

## St Gwyddelan's Churchyard

The Bro Gwydyr Ministry Area of which St Gwyddelan's is a part, is keen to manage the churchyard in an eco-friendly way. Advice was asked from the charity "Caring for God's Acre" (CfGA). Their botanists have completed a survey of the plants in the churchyard and produced a helpful Management Plan. They identified 37 wildflowers, 10 grasses, 6 ferns and some trees and shrubs. They suggest the wildflowers could be increased but only with species that typically grow in this vicinity. The area of grasses can be thinned to reduce competition for flowers. To do this the annual Yellow Rattle, which is semi-parasitic on grasses, will be sown. There are also mosses and lichens and Paul Jenkins has identified several.

The most prominent trees are of course the yews (9) and the Scots Pine (7). Two of the yews have been classed as 'Veteran', one male and one female, probably 1500 years old and all are a great feature of the churchyard. With the help of the SNPA Forestry Officer and specialist colleague, the trees have been surveyed. At this time all are sound. We are advised to remove ivy growing up the yews. But the Scots Pine in particular will be surveyed every year or two years to see if any should have limbs removed or be felled for safety reasons. Other trees and shrubs include the Purple-leaved Sycamore, Holly, Ivy and Elder. One of the aims of management is to try to keep the inscriptions on gravestones legible where possible, clear of shrub growth and fallen leaves.



The churchyard will be strimmed in spring and again after flowers have seeded in July/August. All cuttings will be removed off site as they have been for some years. A path through the churchyard will be kept cut short at all times for all to use. Lots to think about and do !