

## GLAMORGAN RECORD OFFICE/ARCHIFYDY MORGANNWG

**Reference code:** GB 214 BLL

**Title:** BOROUGH OF LLANTRISANT / BWRDEISTREF  
LLANTRISANT

**Date(s)** 1424-1912

**Level of description:** Fonds (level 2)

**Extent:** c. 0.28 cubic metres

**Name of creator(s)** Borough of Llantrisant

### **Administrative/Biographical history**

Most ancient boroughs originate from the manor, stemming either from the Court Baron, which was the lord's private court, or the Court Leet, which was the manorial court of public record. Such boroughs would gradually become enfranchised as burgesses purchased or took on rights from the lord. If a borough held property, or had an income, it would normally become a Borough Corporation, and from this a non-manorial Municipal Corporation would evolve.

Boroughs aimed to obtain charters, either from the monarch or from the lord of the manor. These charters would confer detailed privileges, and confirm any rights already held or claimed by burgesses. These would normally include the right to hold, administer and sell real estate; the right to trade, and host markets and fairs; the right to return a member of parliament; the right to hold Quarter Sessions or a borough court, and the right to raise taxes. Certain obligations which the borough was expected to fulfil would also be listed, such as the collection of the monarch's taxes; execution of the monarch's rule; maintaining the peace; sending a burgess to parliament, and acting as public trustees to charitable grants. If the burgesses wished to extend their authority, they would attempt to obtain a new charter which would confirm previous charters, and add new rights and privileges.

The decline of the ancient boroughs began in the late seventeenth century, with the Test Acts of 1661 and 1672. These acts prohibited Roman Catholics and Dissenters from holding office. As a result, the pool of burgesses available to hold office shrank, which in turn led to the formation of small cliques voting each other into office year after year. The result was an increase in corruption and the misuse of power. The enclosure of the commons also contributed to the decline of boroughs, by reducing their geographical jurisdiction, and cutting the income derived from common lands. The increased importance of justices of the peace and of the parish during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries also meant that their powers of management over the towns were being superseded, and the courts leet and baron no longer held sway.

Llantrisant Borough stems from 1245, when Richard de Clare conquered Meisgyn and began ruling from Llantrisant Castle. The first charter was granted in 1346 by Hugh le Despenser, which provided the burgesses of Llantrisant with all the freedoms and rights enjoyed by the burgesses of Cardiff over the past two centuries. Other privileges already held by the burgesses were also confirmed. This charter, along

with those of 1358, 1397 and 1421, are cited in the earliest surviving charter of 1424. This granted the borough and its burgesses various rights and privileges over property, trade, taxation, highways and courts. Officers were appointed, including a Constable of the Castle; steward; portreeve; 12 aldermen; serjeant at mace; 4 market overseers; 4 commons overseers, and unlimited burgesses. Over the years, the borough also became responsible for the town hall; scales and weights; town pump; manor pound; highways and boundaries.

Each Llantrisant burgess held the right to vote. In Llantrisant, the status of burgess could be acquired as a right of birth; through marriage to a burgess' daughter; through an apprenticeship to a burgess of at least 7 years, or through gift. Prior to the 1832 Reform of Parliament Act, the boroughs of Llantrisant; Cardiff; Cowbridge; Kenfig; Aberavon; Neath; Swansea and Loughor voted together and sent one burgess to parliament. After 1832, Llantrisant, Cardiff and Cowbridge jointly sent one member, and continued to do so until the reforms of the 1918 Representation of the People Act.

Llantrisant's only court was the Court Leet View of Frankpledge. It was summoned bi-annually in May and October, and held responsibility for the making of bye-laws, general orders and the administration of the markets.

The Borough's powers were gradually superseded, and under the terms of the 1883 Municipal Corporations Act, Llantrisant Borough was dissolved. In 1889, Llantrisant Town Trust was established under an order of the Charity Commissioners to administer ancient borough property; manage the common; enrol freemen; maintain the pump and improve the town.

### **Scope and content**

Llantrisant Borough records include a charter; records produced by, or relating to the Court Leet View of Frankpledge; papers concerning burgage rents; papers relating to parliamentary elections; papers concerning the case of Llantrisant Borough, 1711; correspondence and minutes.

### **Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information**

All records offered have been accepted and listed

### **Conditions governing access**

The majority of the records are on open access. For preservation reasons, the original charter will not be produced for research and photocopies will be made available in its place.

### **Conditions governing reproduction**

Normal Glamorgan Record Office conditions apply.

### **Language/Scripts of material**

English, Latin

### **Physical characteristics and technical requirements**

Fair condition

**Finding aids**

Item level list available

**Related units of description**

Llantrisant and Llantwit Fardre Rural District Council (RDLL)

Glamorgan County Council (GCC)

Llantrisant Town Trust (DBB/1-6)

**Date(s) of descriptions**

November 2002

<b>BLL71</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>1882-1885</b>
BLL71/1	Minutes of a meeting of the freemen of the Borough of Llantrisant to consider the Municipal Corporations (Unreformed) Bill  [1 paper]	June 1882
BLL71/2	Minutes of a meeting of the freemen, burgesses and rate payers of the Borough of Llantrisant concerning the separation of Llantrisant and Cardiff in sending a representative to parliament  [1 paper]	Jan. 1885
BLL71/3	Letter requesting attendance at a meeting of the Boundary Commissioners  [1 paper]	Jan. 1885

