

Explore Saint Illtud's Church

Saint Illtud's Church is on the site of one of the oldest centres of learning in Britain! The church was founded around 500AD by Saint Illtud, who set up a monastery and college here.



The college became home to students from across Europe, including monks, religious scholars and the children of nobles and royalty. Many Saints studied at Illtud's college and Illtud's teachings almost certainly influenced Saint David and Saint Patrick, who became the Patron Saints of Wales and Ireland.

The seaside location of the college was convenient for students arriving on ships. It was also important for protection – the college was built in a hollow and couldn't be seen from the sea, which helped to protect it from Viking raiders.

The church you see here today was built during the 1200s close to where the college once stood.

Saint Illtud's College didn't have a badge like many schools do nowadays. If it did, can you imagine what it might have looked like? Draw your idea for Saint Illtud's College badge here:



Did you know...

Did you know... one legend says that that Saint Illtud was a skilled warrior before he became a monk! It is believed that he fought alongside the legendary King Arthur in defending Britain against the Saxons, who invaded from Germany during the Middle Ages.



Find the touch-screen display inside Saint Illtud's, which provides more information about the church, the town and other heritage features nearby.

Find the ancient stones!

At the western end of Saint Illtud's Church stands the Galilee Chapel. Inside the Chapel you'll find five ancient stones, which are some of the finest Celtic Crosses in Wales.



The stones are around 1100-1200 years old. See if you can work out which stone is which using the descriptions below...

- The Houelt Cross:** this stone has a circle around its top and is carved with beautiful, criss-cross decoration.
- The Samon Cross:** this is the shorter of the two pillars. It is carved with a curly pattern on the front.
- The Samson Pillar:** this is the tallest of the three stones.

Turn the page upside down check whether you guessed right!

The Samson Pillar



The Samon Cross



The Houelt Cross

