



Photograph © G. Woosnam

Talygarn Lake

Walks Nos 54 and 55, Ystradowen

Border Vale Walks

Though at the northern edge of the Vale, this area's attractions readily bear comparison with other areas further south. It possesses a landscape that is slightly higher; more wooded and has more lakes. Livestock farming dominates so the walker is less liable to encounter crop blockages during summer months. The main walk traverses fertile farmland, both coniferous and deciduous woods and open limestone down land. As well it skirts two historic houses, a beautiful lake and just touches on the southern extremity of the once important S Wales mining area. One of the shorter walks goes past a flourishing fish farm.

Distance Main walk 7 miles; short option A, 3 miles; option B, 3 1/2 miles.

Map Explorer 151.

Parking Road side in Ystradowen, also a small car park at Talygarn Church. Parking elsewhere on route is very limited.

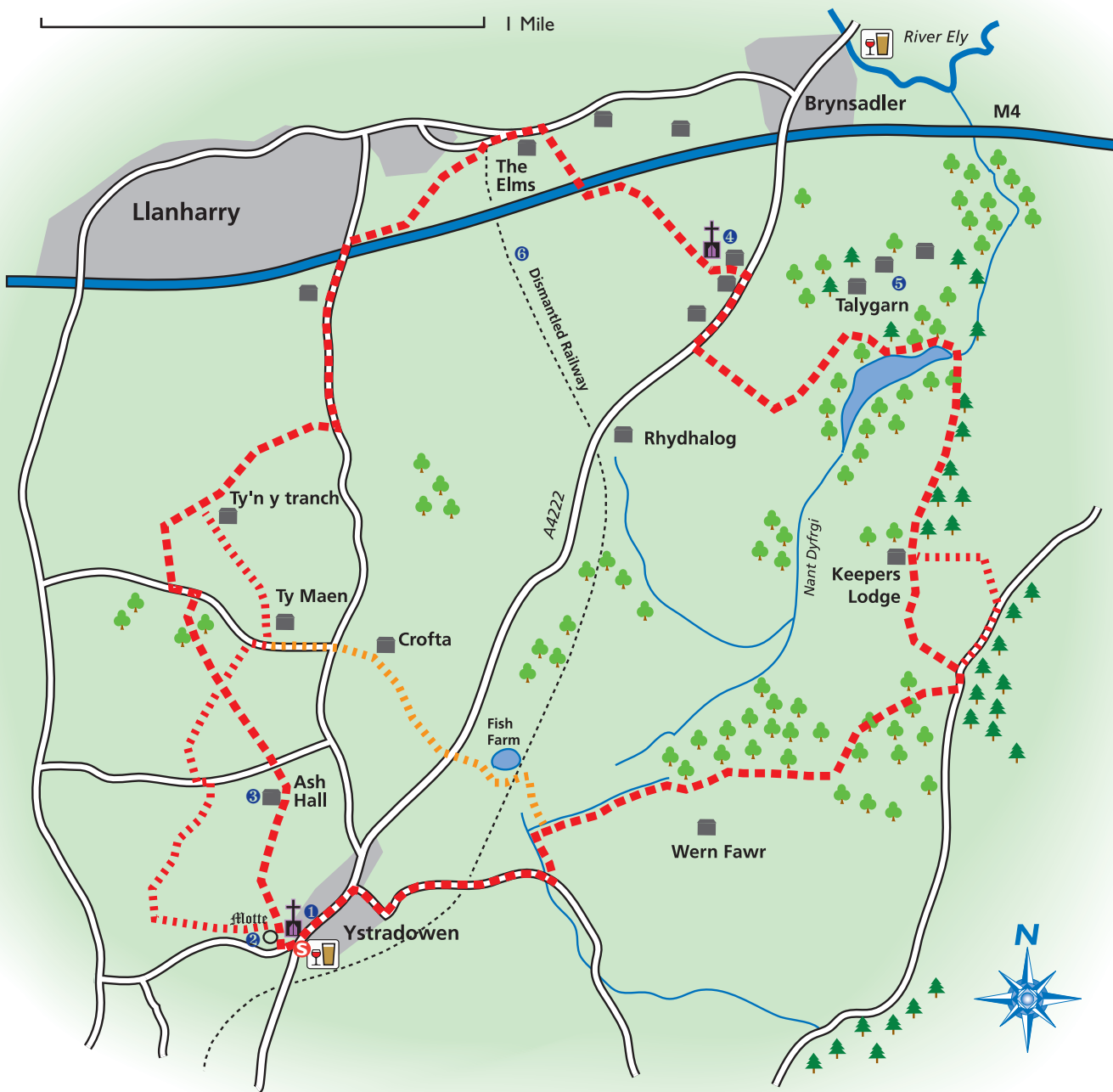
Public Transport E11 bus service between Cowbridge and Talbot Green, running approximately hourly. (not on Sundays).

Refreshments White Lion at Ystradowen.

Toilets

START Route Guide below starts at the White Lion Inn (GR 012777)

SCALE (APPROX):



	Start
	Path
	Spur or Diversion
	Link
	Road
	River or Stream
	Wooded Area
	Built-up Area
	Individual Building
	Church
	Refreshments

signs in this lakeside area indicating where the owner allows walkers access to vantage points. If you wish to view Talygarn House ⑤ ensure that you stick to the public rights of way). Continue along the well defined track for another 1/2 mile to reach Keeper's Lodge farm. Walk on in the same direction, through gates, with the field hedge to your left, to a stile. (There may be a notice here requesting you to use the farm drive rather than the fields). Cross another short stretch of field to a gap and proceed, bearing slightly left, across the next field to reach a stile leading to a road.

Turn right and after about 80 yards turn back right again via a stile into a field which can often be boggy in wet weather. Cross it to a stile leading into a wood. The woodland path is quite well marked but there is a muddy stream area to cross. As you emerge from the wood there are two alternative routes indicated, official and permissive. Either will bring you out to a broad track where you bear left. Continue over a stile into a field where you keep to the right hand side to a stile in the far corner. Cross the top corner of the next field, using the stiles to enter another long field where once again you keep to the right hand edge. Having passed under a line of pylons you reach a stile in the far corner. Cross it and skirt round the hedge/treeline on your left. Go forward to negotiate another stile that leads you on to a well-defined track. Turn right and then very quickly leave the track to go left, through vegetation to a sleeper bridge and stile. Cross both and turn right. With the fence now on your right walk on to pass a redundant stile to another sleeper bridge and stile. These lead you into the final field of this walk. Keeping to the right hand perimeter, walk two sides of this field. (You will pass the footbridge that connects this walk with alternative short walk B). You then reach the final stile which brings you on to a minor road. Turn right and follow this road to a T-junction on the Badgers Brook estate. Here turn right to the main road. At this road turn left to arrive back at the start.

PLACES OF INTEREST

① ST. OWAIN'S CHURCH
Was built in 1867 to replace a church that had existed on the site since the 13th century. Owain is thought to have been the son of a 12th century Morgannwg king. The church has a 17th century bell and possesses a sensitively built recent extension.

② THE MOTTE
This feature is over 800 years old. It is a 5 metre high mound of earth which may once have had ditches, or may never have been completed. It is thought to have been built by St Quentin to defend the territory of Talyfan. It was soon superseded by Talyfan castle. Daniel Owen of Ash Hall planted trees on the motte to beautify it and to highlight the legend that it had been a centre of druidic activity.

③ ASH HALL
Built in the early 18th century its best known owner was Daniel Owen. Owen was born in Llanharan, emigrated to Australia where he made his fortune, returned to Wales and bought this property in 1866. He upgraded it and for 30 years acted as the virtual squire of Ystradowen. He became co-owner of the Western Mail and helped finance the Cowbridge-Aberthaw railway. He died in 1896 and is buried in the local churchyard. The nearby Ash Cottage, the core of which is very old, is rumoured to be haunted, but by kindly spirits!

④ ST. ANNE'S CHURCH
This was a chapel of ease which was restored in 1687 by Sir Leoline Jenkins of Cowbridge School and Jesus College Oxford fame. It was rebuilt in 1887 by George (G.T.) Clark (Talygarn) in memory of his wife Ann.

⑤ TALYGARN HOUSE & GROUNDS
As it existed until recently, this house and its grounds and lake were largely the creation of George Clark. He was a multi talented Londoner with justifiable claims to fame in the fields of medicine, railway engineering, the iron and coal industries, as a traveller and in later life as a noted historian. Many elements from the continent were incorporated into the fabric and pictures within the house. The grounds, also, benefited from numerous exotic imports. Many of the exotic trees still exist. The house later became a miners' convalescent home and later passed into the hands of NHS. It has recently been sold to a property developer who has embarked on a restricted but distinctive building programme. The lake area is being looked after and restored by a different local owner.

⑥ PONTYCLUN - COWBRIDGE RAILWAY
Opened in 1865; at last, linking Cowbridge to the rapidly growing railway network. It just failed to reach its centenary for the last passenger train ran in 1964, another victim of Beeching.

THE ROUTE

All three walks start here at ①. To begin take the minor road away from the White Lion to pass in front of St Owain's Church ① and reach a kissing gate on the right. Go through, past a stile that is between the church on the right and a wooded mound (motte) ② to the left and continue with, at first, a railed fence on your right to a stile in the far corner of the field. Now head uphill towards Ash Hall ③ which you will see on the skyline above you. Go round this property, now on your left, and continuing uphill cross two stiles to reach a gate at a minor road. Ash Cottage is immediately to your right. Cross the road to a gate and stile. In the next field bear slightly left uphill to arrive at another stile. Once over this you enter open limestone country. Maintaining the same general direction you head for a copse of conifers crossing one stile en route. Enter and leave this patch of woodland via the stiles and cross a narrow field to a stile leading you on to a minor road.

Turn left and soon right to enter a farm drive. A little way along this drive turn left over a stile and then cross the subsequent field diagonally right to a stile at which you turn sharply right. Walk along with the hedge to your right until you reach a gate just short of a house, Ty'n y Tranch. (Those doing the shorter walks A or B should turn right here and go on to the red and then orange text overleaf.)

On the main walk carry straight on to cross three stiles in quick succession behind the house. Now proceed gently downhill, with the field hedge on your left, to another stile in the field corner. Cross this, turn left for a short distance, then right to follow the remnants of an old field boundary to a gate at a country road.

Turn left and follow this road until, reaching the edge of Llanharry, you pass over the M4. Almost immediately, turn right and follow a path sandwiched between the M4 and a new housing estate. Currently the path then runs downhill and takes a clear route over

waste ground. Subsequently, it passes between new housing and on to what was the narrow former Brynsadler-Llanharry main road. (N.B. this area is a housing development area so the route of the path may change a little in the near future). Turn right here to reach the current main road. Again turn right and at The Elms turn right once more and proceed along a well marked track for some 1/2 mile, (re crossing the M4), to reach the A4222 at Talygarn. You pass St Anne's Church ④ en route.

At this Pontyclun-Cowbridge road turn right. Walk on to the last house on the right before crossing to a drive which is marked Private Road. There is a Public Footpath over this drive. Proceed along this drive for about a third of a mile to a point where it splits. (Cot Farm is on the right). Take the right hand track to proceed through the woodland and eventually along the edge of Talygarn Lake for another third of a mile to reach a stile. Turn right to cross the lake's dam. (There are various



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SHORTER WALK ALTERNATIVE B - 3 1/2 miles

Where you leave alternative Walk A turn left along the road to reach a T-junction. Cross the stile in the hedge ahead of you and proceed downhill, in the same direction, through the field to cross the drive of Crofta farm. The house is on your left. (Ensure that you keep to the Right of Way). Go over the stone stile and continue downhill through two fields and two more stiles to reach the main road. Cross the road to the entrance to Seven Oaks fishery. Here cross the stile and head downhill to the left of a feeder pond to a double stile and sleeper bridge. Once over these turn sharp left along the field perimeter to cross the embankment of the long since closed Pontyclun/Cowbridge Railway (6). Now bear diagonally right, along a permissive footpath, to reach a new right, along a permissive footpath, to reach a new footbridge. Cross it, and turn right along two side of the field. Now follow the instructions at the end of the main walk.

WALK FEATURES

- St Owain's Church
- The Motte
- St Anne's Church
- Ash House
- Talygarn House & Grounds
- Pontyclun - Cowbridge Railway



Photograph © Vale of Glamorgan Council

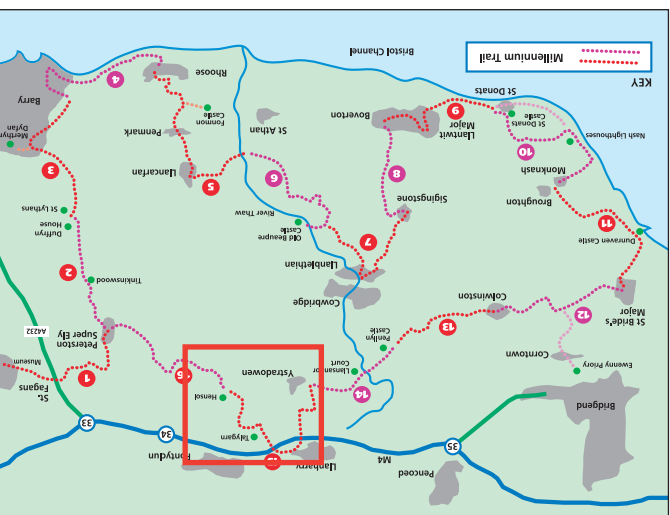
FOLLOW THE WALKER'S CODE

- Guard against all risk of fire
 - Fasten all gates
- Keep all dogs under close control
- Keep to public paths on farmland
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges & walls
 - Take your litter home
- Protect all wildlife, plants and trees

Valeways has published a guide to the Millennium Heritage Trail. This colourful book describes the 16 sections which make up the Trail and comes in a package with 16 separate A3 maps. The guide can be obtained from Valeways for £8.49 including post and packing.

Those who have never visited this part of Wales will enjoy walking through fertile, lowland countryside adjoining the spectacular Heritage Coast with its beautiful beaches. The route includes many fascinating historic features, from prehistoric burial chambers to magnificent castles, churches and mansions.

The Trail is split into 16 easy to follow sections, each of which can be walked within a few hours. The surroundings are diverse, often spectacular and steeped in history.



WALK LOCATION IN RELATION TO VALEWAYS' MILLENNIUM HERITAGE TRAIL

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Valeways is a registered charity working in partnership with the community to reopen existing footpaths to create a network of enjoyable circular walks across the Vale of Glamorgan, linking towns and villages to the surrounding countryside and points of interest. We are indebted to the many volunteers who give up their time freely to provide this walk for your enjoyment.



Valeways Partnership - Many thanks to the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the Countryside Council for Wales for their continued support.

Cefnogwyd gai Supported by



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Photograph © C. Woosnam

Leave the main walk at A*. Go through the gate and across the drive to a stile. Walk on in the same direction (south) through two fields and the two double stiles. Having crossed the second of these bear right. Proceed downhill, along this diverted path to a stile in the field's bottom right hand corner. Cross it and soon another that gives onto a country lane. (Short alternative B starts here. See B below). Turn right and soon left at a waymarked gate. Cross the field to a stile you crossed on the outward journey. Then bear left, to avoid the marshy ground, before swinging right. Continue, bearing gently right, to a point where the land begins to slope downhill. Now head for the stile that has come into view. Cross the next field aiming for a stile just to the right of a red roofed house. This brings you on to a road which you cross via another stile into the field opposite.

SHORTER WALK ALTERNATIVE A - 3 miles

Walk Nos. 54 & 55, Ystradowen

Border Vale Walks

Distance: 7 miles (short versions 3.5 & 3 miles)



Photograph © Ray Price

