*

New Tractor!

Back in March, we welcomed an exciting new addition to the North Pembrokeshire team – a new tractor! We were able to access funding from the Welsh Government Local Places for Nature grant, allocated to the Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership, allowing us to upgrade our 10-year-old machine for a brand new model. She has already been put through her paces, collecting old fencing from around the Southwood Estate, mowing, and renewing fencing on the coast above Abermawr. Heading into winter, having a newer, more capable machine will help us to better manage the 1000 acres of SSSI and SAC across North Pembrokeshire, and opening up more of our commons for grazing. Not to mention being happier rangers, now that we have air conditioning!



New tractor Photograph Alys Chapman

Update from George Mee, Nature Recovery Ranger

Natural grazing at Southwood:

This year saw our first calving at Southwood in a long time, eight healthy calves were born in March and April, and were soon out exploring 200 acres of the estate with their mothers. A handful of new

animals joined the herd too, including our new bull, one of the last bulls from the Tyddewi herd – some real local provenance!



One of the first calves Photograph George Mee

Arable flora survey at Porthmawr:

Porthmawr is a small farm of about 20 acres on the slopes below Carn Llidi, overlooking Whitesands bay, acquired in 2024. The farm is made up of a series of small fields, which have historically been used to grow a range of crops, including cereals and potatoes. During 2025 we've been surveying for rare arable plants. These species require regular disturbance through ploughing but are susceptible to herbicides, and high fertility levels used to grow modern crops. Farms like Porthmawr offer refuges for these species, and the birds and invertebrates that rely on them. One of the fields at Porthmawr is now classified as of 'national importance' according to the Plantlife IAPA scoring system. Over the coming months the seeds from these plants will support hundreds of migrating finches, buntings and larks.



View over Whitesands bay, the majority of plants in foreground are Fat hen, a favoured food of many finches and buntings



A selection of arable plants thriving in a field corner, including weasel's snout, and corn spurrey.

TUDOR MERCHANT'S HOUSE



Melanie Knapp
Senior House & Collections Officer
Tudor Merchant's House

As I write we are coming to the end of another busy summer holidays, year to date I am pleased to report we have had over 10,000 visits to Tudor Merchant's House. Overall, we are up 1.8% on last year which is very pleasing. We have enjoyed increased numbers over Easter and the Whitsun week and again in July and August all despite lovely weather. The free entry tickets have been extended and can create extra challenge during busy times, we often have people queuing happily to gain entry by forming an orderly line all the way down Bridge Street!

Member Feedback has continued to be very positive with 82% saying they had a very satisfying experience and 17% saying they were satisfied with their visit. Over 90% of our visitors have not been before and through conversations we discover that the majority have not visited Pembrokeshire previously. This gives us a real opportunity to engage and explore other NT places for them to visit. We have also had many more overseas visitors including large tour groups who are already looking to book again next year.

In June we were involved with the first Tenby Tudor Weekend. There were several events around the town and Angela Jones gave a talk in the house on The Spice Trail and Terry John spent the day with us doing his Tudor paintings some of which were used on our interpretation cushions which are still on display and attracting positive comments.



Terry John

In mid-July we had a Purpose and Narrative Workshop led by our Curator and Experiences & Partnerships Curator for South Wales. The meeting was well attended by staff and volunteers and the purpose of the workshop was to come together to agree on what TMH is uniquely able to do for the benefit of people and place and to agree on the most significant and relevant stories we can share with our visitors. The document is currently in draft and will be shared when it has been finalised. Again, in July we participated in the Festival of Archaeology, prior to the event we had a visit from Dave Thomas (NT Wales Archaeologist) who gave us some interesting facts on our archaeological dig which we were able to share with our visitors along with the extra exhibits during the festival fortnight.



Festival of Archaeology TMH Kitchen



Festival of Archaeology Main Display

As we move now into the Autumn our next event is the **Open Doors free entry day on September 27th**. This coincides with other community events in Tenby over the weekend. This is a good opportunity for anyone wishing to visit for free and find out more about what NT has to offer. Our main season then draws to a close on the 1st November.

Our Tudor Christmas opening days are on Friday and Saturdays between 11am-3pm on the 29th and 30th November, 5, 6, 12, 13th December. Please come and visit if you are Christmas shopping in Tenby.

Finally, this year has been particularly challenging in regard to recruiting new volunteers. We have attended local volunteering events and advertised on the NT website and Volunteering Wales but unfortunately without any success. Thankfully our

existing volunteers have all pulled together and supported us by doing extra shifts to ensure our visitors have the best welcome and experience. If you know of anyone considering a volunteering role with National Trust, we are very happy for them to visit any time to see how we operate or to contact myself direct

melanie.knapp@nationaltrust.org.uk) for further information.

Report and photographs Melanie Knapp

Colby Woodland Garden



Steve Whitehead Head Gardener.

At Colby the gardeners and volunteers have been busy preparing the garden for winter and thinking about next year. While there are still plenty of late season flowers to come, we're looking forward to seeing the Autumn colour on the Acers, Dogwoods, Willows and Sweetgum. There is still more hay to cut and some harrowing to be done in the meadow to ensure good wildflower displays next year, so we're really hoping for some dry spells this side of Christmas.

Wind-blown timber from Storm Darragh is still waiting to be cleared from the woodlands. This will allow the bluebells to show well next spring, so that will be a critical winter job too. Our wonderful volunteers have recently been working on clearing the invasive Himalayan balsam from the stream-sides, keeping the footpaths open and trying to maintain the delicate balance between our native wild plants, left untouched to help wildlife thrive, while still giving room for the exotic garden plants to show at their best. Up-coming winter work also includes clearing some of the willows around the ponds and wetland area, to let more light in for the pond-plants, so they can support even more of our native pond dwellers.

The summer bat surveying by Vincent Wildlife Trust throughout the Colby Estate woodlands has now conclusively proved that we have all 14 species of bat found in Pembrokeshire here in the woodlands at Colby, including the rare Barbastelle bat. The data that VWT are still processing will really help us to plan any future work on our trees to enhance potential roost sites for these tree-dwellers. We'll also be putting an owl box up on the edge of the woodland, next to a particularly vole-rich bit of developing gladed-woodland on the Summerhill side of the garden. The box was kindly donated by one of our volunteers.



The Gazebo under repair.



The Gazebo with newly renovated roof

Thanks to Beth (our excellent Facilities Manager organising) and Finn (the contractor doing all the hard work) the Gazebo roof replacement project is finally finished. Now that the building is at last bee-free and water-tight, we can start planning the fund-raising to restore the beautiful trompe l'oeil paintings inside that were badly damaged by water (and honey) running down the walls. Now that that's all finished, work will soon start on making safe the worst areas of the walled-garden wall, which is now showing its age.



Beautiful Autumn colours



Path through the garden

Report and photographs Steve Whitehead

PNTA WEBSITE

The Association has a website at www.pembsnta.org.uk It contains information about the Association, our Events Programme, the Newsletter and Association news items.

We hope it will be useful to existing members and attract new members. Together with email and MailChimp, it helps us provide up to date information for members.

CONTACT BY EMAIL

We are continuing to increase our use of electronic communications. If you have an email address and are not receiving messages, such as **MailChimp** from us, or have just started an email account, please let us know at one of the Winter talk meetings

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is not surprising that with such a disruptive year, that there are still membership fees owing for 2025. You can renew your membership at one of the Winter talk meetings by cheque for £5 (single) or £8 (double) or better still, complete a standing order form which is available on the PNTA website.

Subscriptions run from January to January. Your effort will be much appreciated.

NEWSLETTER BY E MAIL.

In order to keep costs down and do our bit for the environment we are continuing to send out the newsletter by e mail unless members have requested to receive the newsletter by post.

A number of members currently receive Andrew's mailchimp on a regular basis and this works well to keep everyone up to date. The newsletter is also published on the website.

MAILCHIMP

Mailchimp continues to offer reminders about upcoming events, reports on recent activities and other things that I hope members find of interest.

If you have been missing out, but would like to subscribe, please email me at andrew.pnta@gmail.com

If you have already provided an email address but are not seeing Mailchimp, please check your junk/spam file.

**YOUR OFFICERS AND
COMMITTEE MEMBERS
ARE AS FOLLOWS (* OFFICER):**

Chairman* Jane Mason

Vice-Chairman*

Treasurer* Steven Flather

Secretary* Annie Weaver
Tel: 01646 831323

Membership

Secreta

Mailchimp Andrew Weaver

Newsletter. Marilyn James

Publicity Jane Mason

Walks Steve Drinkwater

Day Trips

Winter Talks. Graham Wright & Sandra Wright

Additional

Socials. Lyn Humphries

FINANCE REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2024

All income sources showed an increase over the previous year, with a total increase of just over £1,500. Excluding donations to the National Trust, expenditure marginally increased, this was offset by the lower donation to the National Trust. In 2023 a larger donation than usual was made to the National Trust in celebration of our 25th anniversary. £3,000 of the 2024 donation had not been released as at 31 December 2024 and a provision for this has been made in the Balance Sheet. The Association made a surplus of £1.3k in 2024.

Apart from the change in the National Trust donation, the changes in the financial position have changed very little. Cash and bank balances are at a healthy £11.5 k and the General Fund stands at over £6k after providing for donations. Movements in the Receipts and Payments in advance are due to timing differences in the payment of spring tour deposits, the tour remains are main income source.

A summary of the 2024 Annual Statement of Accounts with comparative figures for 2023 is shown below. An electronic copy of the full statement is available on request by e mailing

Sflather21@gmail.com

PEMBROKESHIRE NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION
SUMMARISED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR 2024

SUMMARISED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

2023			2024
£	£		£
		<u>INCOME</u>	
(1,667.50)	Membership subscriptions winter talks	(2,031.75)	
(2,398.07)	Tours, fund raising and donations received	(3,528.50)	
(34.24)	Bank interest	(54.62)	
			(5,614.87)
(4,099.81)			
		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
5,000.00	Donations made/committed	3,500.00	
300.00	Winter talks	490.00	
300.86	Administration and gifts	302.78	
			4,292.78
5,600.86			
1,501.05	(surplus)/deficit for year	(1,322.09)	
(1,501.05)	To/(from) Accumulated Fund	1,322.09	
<u>Nil</u>			<u>Nil</u>

SUMMARISED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

2023		2024
£		£
13,392.34	Cash and Bank	11,507.81
(3,629.62)	Payments and receipts in advance	(2,423.00)
9,762.72		9,084.81
6,263.77	Accumulated Fund at start of year	4,762.72
(1,501.05)	(To)/From Income and Expenditure Account	1,322.09
4,762.72	Accumulated Fund at end of year	6,084.81
5,000.00	Provision for donation to National Trust	3,000.00
<u>9,762.72</u>		<u>9,084.81</u>

SUMMARISED CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

2023		2024
£		£
1,501.05	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year	(1,322.09)
(5,000.00)	(Increase)/Decrease in Provisions	2,000.00
(1,922.62)	(increase)/Decrease in Payments and Receipts in advance	1,206.62
(5,421.57)		1,884.53
13,392.34	Closing Cash and Bank	1,1507.81
7,970.77	Less: Opening Cash and Bank	13,392.34
<u>5,421.57</u>	Movement in Cash and Bank	<u>(1,884.53)</u>

Notes and accounts prepared by
Steven Flather FCCA
Treasurer

PNTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Pembrokeshire National Trust Association will hold its AGM at Wolfscastle Country Hotel on Thursday November 20th 2025 commencing at noon. Speaker Jonathan Hughes Assistant Director of the National Trust in Wales.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's report
3. Treasurer's report and approval of accounts
4. Approval of annual subscriptions to apply to the next AGM
5. Election of officers and other Committee members for the period to the next AGM
6. AOB

Please notify the Chairman well in advance if you wish to raise any matters.

Following the AGM, for those that wish to stay, there will be a lunch followed by a short presentation

Please Note – The minutes of the 2025 AGM will be available at the meeting.

The members of committee are willing to continue in their roles.

We are looking to recruit extra members to help with organisation, either on or off committee.

NOMINATION FORM FOR PNTA COMMITTEE

Name _____

Position sought for election _____ (please write
'General' if just seeking a General position on the Committee)

Proposer _____

Seconder _____

(Nominees, proposers and seconders have to be members of the PNTA)

Please send your form, by Thursday 13th November to:

Annie Weaver Secretary PNTA, Larks Rising, Kiln Park,

Burton Ferry SA73 1NY or call on 01646 831323 if you wish to have further information.

BOOKING FORM FOR PNTA SPRING TOUR 10TH - 14th MAY 2026

We will be staying at the **Imperial Hotel**, at **Torquay**, as our base for **touring South Devon**.

Our **provisional** timetable of activities:

Visit Hestercombe Gardens (Not NT) near Taunton on our journey to Torquay. A guided tour of Exeter Cathedral, then on to Killerton NT.

For Tuesday you will need to choose between a tour of Britannia Naval College, Dartmouth or a ferryboat trip to enjoy Greenway NT, Agatha Christie's former home. We hope to squeeze in a look at Buckfast Abbey on the way back to our hotel.

A boat cruise on the Tamar, at Plymouth, followed by Buckland Abbey NT.

En route home we will take a break at Tyntesfield NT.

We will be travelling by coach with Richards Bros.

Those who are not National Trust members may need to pay the entry fee for NT properties visited. Other entry fees etc are included in the price.

THE COST WILL BE £695 pp for those sharing a room (single supplement £200). This includes coach travel plus three course dinner, bed and breakfast, at the hotel.

Apologies for the higher cost, but rooms have sea views as standard.

Please send your cheque for the deposit (£100 per person) with your booking form or make payment online.

We need at least 28 on board to make the trip viable.

Final payment will be due towards the end of March. (Travel insurance is not included but is encouraged.)

If you would like to reserve your place, please return the form with a cheque made out to PNTA and send to; Andrew Weaver, Larks Rising, Kiln Park, Burton, Milford Haven, SA73 1NY

Name/Names _____

Address _____

Phone numbers _____

email address _____

Single ____ Double ____ Twin ____ room (Please tick)

Payment by Cheque Yes/No or online Yes/No (Please indicate)

If you prefer to pay on line, please pay Barclays Bank, Sort Code 20-37-82 for the credit of the PEMBROKESHIRE NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION, Account Number 90390992 Please add 2026 tour as the reference

Please still send a form by post or email to andrew.pnta@gmail.com If you have received the newsletter digitally, it is not essential to print the form, provided that you give the requested information in a letter or email.

