

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MADRON BAPTISTERY CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

17 October 2005

At Madron Well, a program to improve and conserve the site for public access and enjoyment has recently been initiated. This is being carried out by a partnership that includes Madron Community Forum, the Parish Council, Bolitho Estates, DEFRA, Cornwall County Council, the Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network, Penwith Access and Rights of Way, and English Heritage.

The Baptistery, which dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, is a picturesque granite ruin with spring water feeding into a stone basin in the corner, and stone seats lining the walls. However, over the years, the site had become badly overgrown and was in need of care and restoration. Thanks to the work of volunteers and professional bodies, a dense layer of damaging vegetation has now been cleared around the site, revealing the chapel building and enclosure walls. Footpath access to the site has also been improved, and the beautiful pathway to the Well and the Baptistery is once more a pleasure to walk.

Madron Well and Baptistery are heavily visited sites, popular with a diverse community of tourists and residents. Sadly, they are suffering from this popularity, with erosion and vandalism constant threats. They are valuable assets to the heritage environment that need care to ensure their long-term protection, and the current program will also include stonework consolidation and improvement of the parking area and path to allow access for less-able visitors. The work is to be funded from a variety of sources, including DEFRA, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage, with local organisations and volunteers also making a major contribution.