



Maesyfelin
Isaf

Where it's not just a room



Places of Interest Locally

These pages are intended as a guide for places where to go and what to do, within a 'roughly' 60 minute drive from Maesyfelin Isaf.

The illustration on the following page shows many of the options available to enjoy in and around Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire, with a brief personal overviews and description.





Gwili Railway, photo courtesy of Scott Artus



National Wool Museum © Amgueddfa Cymru



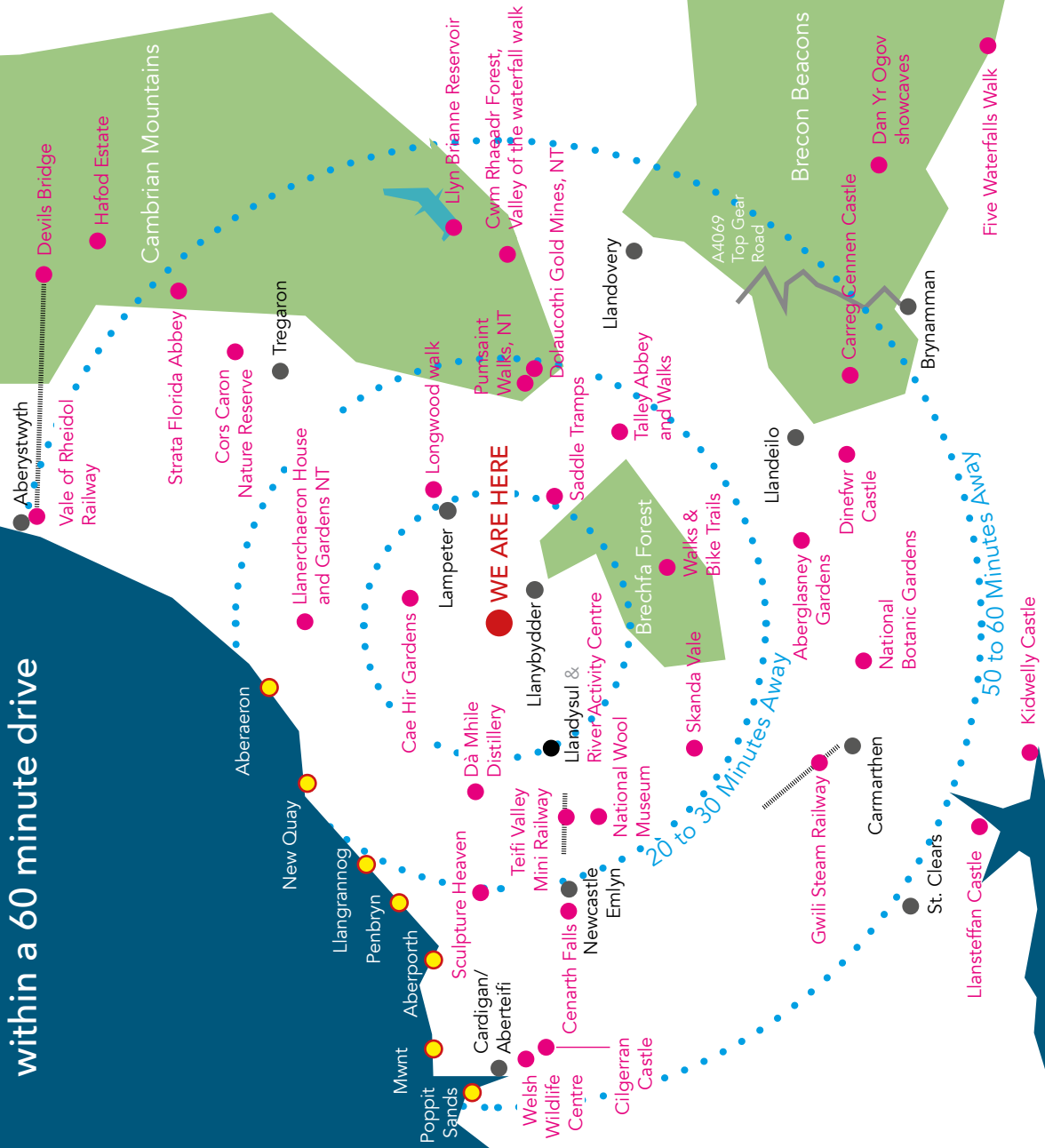
Langrannog Beach and Coastal Walks



Cenarth Falls | © Gavin Haskell, Dreamstime

Whats In The Area

within a 60 minute drive



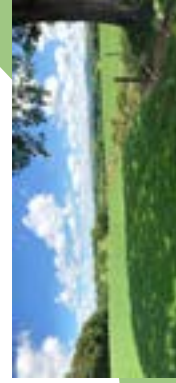
Dolaucothi Gold Mines



Llanerchaeron House and Gardens



Cwm Rhaeadr Forest, Waterfall Walk



Longwood Walk



Talley Abbey | Photo Crown Copyright Licensing



Carreg Cennen | © Leighton Collins, Dreamstime

Illustration of area for representative purposes only, please do not scale.

Stephen Kellett Design © 2024



Just Down the Road

Jen Jones Welsh Quilts & Blankets



The Jen Jones Welsh Quilts and Blankets Cottage Shop is located just outside the village of Llanybydder, this side of the river Teifi, so only about 5 minutes away if that. The long established charming eighteenth century cottage shop has been open for over thirty years and attracts visitors from around the world. You can book a visit by calling 01570 480610 or checking out their website, Jen Jones. A very warm welcome or 'croeso', in Welsh, awaits you at their cottage shop. Inside, upstairs and downstairs, we think you will be spoilt for choice by the deliciously colourful antique quilts, blankets, throws, shawls and so much more.

www.jen-jones.com

Local Fishing – from 5 minutes away



Cledlyn Lake Fishery - (01570 481439)

Literally a few fields away, indeed you should be able to see their cabin, in above photo, from our bedroom windows, so well within walking distance. Plus they have a Cafe on site serving cooked breakfasts and lunch, please see their Facebook page for more information and details.

Please contact Jan direct if you wish to book your breakfast. www.facebook.com/CledlynLakeFishery

But in the interests of fairness and to keep all the 'Fishing' bits together

Celtic Lakes - (01570 471081) is just 9 miles away on the Aberaeron/Lampeter road, see their facebook page for details. www.facebook.com/p/The-New-Celtic-Lakes-100063627007485

Springwater Lakes - (01558 650788) is around 12 miles away, south of Lampeter and they have their own bait and tackle shop. www.springwaterlakes.com/facilities/fishing/



Lampeter

~10 minutes
~6 miles



Lampeter is a picturesque small market and university town providing services for a wide area, with a number of independent shops specialising in home furnishings, books, records, art and craft, clothing, food and drink. There's a regular farmer's market as well as excellent cafes serving home made cakes, Italian ice cream and other freshly prepared and artisan food. You'll also find two supermarkets a Sainsburys and a Coop, a leisure centre and swimming pool, local museum and a great network of walks to enjoy. The popular Lampeter Food Festival in July is held on the grounds of the University College.

I would try and describe where Sainsburys is but it is well hidden behind the High Street, so would suggest you use Google Maps or something. The Coop on the other hand is on the A482 heading south out of town just before the river Teifi and you can't really miss it.

Traditional events include the annual agricultural show held in August, almost continuously since the 1870s and the prestigious Rhys Thomas James Eisteddfod, held over the August Bank Holiday weekend. There are also craft fairs and music festivals as well as regular events organised by Ramblers and the town's various sports clubs, who welcome visitors. Distance: 5.4 miles, 10 minutes away.

Food Festival - For up to date details see www.facebook.com/Lampeterfoodfestival

The Welsh Quilt Centre and Calico Kate - Following on from earlier article on Jen Jones, there are another two similar shops located on the High Street in Lampeter town centre. Offering quite a broad range of traditional Welsh Blankets, fabrics, sewing paraphernalia etc... Both these shops are a rabbit warren of nooks and crannies full of some marvellous stuff for the crafters amongst you. For more information see www.welshquilts.com and www.calicokate.co.uk

D L Williams, Ironmongers & Hardware - Is another marvel and great for those who remember Ironmongers of old, as it is a treasure trove of stuff over two floors and massively deceiving floor space compared to the street view. *"We offer everything you need for your home and garden, from hand and power tools, ironmongery, kitchenware, gardening products, pet food and equipment, gifts and much more. We provide everything that the residents of Lampeter and beyond with everything they need in this 'Aladdin's cave'."* - www.dl-williams.co.uk/ironmongers/

Museum - Yes there is one but...



Cae Hir Gardens

~11 minutes
~6 miles



Ornamental garden, nursery and tearoom - a perfect afternoon out!

OPEN from 10am to 5pm, 7 days a week, from April – October. Well worth a visit as one of the best open gardens in Wales which is advertised as the Dutch garden in the heart of Wales. Cae Hir is a family garden, an RHS Partner Garden and one of the founding members of the Great Gardens of West Wales. Awarded a 2017 Certificate of Excellence on Trip Advisor. Created as a visitor attraction and opened as such in 1989.

Cae Hir have welcomed thousands of visitors to our 5 acre garden over the last 30+ years. Soak up the sun on the lawns, amble, meander and enjoy the views as they open up before you, or maybe read a book in a shady corner. You could even bring your laptop and use our free wifi to get some work done in peaceful surroundings. Whatever you choose to do, our garden is your garden for as long as you choose to stay.

www.caehirgardens.com

Opening Times

10am - 5pm
7 days a week
April 1st - Sep 30th
October Autumn Days TBA

Please wear sturdy, waterproof footwear - our lawns are rarely 100% dry, whatever the weather!

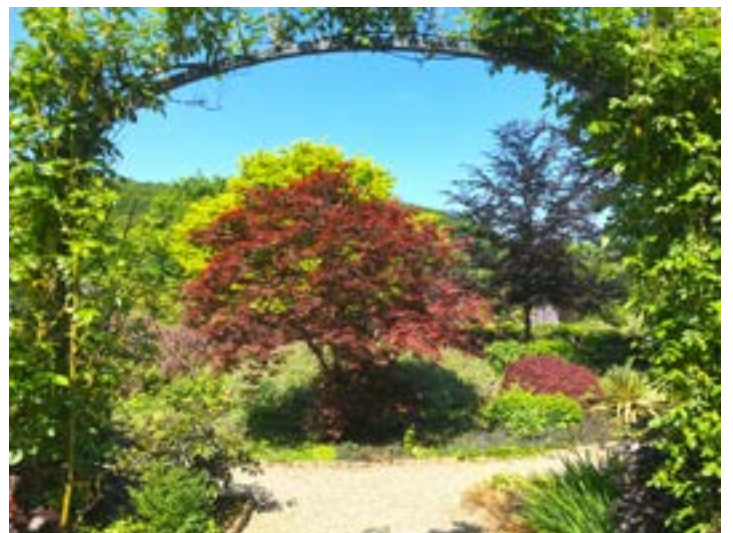
Garden Admission Prices

Adult / OAP: £7.50
Children (2 - 16): £2.50
Children under 2: Free
Family (2 adults, 3 kids): £20
Season Memberships available

Entry fees are for the garden only
- entry to the tearoom & nursery is FREE.

Dogs

Dogs with well behaved owners are welcome in the garden! Please keep dogs on leads at all times, and clean up after them if needed. We have a dedicated dog mess bin for this purpose, at the garden entrance. Fresh water is always available in the nursery area.





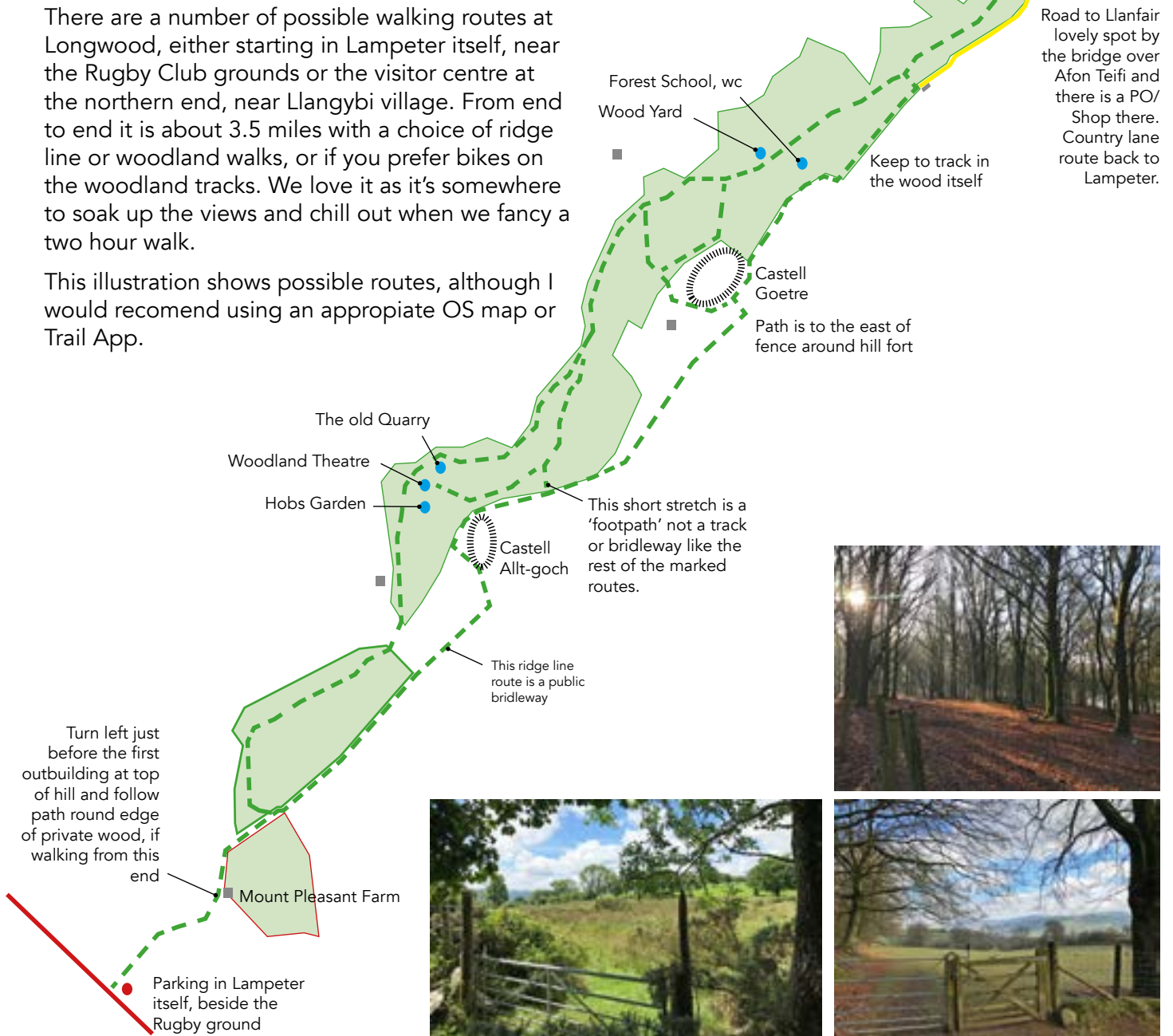
Longwood Woodland Walks, Lampeter

~11 minutes
~6 miles



There are a number of possible walking routes at Longwood, either starting in Lampeter itself, near the Rugby Club grounds or the visitor centre at the northern end, near Llangybi village. From end to end it is about 3.5 miles with a choice of ridge line or woodland walks, or if you prefer bikes on the woodland tracks. We love it as it's somewhere to soak up the views and chill out when we fancy a two hour walk.

This illustration shows possible routes, although I would recommend using an appropriate OS map or Trail App.





Within 16 to 30 Minutes

Llanerchaeron House & Gardens (National Trust)

~24 minutes

~13 miles



An elegant Georgian villa and gardens, set in the wooded Aeron valley. Remarkably unaltered for over 200 years, this self-sufficient estate includes a farm, walled gardens and lake. The villa, designed in the 1790s, is a complete example of the early work of John Nash. It has its own service courtyard with dairy, laundry, brewery and salting house, giving a full 'upstairs, downstairs' experience. The walled kitchen gardens, pleasure grounds, ornamental lake and parkland offer peaceful walks, while the Home Farm complex has an impressive range of traditional, atmospheric outbuildings.

There are a number of paths around the gardens and woodland as illustrated below.

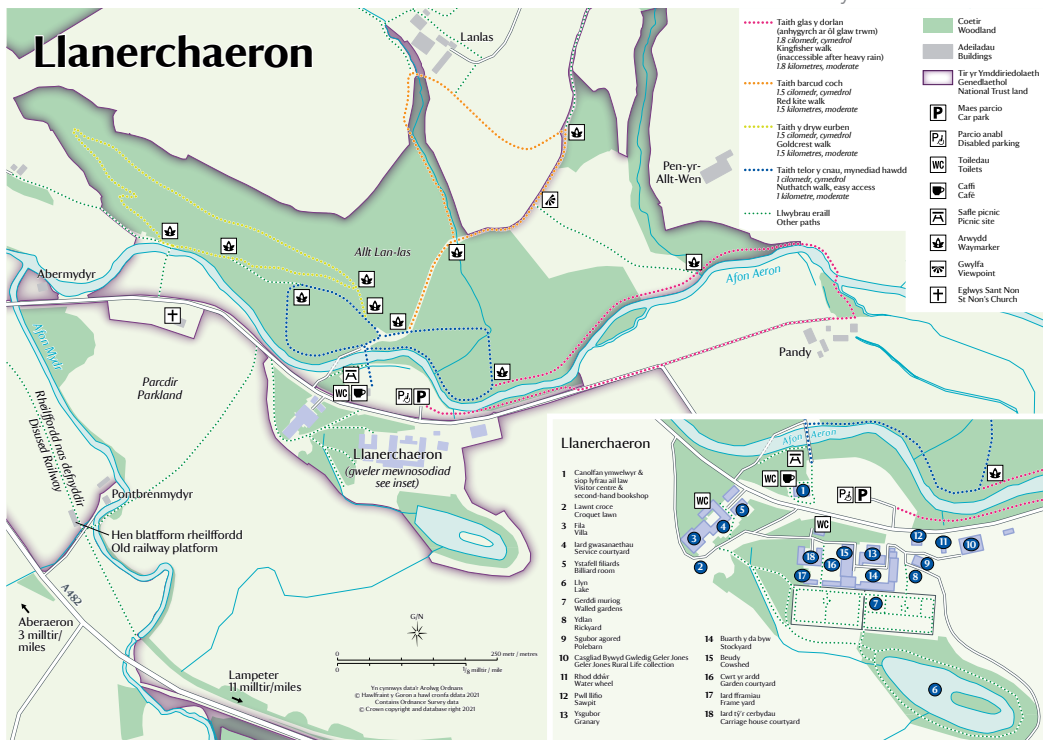
As a working farm, there are Welsh Black cattle, Llanwenog sheep and rare Welsh pigs as well as chickens, geese and doves. Only guide dogs are allowed on the property. However, dogs on leads are welcome in the woodland and parkland walks.

The house, garden, farm and Conti's Cafe are open from Wednesday to Sunday. Although the car park and woodland generally open all year round.

Llanerchaeron Website



Illustration courtesy of NT Llanerchaeron





Maesyfelin Isaf

Where it's not just a room



Dolaucothi Gold Mines & Landscape (National Trust)

~26 minutes
~14 miles



Mine Tour, a last minute H&S talk

These unique gold mines are set amid wooded hillsides overlooking the beautiful Cothi Valley. Over 2000 years ago, the Romans left behind glimpses of their gold-mining methods. The harsh mining environment continued in the 19th and 20th centuries, ending in 1938. Guided tours take you back to experience the conditions underground in the Roman and Victorian workings (tour routes may vary throughout the season).

The 1930's Mine Yard contains buildings and mining machinery, dating from that time. Have a go at gold panning and experience the frustrations of searching for real gold!

There were two underground tours available at the time of writing which have to be pre-booked. Please note, these involve steps and steep slopes, so it is appropriate outer wear and stout enclosed footwear is essential

Also nearby and either from the same car park or the one opposite, there are a number of walks on the neighbouring NT estate, of which a walking map can be downloaded from their website. These walks can also be started from the car park at Pumsaint where there is also a public WC.

Dolaucothi website



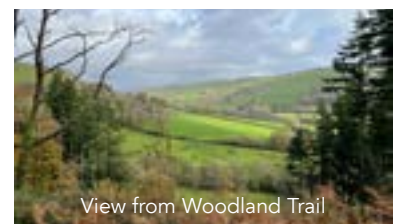
Illustration courtesy of NT Dolaucothi



Mine Tour



Mine Site



View from Woodland Trail

07341 270631 | steve@maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk | www.maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk

Maesyfelin Isaf, Drefach, Llanybydder, Ceredigion, SA40 9YB



National Wool Museum - Drefach Felindre

~22 minutes
~12 miles



Courtesy National Wool Museum © Amgueddfa Cymru

Wool was once one of Wales' most important industries. Located in historic Cambrian Mills, from where Welsh woollen blankets, stockings, shirts and shawls were sent around the world, the National Wool Museum offers engaging experiences and learning for all ages. Find out how wool is processed from fleece to fabric on our self-guided trails, explore exhibitions on the history of cloth making and its use in fashion, and try your hand at traditional skills such as carding and spinning before marvelling at the skills of our craftspersons in processing wool.

The beautiful Teifi Valley has been the beating heart of the woollen trade in Wales for over a hundred years. With several of their old machines still in working order, there's no better place to learn the story of nature's great natural, renewable and biodegradable fibre. Melin Teifi, adjacent to our museum still produces the finest traditional Welsh flannel, and our visitors are welcome to watch master craftsmen at work creating intricate patterns and wonderful fabrics on mechanised looms.

Wool Museum Website



Indeed Maesyfelin Isaf itself stands on the foundations of the old Maesyfelin Woolen Mill as ran by the Bowen family from the 1800s, using the reclaimed stone to build todays property. For more details see the QR link to my website History page.



Maesyfelin History



Photos courtesy National Wool Museum © Amgueddfa Cymru





Dà Mhile Distillery and Glynhynod Farm

~19 minutes
~11 miles



Courtesy of Glynhynod Farm

Glynhynod Farm (Remarkable Valley), has been owned and run by the Savage-Onstwedder family since July 1981. John, Patrice and Paula came to Wales from their native Holland with dreams of setting up a centre for organic farming and self-sufficiency. Their first venture was using Patrice's cheese making skills to make the wonderful raw milk Caws Teifi Cheese, which is still made on the farm to this day.

10 years after establishing Caws Teifi Cheese, John spotted a gap in the market for organic whisky. Our name was inspired by the initial bottling which was done to celebrate the millennium, (Dà Mhile translates to 'two thousand' in Scots-Galic/Dwy Fil yn Gymraeg).

Today the farm and family businesses are run by Patrice and John's two sons; John-James and Robert. Their cheeses and spirits are sold at local farmer's markets, local shops, wine & spirits merchants and online. They also sell products in their farm shop and online.

Distillery tours, talks and tasting are available through their website or call them direct on 01239 851998.

The farm shop is open Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm located off the A486 Llandysul/New Quay road. If you use What3Words it is ///modest.negotiators.octagon

www.teificheese.co.uk and/or www.damhile.co.uk

Talley Abbey and Surrounding Walks

~27 minutes
~14 miles



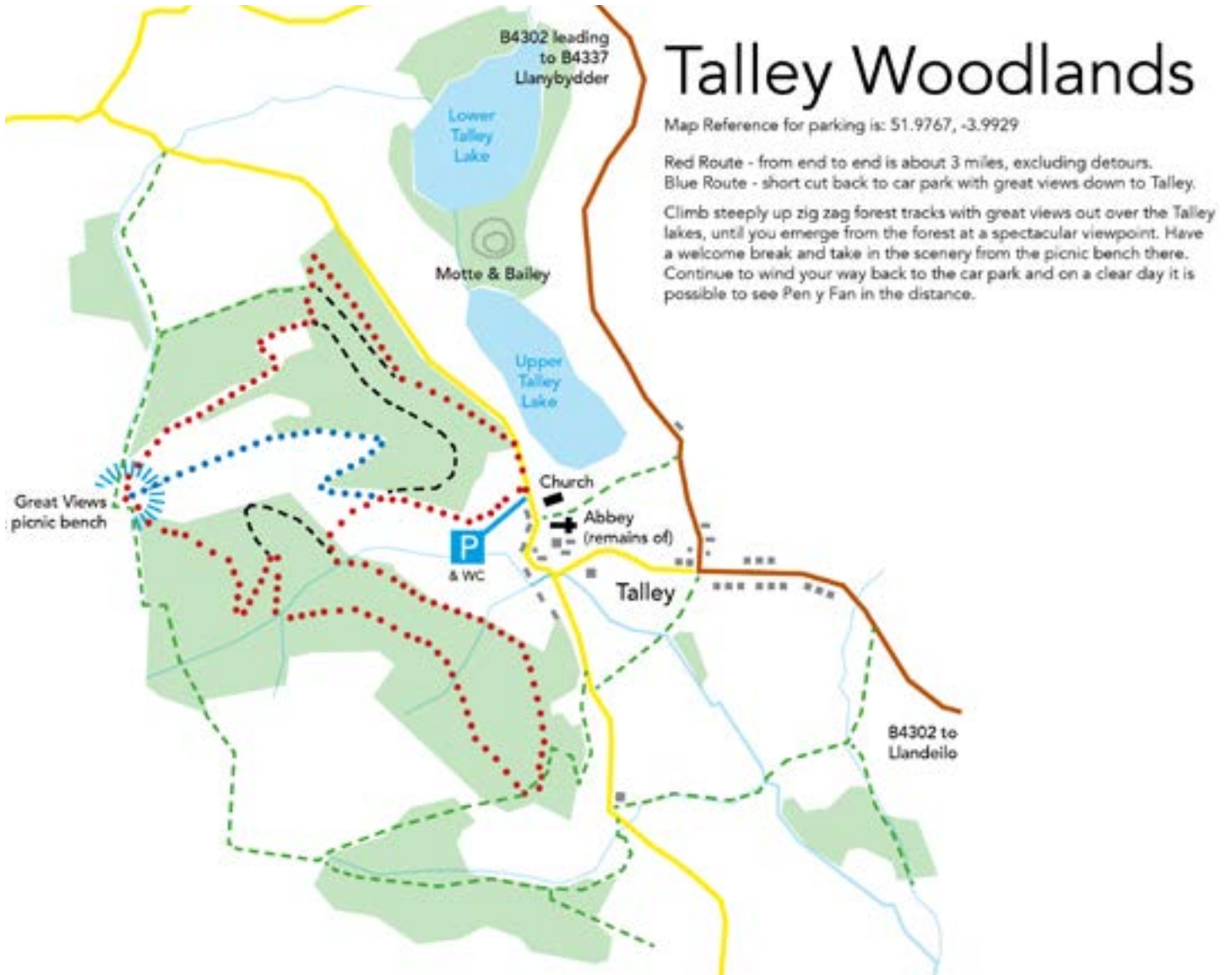
Talley Abbey was founded in the 1180s by Rhys ap Gruffydd ('The Lord Rhys', native ruler of the south Wales kingdom of Deheubarth) for the monks of the Premonstratensian order. This was the first and only abbey in Wales for the Premonstratensians, monks who were also known as the 'White Canons' from the colour of their habit.

The church tower, standing almost to its full height, is the most impressive feature of the ruined abbey, which never enjoyed the wealth and success of the Cistercian religious settlements, quite widespread



throughout Wales that inspired it. Lack of funds meant that the church was never fully completed, though the outline of the footings demonstrates the scale and ambition of its design. The ruins stand in an idyllic setting beside Talley's twin lakes.

There are also some marvellous walking routes offering some fantastic views over the valley and on a clear day you can see Pen-y-Fan in the Brecon Beacons. On our last visit the public toilets had been closed, but the village church hall was open as a tea room come Cafe and had facilities, which is run by volunteers.





Aberaeron

~30 minutes
~16 miles



A charming Georgian port town on the Cardigan Bay coast of West Wales offering a quayside and harbour aplusnd coastal walks. Aberaeron retains its Georgian character with elegant brightly painted town houses and is still a focal point for the rural communities in mid Ceredigion. Enjoy a stroll around the harbour along Quay Parade and enjoy lunch or afternoon tea at the Hive on the Quay or The Cellar. Plus many charming shops including the Aberaeron Craft Centre, eating places and pubs to enjoy.

Take a boat trip to explore Cardigan Bay's marine ecology and Heritage Coast from the harbour.

Aberaeron to Llanerchaeron Cycleway: The 3km trip from the edge of town along the old railway track to the historic National Trust mansion and Walled garden at Llanerchaeron. makes a lovely family day out. The wide level pedestrian pathway is ideal for cyclists, pushchairs or wheelchairs.

Newquay

~30 minutes
~14 miles



No, not that Newquay but a different and nicer proposition being quieter, calmer and arguably prettier. Instead this stretch of the coast looks like Cornwall before it got all 'Cornwall'. Key attractions for holiday makers include the picturesque harbour and expansive sandy beach, as well as the ability to see the population of bottlenose dolphins that lives in Cardigan Bay. The town has a heritage centre and marine wildlife centre, as well as the usual collection of shops and restaurants. Nearby New Quay Honey Farm, the largest bee farm in Wales, has a live bee exhibition and sells honey, mead and beeswax.

Newquay is the best place to book boat trips out for Dolphin spotting, which at the last count was 3 firms: New Quay Boat Trips, SeeMor Boat Trips and Dolphin Survey Boat Trips, see Google for more info.

I am betraying my own somewhat grumpy old git opinions here, but New Quay is way too commercial and busy for my tastes. But each to their own.



Within 30 to 45 Minutes

Teifi Valley Railway

A narrow gauge (2ft/610mm) railway hoping to operate between Pentrecwrt and Newcastle Emlyn along the River Teifi. It is a tourist railway built on the GWR part of the Carmarthen and Cardigan Railway and operated on about two miles of track. A new platform was constructed at Henllan, on the original GWR location, from where the service had been planned to continue to Newcastle Emlyn and eventually, to Pentrecwrt. Trains currently run from Henllan station to Pont Goch (Red Bridge; formerly Llandyfriog Riverside) around a mile.

The Teifi Valley Railway was created from a branch line of the Great Western Railway which served the West Wales rural area. Situated near the market town of Newcastle Emlyn between Carmarthen and Cardigan it offers the visitor a nostalgic reminder of the history of steam.

For more information see their website www.teifivalleyrailway.wales

Gwili Railway – Abergwili Junction (Carmarthen) to Danycoed Halt

~35 minutes
~19 miles



Possibly one of the UK's most picturesque preserved lines can be found at Bronwydd Arms. The Gwili Railway, is a standard gauge steam railway located 3 miles north of Carmarthen. Named after the River Gwili, alongside which it runs for 4 miles between Bronwydd Arms, Abergwili Junction and Danycoed, passing through picturesque farmland and steeply wooded hillsides. The locomotive stock of the Gwili Railway is unusual in that it mostly represents local industrial and wartime operations rather than mainline services.

The railway follows the original main line between Carmarthen and Aberystwyth and once formed part of a continuous link between North and South Wales, long since gone. The Gwili Railway line is currently 4 miles between the end of the line at Abergwili Junction and the end of the line at Danycoed Halt.

Trains depart from Bronwydd Arms Station to Danycoed Halt then back down to Abergwili Junction and then returning to Bronwydd Arms. The round trip is 8 miles and takes just over one hour though, as your standard ticket lasts all day, you can return on a later train or even take more than one trip during the day.

For more information see their website www.gwili-railway.co.uk



Brachfa Forest | Walking & Biking Trails

~25 minutes
~13 miles



Photos courtesy of Natural Resources Wales

Today Brechfa Forest covers some 6500 hectares and is looked after by Natural Resources Wales for the benefit of people, wildlife and timber production. There are walking and mountain bike trails through these two woodlands within Brechfa Forest:

- Byrgwm woodland
- Abergorlech woodland

There are also walking trails in other places in Brechfa and horse riders are welcome on forest roads. Hike up the Afan Gorlech, a river that crashes its way through Carmarthenshire. The Gorlech threads its way through the huge Brechfa Forest, which is substantial enough to have its own Ordnance Survey map and all those trees and water make it a premium location for wildlife, birdsong and an experimental forest garden. Start at Abergorlech car park... The infamous Brechfa, Raven Trail (black rated) can also be found in this area.

If your in the area, a really good stop for a Pint and a Meal is the Forest Arms in Brechfa: www.forestarms.com



NRW Brechfa Website



Mountain Bike Trails



Cenarth Falls | Newcastle Emlyn | Ffynone Waterfall

~32 minutes
~17 miles



© Gavin Haskell | Dreamstime.com

Situated in the Teifi valley on the way to Cardigan/Aberteifi these locations offer some spectacular sites and walks. At Cenarth falls there are a number of small waterfalls and pools on the river Teifi and a well known salmon leap, plus a fantastic riverside boardwalk upstream, with a choice of pubs and cafes.

Newcastle Emlyn three miles up the road, has its own castle ruins and a choice of shops and pubs.

Continued over...



Also in the area is Ffynone waterfall which is a bit more off the beaten track but worth a visit and a popular Vlogger site with people swimming up to the base of the waterfall. Use either the postcode SA37 0HQ or the more accurate What3Words location is ///entitles.thunder.squeaking to find the place.



Woods above Ffynon waterfall



Ffynon waterfall



Cenarth Boardwalk

Beach & Coastal Path Llangrannog - Penbryn | Cwmttydu | Tresaith | Aberporth | Mwnt

~34 minutes
~17 miles



There is quite a selection of decent beaches between Cardigan and New Quay, although our preferences are Penbryn for being a reasonably quiet beach, or Llangrannog for beach with quaint little village on the front. For coastal walking I would say anywhere between Tresaith and New Quay, with Llangrannog being a good base for going North or South. Please see following page for more details on the coastal path.

Llangrannog is one of our favourites. Popular with families, surfers or just for relaxing and watching the world go by from the many excellent cafes and pubs. You can choose from traditional pub food overlooking the sea, or home made ice cream at the beach cafe. From the main beach at Llangrannog it is possible at low tide to walk round to the second beach, or by the cliff path which climbs by steps next to the Quay Café at any time. We would recommend parking in the designated field at the top of the village as free parking and avoids the narrow lanes down to the beach car park and the fees and during the summer season operates a free park and ride service.

Penbryn is a larger beach with a pay and display NT car park which is about 1/4 mile walk. This is our favourite due to its size as it never feels too busy even in peak season. There is a WC in the car park, as is the Plwmp Tart a small but fantastic cafe.

Tresaith small beach but a very pretty waterfall off the cliffs, that you can get to if the tide is out.

Cwmttydu probably the most awkward to get to and limited parking.

Mwnt maybe one of the most visited beaches as nice and sheltered, has a pay and display NT Car Park and a rather interesting Eglwys y Grog (Holy Cross Church) the present building is probably 14th-century. Although recent visits from visiting neanderthals has meant it is mostly now kept locked.

Aberporth looks nice, but have never been.



Ceredigion Coast Path The Challenge (60 miles/96km)

The Ceredigion Coast Path follows a 60 mile route between the Teifi and Dyfi estuaries – starting just south of Cardigan and heading northwards finishing at Ynyslas. Using the towns and villages along the coast as a base, the path through Ceredigion can be walked in easy sections. Local shops, cafés, pubs and restaurants provide a welcome reward on completing a section.

Section	From	To	Distance	Grade
	Cardigan	Aberporth	12 miles	Moderate/easy
	Aberporth	Llangrannog	5.4 miles	Moderate/hard
	Llangrannog	New Quay	9.4 miles	Moderate
	New Quay	Aberaeron	6.6 miles	Moderate/easy
	Aberaeron	Llanrhystud	7.4 miles	Moderate/easy
	Llanrhystud	Aberystwyth	10.6 miles	Moderate/hard
	Aberystwyth	Ynyslas	9.8 miles	Easy/hard

Accessibility

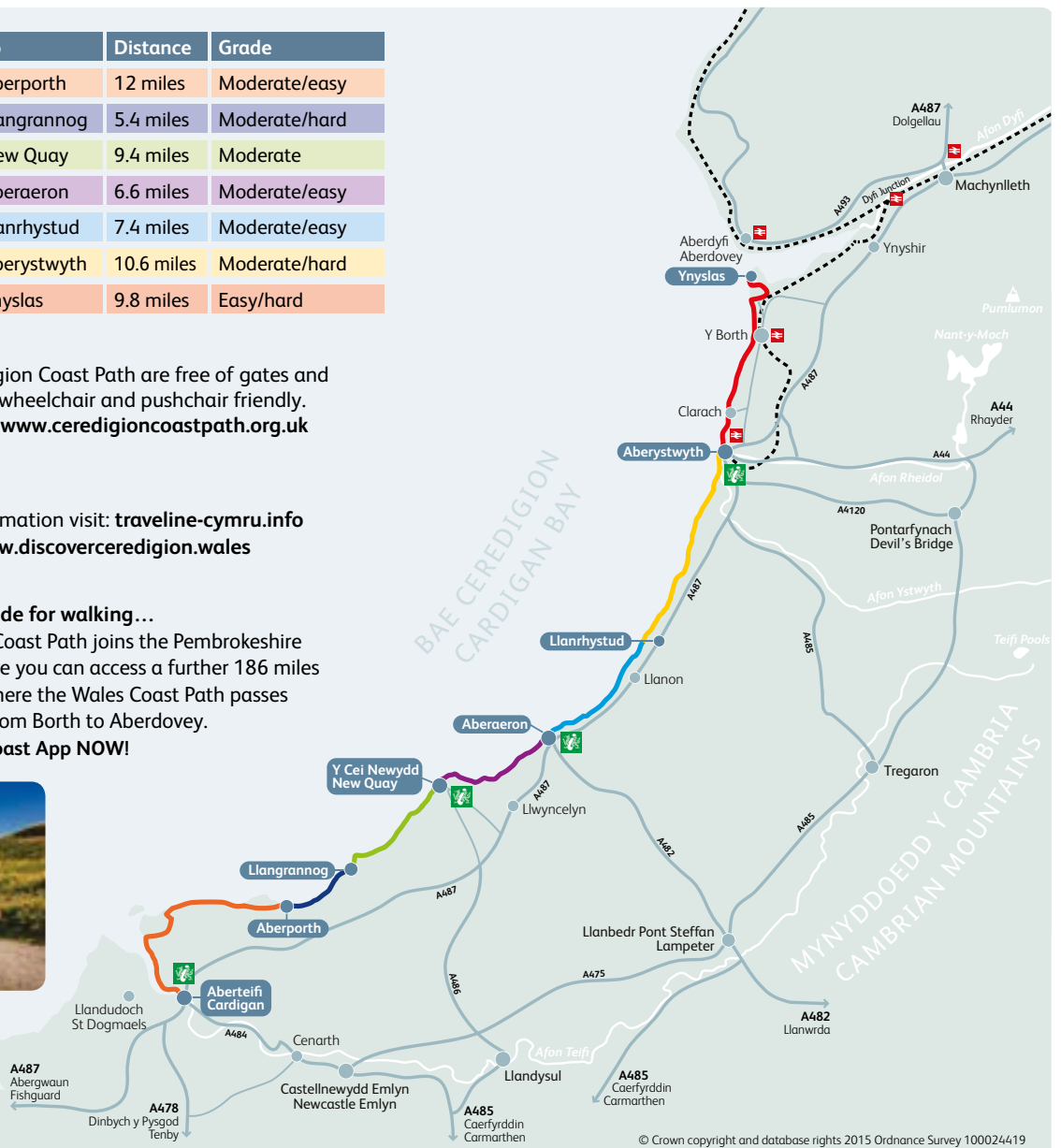
Some sections of the Ceredigion Coast Path are free of gates and stiles and some sections are wheelchair and pushchair friendly. For further information visit: www.ceredigioncoastpath.org.uk

Travel

Returning to base is easy.
For all up-to-date travel information visit: traveline-cymru.info
For car-free options visit: www.discoverceredigion.wales

Wales Coast Path

And if those boots were made for walking...
Don't forget the Ceredigion Coast Path joins the Pembrokeshire Coast Path at Cardigan, where you can access a further 186 miles of path. Or continue north where the Wales Coast Path passes through the Dyfi Biosphere from Borth to Aberdovey. Download the FREE Wales Coast App NOW!



There is also a Wales Coast Path 'App' that can be downloaded, for details see QR link or: www.walescoastpath.gov.uk/plan-your-visit/wales-coast-path-app/?lang=en



Contact the Ceredigion Tourist Information Centres for more information or visit www.discoverceredigion.wales

www.facebook.com/discoverceredigion
twitter.com/visitceredigion



Maesyfelin Isaf

Where it's not just a room



Aberglasney Gardens

~42 minutes
~30 miles



If you are into your gardens this place is a must see. Aberglasney was made famous by the BBC television series "A Garden Lost in Time" which followed its restoration. Today it is quite simply one of Wales' finest gardens and at its heart lies a fully restored Elizabethan Cloister Garden that is the only surviving example of its kind in the UK today. Beyond this, visitors can explore 10 acres of over 20 different garden styles from formal to woodland, right through to exotic and modern along with the fully restored ground floor of Aberglasney's grade II* listed mansion.

For more information see their website www.aberglasney.org or scan the QR code below.



07341 270631 | steve@maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk | www.maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk

Maesyfelin Isaf, Drefach, Llanybydder, Ceredigion, SA40 9YB



Cilgerran Castle

~42 minutes
~30 miles



This striking 13th century fortress is perched overlooking the spectacular Teifi Gorge, near Cardigan and has inspired many artists including Turner. Take the wall-walk to truly appreciate why it was built here, although at the last time of looking the HSE brigade seem to have put a stop to that.

Stunning location. The Normans first saw the potential and established an early 'ringwork' castle here, but the imposing masonry castle we see today was probably the work of William Marshal, earl of Pembroke. Traditionally, medieval castles were designed with a keep or strong tower at the centre but Cilgerran Castle is unusual because two massive round towers were erected instead. These, despite Owain Glyn Dŵr's best efforts, still stand to a good height today. Distance: 23.6 miles, 42 minutes away.

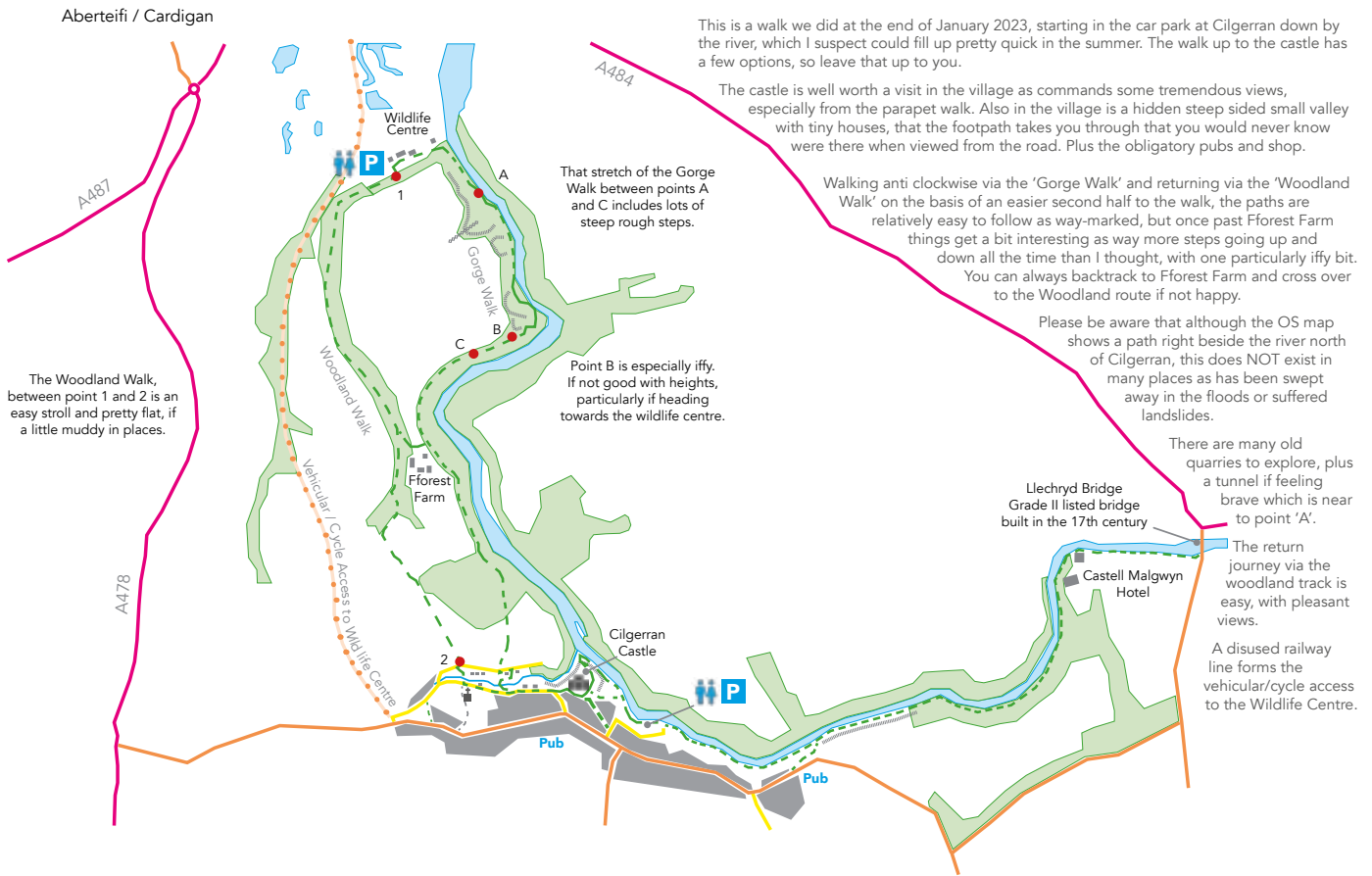
The car park below the castle in the village, has a public WC, also makes a good starting point for an excellent walk via the Castle to the Welsh Wildlife Centre and return. It is a circular route which we went in an anti clockwise direction, starting with the 'Gorge Walk' and returning via the 'Woodland Walk' for details see the following page. The first part of the walk starts easy enough but once past Fforest Farm things get more strenuous with many steps both up/down due to landslides and path detours, plus there are many quarries and a tunnel to explore. Please note that the OS map says there is a riverside walk along the Teifi up to the wildlife centre, this is incorrect for the most part as numerous floods and landslides have taken out many sections.

Cilgerran Castle itself is quite compact but worth a visit, at the time of writing the admission was free and the shop/kiosk closed.

For additional information see QR link to CADW website.

Cadw Website





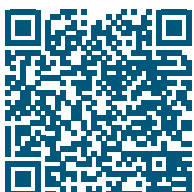
The Welsh Wildlife Centre

~42 minutes
~30 miles



Courtesy Welsh Wildlife Centre

Families will love exploring the nature trails. Discover the wonders of nature at the centre and Teifi Marshes Nature Reserve. With regular sightings of kingfisher, otter and wading birds, Teifi marshes is home to some of the most wonderful flora and fauna in the UK. With a diversity of habitats to explore, activities to do and of course, scrumptious food to eat at our Glasshouse Café, you're sure to have the perfect day out in Pembrokeshire.



For more information see their website www.welshwildlife.org/visit/welsh-wildlife-centre-teifi-marshes or scan the QR code.



Dinefwr Castle and Park | Newton House

~43 minutes
~22 miles



Crown Copyright Licencing Agreement

A magical land of power and influence for more than 2,000 years Dinefwr is an iconic place in the history of Wales. The historic Newton House is run by the National Trust standing proudly at the heart of the Dinefwr estate and Parkland, a family home for over three hundred years to the descendants of Lord Rhys, the powerful Prince of the Welsh Kingdom of the Deheubarth. Dinefwr and its parkland is now a place to enjoy, relax and refresh.

Perched in a commanding hilltop position above the Tywi Valley, Castell Dinefwr occupies a similarly significant position in Welsh history and a much fought over seat of the kingdom of Deheubarth. Now managed by CADW and owned by the Wildlife Trust.



Courtesy Cadw

Cors Caron Nature Reserve and Strata Florida Abbey

~33 minutes
~18 miles



Just north of Tregaron, there are two key places of interest. Cors Caron nature reserve which is a vast area of wetland filling the broad valley of the River Teifi, the reserve includes three raised bogs, surrounded by a complex and unique mix of habitats, there are board walks, riverside walks and an old railway line walk to enjoy.

Strata Florida Abbey is grand medieval ruin where generations of Welsh princes have been buried and is run by Cadw



Courtesy Cadw

Cors Caron

Strata Florida





Cardigan & St Dogmaels

~45 minutes
~26 miles



Another worthy visit if heading West is Cardigan, but also St Dogmaels and the Abbey there. The above photo was taken from walk alongside the Teifi estuary at St Dogmaels where we went for a walk after visiting the Local Produce market, which takes place every Tuesday.

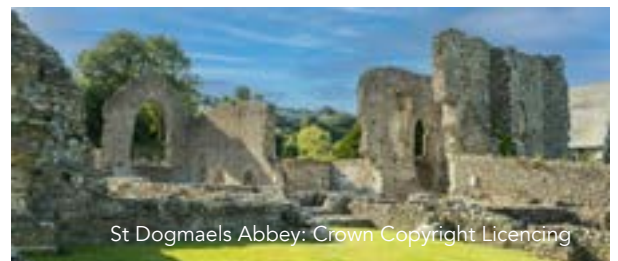
Cardigan itself was ranked third in Time Out's 15 places to visit in 2023, Cardigan has everything: ancient history, modern comforts, beautiful landscapes and the sea just in reach. Its spirit is part old fashioned Welsh market town, part hippy, arty enclave and both sides sing to each other in perfect chapel-pew harmony. Cardigan is peppered with fantastic vintage and antique shops, both old and new.



Crown Copyright Licencing



Y Felin Stone Ground Flour @ St Dogmaels



St Dogmaels Abbey: Crown Copyright Licencing

Carmarthen | ~50 minutes and ~20 miles

Other than the steam Railway at Gwili I can think of no other meritable reason to visit Carmarthen, as it is a wholly unremarkable town and much like any other in the UK. However, it is the closest town with some bigger name shops, so if shopping is your thing or out of town stores then fair enough, plus a railway station. As for the so called Castle, let's just pass on that one.



Courtesy: 'Voyage Scribe', travel guide Blog



Maesyfelin
Where it's not just a room **Isaf**



Over 50 Minutes Away

National Botanic Garden of Wales

~50 minutes
~30 miles



Set in the beautiful Carmarthenshire countryside, the Garden and Parkland is a fascinating blend of the modern and historic. You'll find an inspiring range of themed gardens, the world's largest single-span glasshouse designed by Lord Foster, that has the best display of Mediterranean climate zone plants in the Northern Hemisphere. Tropical House, play areas and a national nature reserve, all set in a Regency landscape which provides the stage for a packed programme of events and courses throughout the year. Set in a romantic Regency parkland.

Personally, much better than the pretentious Eden Project.

See www.botanicgarden.wales for more information, or scan the QR code below.



07341 270631 | steve@maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk | www.maesyfelin-isaf.co.uk

Maesyfelin Isaf, Drefach, Llanybydder, Ceredigion, SA40 9YB



Carreg Cennen Castle & Farm

~55 minutes
~25 miles



Photo Dreamstime | Leighton Collins

Arguable one of the most romantic ruin in Wales. Perched on a great limestone crag nearly 300ft/90m above the River Cennen, the dramatic silhouette of Carreg Cennen dominates the skyline for miles around and commands stunning views over the Carmarthenshire countryside. From the moment you first glimpse the castle, probably built by Edward I's loyal baron John Giffard at the end of the 13th century, you feel an incredible sense of drama and remoteness. In this wild setting, with few reminders of the modern world, the castle will seem like your own personal discovery.

Another exciting feature at Carreg Cennen that awaits exploration at the south east corner of the inner ward. Here a steep set of steps leads down past a postern gate into the bowels of the castle and enables the explorer to discover a natural cave and vaulted passage cut into the cliff-face.

The castle is in private hands, primarily due to a mistake in the wording of the deeds and included the castle as part of the farm, when sold Lord Cawdor's legal team. The Castle is maintained by CADW: Welsh Historic Monuments.

For more info see their website www.carregcennencastle.com



Aberystwyth

~50 minutes
~28 miles



Coastal university town with hospital and all the main facilities, big shops and an excellent sea front and pier. Oh and don't miss the 'funny peculiar' Cliff Railway up Constitution Hill for breathtaking views, which is open from April to October, see their website www.aberystwythcliff railway.co.uk

There is also one end of the the Vale of Rheidol Railway that runs up the valley 12 miles to Devils Bridge which is also worth a trip, see more info on following page.



Vale of Rheidol Railway – Aberystwyth to Devils Bridge

~50 minutes
~28 miles



Courtesy Andrew Simmonds

All aboard the Vale of Rheidol by narrow gauge steam train. An unforgettable journey from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge, through the beautiful Rheidol Valley and sit back, relax on a nostalgic journey through the spectacular Mid Wales countryside.

Hop aboard at Aberystwyth and watch the scenery passing by your window. You will soon see the countryside change travelling through wide open fields, ancient woodland and rugged mountain scenery as the line twists and turns, clinging to the hillside to reach Devil's Bridge - home of the famous Mynach Falls and Devil's Punchbowl.

Opened in 1902, the railway is a masterpiece of engineering and has been delighting passengers young and old for generations. Although the line no longer carries lead ore from the mines it has been carrying holidaymakers to the beauty spot of Devil's Bridge for over a hundred years!

The railway is a registered charity, dedicated to preserving the heritage railway for future generations to enjoy. The historic coal fired steam locomotives and vintage carriages were built by the Great Western Railway in the 1920s and 30s and are now fully restored.

Listen to the sound of a powerful narrow gauge steam locomotive working hard to climb 700ft (200m) during the 12 miles from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge.

For more information see their website www.rheidolrailway.co.uk



Courtesy John R Jones



Courtesy Rheidol Railway



Llansteffan and Castle

~53 minutes
~29 miles

Cadw website Link



Photo Crown Copyright: Visit Wales

Llansteffan is just a few miles south of Carmarthen, so if you are out that way it is well worth a visit.

Wow-factor views are part of Llansteffan's appeal. This headland castle overlooking the green farmlands, swirling sea and gleaming sands of the Tywi Estuary and Carmarthen Bay, boasts one of the most stunning locations in Wales. That's not to say that the stronghold itself is lacking in interest. Llansteffan, which controlled an important river crossing, occupies a site that has been defended since prehistoric times. Its rough stone walls, dating from the late 12th century, enclose an Iron Age promontory fort occupied in 600 BC. Although ruined, the castle retains its power to intimidate, especially when you approach its massive twin-towered gatehouse, built in around 1280 and still looming large.

There are a number of possible walks that can be created, offering some splendid views and beaches to discover. The walk illustrated below is one from 'Wales Coast Path' organisation. The Castle itself is Free to enter and a great place for a picnic.

There are two pubs in the village as well as cafe/bistro and a really good catering wagon at the north car park, were we parked up.



Illustration © Ordnance Surevey





Lyn Brianne Reservoir

~55 minutes
~28 miles



Offering impressive landscapes, walks and bike rides is this spectacular reservoir nestled in the Doethie Valley, surrounded by the beautiful Tywi Forest. It was named after a stream Nant y Bryniau, which in English translates stream in the hills. This picturesque body of water is the head of the River Tywi. Beneath the tranquil waters of Lyn Brianne lies the old Fanog farm, which was flooded in 1972 to create the reservoir we see today. On the rare occasion the water levels drop, only then the farm is visible. This area boasts an abundance of wildlife including the rare red squirrel.

The walk illustrated below takes in many wonderful views and some thrilling paths, so don't miss out the route around Gwenffrwd Dinas.

Car parking by the overspill weir to the southern side at grid reference 52.121446, 3.763870 or what3words location [:///bets.triangles.trading](https://www.what3words.com/location/:///bets.triangles.trading)

The roads to get here are narrow and windy but there are often Motorhomes and Campervans up there and loads of Bikers of course.



Illustration © Ordnance Survey



The view looking downstream as walking around Gwenffrwd Dinas



Cwm Rhaeadr Forest | Valley of the Waterfall

~45 minutes
~22 miles



Cwm Rhaeadr Forest is in the peaceful Tywi valley. Cwm Rhaeadr means “valley of the waterfall” in Welsh and you can enjoy views of the highest waterfall in Carmarthenshire on the Waterfall Walk. There is a good car park with picnic tables set amongst tall conifer trees.

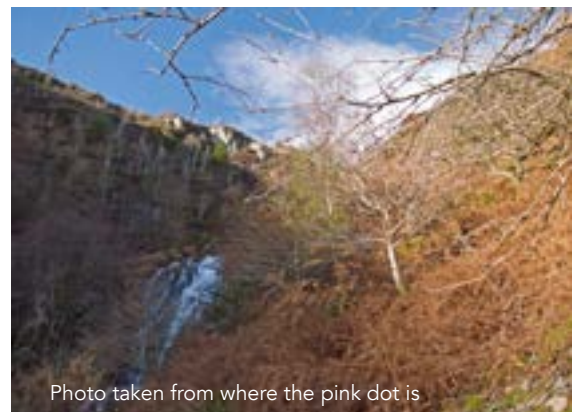
A natural Resources Wales site, offering numerous walks and bike trails from the car park, which is not far from Llyne Brianne. Of the longer walks there is one up to the top of the hills or a very picturesque waterfall walk, following blue marker posts and if you are up for it a marvellous climb beside a truly wonderful waterfall only for the brave to reach the top, but the views are rather good. Tip, get there early to have the waters catching the sunlight as it falls down the hillside.



We didnt manage to get much further up than where you see Sarah in the photo above, but it is obviously possible to get as far as the blue dot on the illustration, just that Sarah is not good at coming back down again. So we detoured a bit and got to where the pink dot is.

Now when it comes to finding the place, it is not too far from Llyne Brianne, so use What3Words location

`///respond.unimpeded.angers`



For more information check 'Natural Resource Wales' website via the QR link, I have not written the site out as it is way too long.





Kidwelly Castle and Burry Port

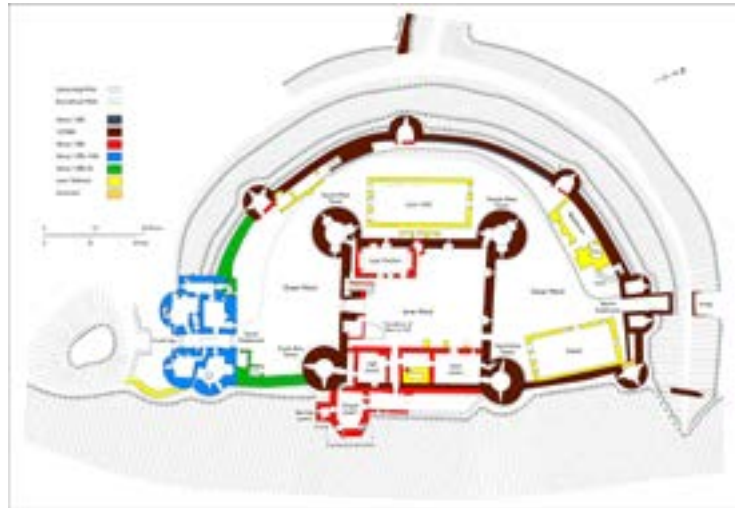
~55 minutes
~30 miles



Courtesy of Wikipedia Creative Commons

Kidwelly Castle rises above the river Gwendraeth and appears in the very first scene of 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail', for those that are old enough to remember :-)

Kidwelly began in the early 12th century as a Norman 'ringwork' castle made of wood and protected only by an earthen bank and ditch. Not surprisingly it was under constant attack by Welsh princes including the Lord Rhys, who captured it in 1159. Four decades later the Normans were back in charge. By the 1280s the Chaworth brothers, powerful Marcher lords, had created the stone 'castle within a castle' that still stands today. After centuries of see-sawing conflict between Norman invaders and native princes Kidwelly was now a match for any castle in Wales. The gatehouse added by the Duchy of Lancaster was the icing on the cake. Even the forces of Owain Glyndŵr couldn't break through.



Courtesy Cadw

Parking is either at the Cadw site in front of the castle or a public car park at the other end of castle Street.

If you have come out this far, it may well be worth going a bit further to Pembrey Sands and Burry Port, especially the lighthouse which is quite a focal point. This is an additional 5 miles and 15 minutes from Kidwelly, or thereabouts and as such takes it a bit beyond my self imposed 1hr limit.

Discover
Carmarthenshire
Website for Burry
Port & Pembrey



Courtesy of Discover Carmarthenshire



Courtesy of Discover Carmarthenshire



Devils Bridge and Hafod Estate

~60 minutes
~32 miles



Hafod Estate: Courtesy of Visit Wales, Crown Copyright

Now I know this one is just outside my self imposed 60 minute rule, but because guests often come via this route or are close when visiting Aberystwyth hence I believe it is worth including.

First off lets cover **Devil's Bridge**, as in the destination for the Rheidol Railway that starts at Aberystwyth. As it is a world-famous tourist attraction in the heart of the Cambrian Mountains, 12 miles from the seaside town of Aberystwyth. These unique waterfalls have attracted many thousands of visitors since the 18th century, including William Wordsworth who wrote about the "Torrent at the Devil's Bridge".

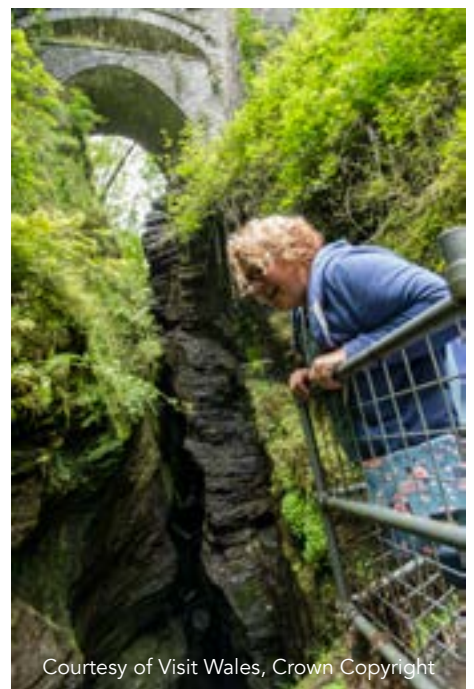
Today, the Waterfalls Nature Trails provide a unique opportunity to see this great natural feature in the Rheidol Gorge. Devil's Bridge Waterfalls are open all year (during January and most of February, you can access the walks through the turnstiles only). Our superb Tea Rooms offer refreshments and light meals to complete your visit.

Then not far away is the **Hafod Estate** which will take you through woodlands, past the Ystwyth valley's rocky gorges, into Mrs Johnes' Flower Garden all within one of the finest examples of a Picturesque landscape in Europe, the vision of its most celebrated owner, Thomas Johnes. Explore the waymarked trails on the five main walks within the 200 hectare estate, look out for tunnels, waterfalls, gorges, chain bridges and some wonderful points of interest and views.

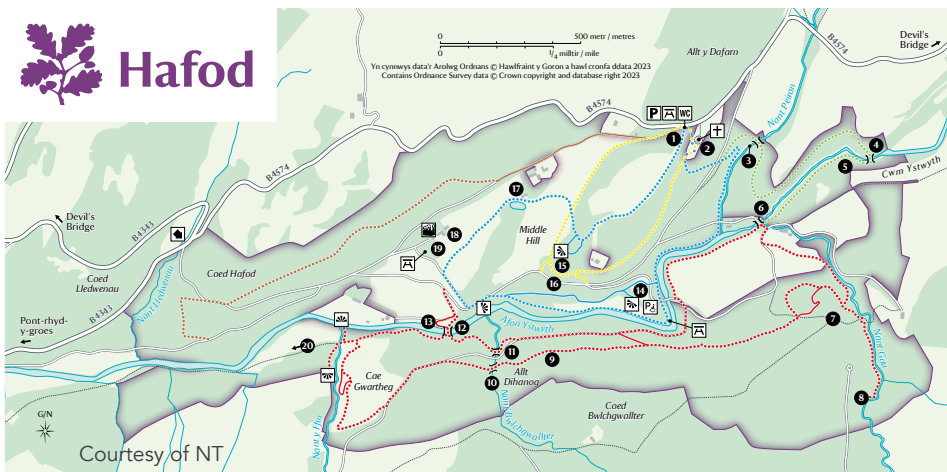
I have include a QR link to a NT map of the estate with paths marked.



Courtesy of Visit Wales, Crown Copyright



Courtesy of Visit Wales, Crown Copyright



Courtesy of NT

Devils Bridge Website

Hafod Estate NT Map

