Mr Barafundle and the Rock Dragon

The author of the book is Julie Rainsbury, with illustrations by Graham Howells.

The story is about a jolly, kindly man and his encounter with a sad, and nameless young Dragon who has been abandoned by the other Dragons due to his inability to learn to fly.

In order to cheer up the sad creature, Mr Barafundle decides he will not only find him a name, but teach him to dance.

So they embark on a long journey through beautiful countryside and an enchanted forest full of mystical creatures, in search of a good witch who will help them to achieve this. In spite of his misgivings and quite a scary journey they visit the witch in her cottage, and she helps them in their quest. Needless to say the story has a happy ending, but of course I cannot reveal it, as it would spoil the fun of reading the book.

Julie Rainsbury and Graham Howells both live in Pembrokeshire. Their strong connection with the area is obvious, not only in the title of the book itself, but also in the names of the characters.

Graham Howells’ illustrations of the characters and creatures are varied, mystical, endearing and often strange. A perfect mix for children to love.

Some of the backgrounds are noticeably similar to the local coastline and places of interest in the Pembrokeshire area, in particular The Green Bridge of Wales. Local children would recognise this, and it would be a good stepping stone to visiting children into the coastal delights of the area.

The story itself is one of kindness of man toward Dragon, and has several scary moments which all children love so much.

It is charmingly written by an author obviously in tune with the literary needs of the modern child. The local themes make it highly suitable to the shelves of a local library, but would in no way be out of place in the children’s section of bookshops and libraries throughout the country.
My next door neighbour plans on borrowing it to read to his granddaughter on her next visit to Pembrokeshire. Praise enough.