

Henrhyd Falls – Sgwd Henrhyd (Craig y Nos Circular)			Henrhyd Falls – Sgwd Henrhyd (Cribarth Plateau Start)		
1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check	1 <sup>st</sup> walk check	2 <sup>nd</sup> walk check	3 <sup>rd</sup> walk check
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## Henrhyd Falls – Sgwd Henrhyd (Craig y Nos Circular)

**Start:** Craig y Nos Bus Stop

**Finish:** Craig y Nos Bus Stop

Craig y Nos Bus Stop, map reference SN 840 153, is 249 km west of Charing Cross, 209m above sea level and in the Tawe (or Swansea) Valley (Cwm Tawe) in **Powys, Wales**.

**Length:** 13.4 km (8.3 mi), of which 4.5 km are on tarmac or concrete.

**Cumulative ascent/descent:** 270m.

For alternative start points, resulting in a shorter or a longer walk, *see below* **Walk options**.

**Toughness:** 3 out of 10

**Time:** 4 hours walking time.

**Transport:** Craig y Nos Bus Stop Bus Stop is on line T6 (Swansea - Neath - Ystradgynlais – Brecon), with 11 buses a day Mon-Sat and 5 on Sundays and Bank Holidays, with a journey time of 40 mins from Neath (and 37 mins from Brecon). The journey time by train from London to Neath is from 2 ¾ hours. There is a pay-and-display car park at the Country Park (£2.50 fee) but also some free spaces along the A4067.

**Saturday Walkers' Club:** This walk is not recommended as a daywalk from London, but if based in the area for a longer stay. Accommodation is available in Craig y Nos, nearby in Glyntawe or Pen y Cae, and further along the bus line in Ystradgynlais, Sennybridge or Brecon.

**OS Landranger Map:** 160 (Brecon Beacons)

**OS Explorer Map:** OL12 (Brecon Beacons National Park)

### Walk Notes:

From the Craig y Nos Country Park, an idyllic spot on the banks of the Afon Tawe (River Tawe) with its Victorian Gothic building (now a hotel), which was home to the world renowned opera singer Adelina Patti from 1878 to 1919, the route follows quiet bridleways and country lanes with excellent views across the valley to the Cribarth mountain, to a steep cliff edge above the Tawe River which it then follows for an extended stretch, with the river running below in rapids.

You leave the Tawe to walk up a spectacular wooded ravine, formed by the Nant Llech. The river's name ('Rock Slab Stream' in English) derives from the rock strata that tilt or dip to create small waterfalls along its course, some of which can be observed from close quarters. The wooded gorge is an Ancient Woodland, meaning many of the trees (especially on the southern bank) have never been felled, providing for spectacular displays of bluebells in season. It is also a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) for its humid habitat, supporting a wide range of damp-loving species. You ascend through the scenic gorge to a natural amphitheatre, carved out over millennia by the highest waterfall in South Wales, the Sgwd Henrhyd (Henrhyd Waterfall), dropping down a rocky ledge forming a water curtain you can walk and picnic behind. From there country lanes and paths across pastures get you a prized lunch pub in Pen y Cae and then back along the bridleways and lanes of the outward route to finish with a riverside loop through the Craig y Nos Country Park to its tea rooms.

A variation of the start leads over the limestone Cribarth Plateau with its shakeholes and far views.

## Walk options:

A triangular section along cliffs above the Tawe River, up the Nant Llech valley to the Henrhyd Falls and back through fields and lanes is the core of this walk, with lunch pub and tea stop, if ending at Craig y Nos.

**Alternative Starts**, linking to the triangular section, are described from:

- **further north** in Glyntawe, for a slightly longer and tougher walk (14.3 km/8.9 mi, **4/10** rating);
- **further south** in Pen y Cae or Ynyswen, for a much shorter walk (from 6.8 km/4.2 mi, **1/10** rating).

These points are linked to the start by the T6 bus line and can also be **Alternative Finish Points**.

A **variation of the start** leads over the **Cribarth Plateau**; this adds about 300m ascent (**6/10**).

**Lunch/Tea** (details last updated 05/05/2017)

### Pen y Cae

**Pen y Cae Inn (Restaurant & Gallery)** Brecon Road, Pen y Cae, Swansea Valley, Powys, SA9 1FA (01639 730 100, <http://www.penycaeinn.com/>). The Pen y Cae Inn is located 10.5 km/6.4 mi into the walk and one of the best gastro pubs in Wales (Voted "Best" in 2015 in fact) and also offers accommodation. Open for lunch Tue-Sun.

**Ancient Britain** Brecon Road, Pen y Cae, Swansea, Wales, UK SA9 1YY (01639 730 273, <http://ancientbriton.co.uk/>).

### Ynyswen/Abercrave

**Abercrave Inn** 145 Heol Tawe, Abercrave, Swansea Valley, SA9 1XS (01639 731 002, <http://www.abercraveinn.co.uk/>).

### Craig y Nos

**Changing Seasons Tea Rooms & Restaurant** Craig y Nos Country Park, Brecon Road, Pen y Cae, Swansea, SA9 1GL (01639 731 498, <http://changing-seasons-tea-rooms.weebly.com/>). Open daily 10.00-18.00 (-22.30 Fri-Sat), serving quality, local seasonal food and drink.

### Glyntawe

**Tafarn y Garreg** A 4067, Glyntawe, Swansea, Powys, SA9 1GS (01639 731 415, <http://www.tafarnygarreg.co.uk/>). The Tafarn y Garreg had been shut for several years but re-opened in summer 2015. Open 12.00-23.00 Tue-Fri, 12.00-23.00 Sat and 12.00-18.00 Sun. Food served 12.00-20.00 Tue-Fri and 12.00-21.00 Sat-Sun.

**The Gwyn Arms** A 4067, Glyntawe, Swansea, Powys, SA9 1GP (01639 730 310).

A roadside pub in a picturesque valley with a large garden, offering good value pub food every day. Open 11.00-late daily. Food served 12.00-20.00 Mon-Sat and 12.00-16.00 Sun.

## Welsh Glossary

aber: estuary, confluence, river mouth, stream; afon: river; allt: hillside, wood; aran: high place; bach: small; ban/fan/bannau (pl): peak, beacon, crest, hill, mountain; big: peak; blaen: source of river, head of valley; bod: dwelling; bre: hill; bron: hill-breast; bryn: hill; bwlch: gap, pass; cadair: chair; cae: field; caer/gaer: stronghold, fort; capel: chapel; carn/garn/carnedd/garnedd: cairn/heap of stones, tumulus; carreg/garreg: stone, rock; cefn: ridge, hillside; castell: castle; celli: grove, copse; cerwyn: pot-hole; cist: chest; clwyd: hurdle, gate; clog/clogwyn: cliff; clun: meadow; clydach: torrent; coch/goch: red; coed: wood; craig/graig: rock; crib/cribyn: crest, summit; crug: mound; cul: narrow; cwm: valley, bowl, dale; cyfrwy: ridge between two summits (saddle); ddinas: fort; dibyn: steep slope, precipice; diffwys: precipice, abyss; din: hill-fortress; disgwylfa: place of observation, look-out point; dôl: meadow; du/ddu: black, dark; dwfr/dŵr: water; dyffryn: valley; -dyn: fortified enclosure; eglwys: church; eisteddfod: meeting-place, assembly; esgair: ridge; fach: small; fawr/mawr: big; fechan: smaller; ffald: sheep-fold, pound, pen, run; ffordd: road; ffridd: pasture; ffrwd: stream, torrent; ffynnon: spring, well; gallt: wooded hill; garth: promontory, hill, enclosure; glan/lan: river-bank, hillock; glas: green, when referring to grass, pasture or leaves; or blue, when relating to the sea or air; glyn: deep valley, glen; gorsedd: tumulus, barrow, hillock; gwyddfa: mound, tumulus; gwylfa: look-out point; gwyn/gwen: white; gwynt: wind; hafn: gorge, ravine; hafod: summer dwelling; hen: old; hendre(f): winter dwelling, old home, permanent abode; heol: road; hesgyn: bog; hir: long; is: below, lower; llan: church, monastery; llawr: level area, floor of valley; llech: slab, stone, rock, rock; llethr: slope; lliest: shieling, cottage, hut; llwch: lake, dust; llwybr: path; llwyd: grey, brown; llwyn: bush, grove; llyn: lake; llynwyn: pool, puddle, moat; isa(f): lower/lowest; maen: stone; maes: open field, plain; mawn: peat; mawnog: peat-bog; melyn: yellow; merthyr: burial place, church; moel/foel: bare, bald/bare hill; mynydd: mountain, moorland; nant: brook, stream, dingle, glen; neuadd: hall; newydd: new; ogof/gogof: cave; pant: hollow; parc: park, field, enclosure; pen: head, top, end, edge; penrhyn: promontory; pentre(f): homestead, village; perfedd: middle; perth: bush, brake, hedge; plas: hall, mansion; pont/bont: bridge; porth: gate, gateway, harbour, bay, landing-place, ferry; pwll: pit, pool; rhiw: hill, slope; rhos: moor, promontory; rhudd: red, crimson; rhyd: ford; sarn: causeway; sgwd/rhaidar: waterfall; sticill: stile; sych: dry; tafarn: tavern; tâl: end, top; talar: headland (of field); tan/dan: below; tarren/darren: escarpment; tir: land, territory; tor: break, gap; tre/tref: settlement, hamlet, town; twlch: tump, knoll; twll: hole, pit; tŵr: tower; tŷ: house; tŵyn: hill; uchaf: upper, highest; uwch: above, over; waun/gwaun: moorland, meadow; wen: white; y, yr, `r: the; ynys: island, holm, river-meadow; ysgol: ladder, formation on mountain-side/school; ysgwydd: shoulder (of mountain); ystafell: chamber, hiding-place; ystrad: wide valley, holm, river-meadow.

## Notes:

### Brecon Beacons National Park

Home to spectacular landscapes, a rich variety of wildlife and fascinating cultural and geological heritage, the Brecon Beacons National Park in Mid-Wales boasts a magnificent array of Old Red Sandstone peaks, open moorland and green valleys, spanning 1.344 km<sup>2</sup> (520 mi<sup>2</sup>). Pen y Fan within the Central Beacons is perhaps the best-known summit but there are many others in the five distinct parts of the National Park (Black Mountain (Y Mynydd Du) in the far west, Fforest Fawr, Central Beacons, the Llangattock and Llangynidr Hills, and the Black Mountains to the east).

### Craig y Nos Castle and Country Park

Craig y Nos Castle ('rock of the night' in English) is a Victorian-Gothic country house built on parkland beside the River Tawe in the upper Swansea Valley, it is located on the southern edge of Fforest Fawr. The main building was built (of grey limestone) in 1841–43 by Captain Rice Davies Powell, who became a county magistrate and a High Sheriff of Brecknock. The opera singer Adelina Patti purchased the castle and surrounding park land in 1878 to develop it (using pink sandstone) as her own private estate. After Patti's death in 1919 it was reconstructed as a sanatorium to combat tuberculosis. After a period as a hospital for the elderly, part of the complex is now used as a boutique hotel, catering, conferencing and entertainment venue. <http://www.craigynoscastle.com/>

The castle grounds are surrounded by a designated country park, which is now part of the Brecon Beacons National Park. <http://www.breconbeacons.org/craig-y-nos-country-park>

### River Tawe (Afon Tawe)

The Tawe flows for some 48 km (30 mi) from its source below Moel Feity in the Old Red Sandstone hills of the western Brecon Beacons to the Bristol Channel at Swansea. Its main tributaries are the right bank Upper and Lower Clydach Rivers and the Afon Twrch. The Tawe Valley (*Cwm Tawe* in Welsh) is more commonly known as the Swansea Valley.

The lower part of the valley was intensely industrialised in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and was especially impacted by metal refining and working. The quality of the river has now greatly improved. Large salmon swim up the river to spawn, whilst trout are in abundance.

### Beacons Way

The Beacons Way is a 152 km (95 mi) linear waymarked long distance footpath running east to west across the Brecon Beacons National Park. It passes many of the most important landmarks and mountain peaks in the range, but has limited waymarking, especially on open hill and moorland sections, meaning navigation skills are essential. First established in 2005, the route was revised in 2016.

### Nant Llech/Sgwd Henrhyd

The name Nant Llech means 'slab stream', presumably in reference to the slabs of sandstone across which it runs. Its headwater streams, the Nant Llech Pellaf and the Nant Llech Isaf join forces at Blaen Llech and then continue westwards as the Nant Llech for 3 km/2 mi to a confluence with the River Tawe just east of the village of Abercraf. The most famous feature of the river is Henrhyd Falls (Sgwd Henrhyd or Rhaeadr Henrhyd in Welsh), a 27m/90ft high fall where the river plunges over the edge of a band of hard sandstone known as the 'Farewell Rock' into a deep plunge pool. The river continues below in a steep wooded gorge cut into mudstones and sandstones of the Carboniferous age Coal Measures.

Sir William Edmond Logan, first director of the Geological Survey of Canada discovered some fossil trees near the base of the falls. These are now on display outside Swansea Museum.

The final scene of 'The Dark Knight Rises' was filmed at the waterfall, where it doubled as the entrance for the Batcave.

### Glyntawe

Glyntawe is a hamlet between elevated mountains on the upper reaches of the River Tawe in Powys. It has always been sparsely populated. There is evidence of a prehistoric lake side settlement at Waun Fignen Felen, now a large upland peat bog, passed on the alternative finish.

Today Glyntawe attracts tourists for outdoor activities in the Brecon Beacons National Park and for caving. It contains the National Showcaves of Wales at Ogof yr Esgyrn cave. This 17 kilometre long cave is part of a very large system of solution caves under the Cribarth plateau to the west of the upper Tawe and it is claimed to be the largest in Europe. Discovered in 1922, it was excavated 1923-1950. Finds date from the post-glacial period through the Roman era to historic times. The cave, used for habitation and for burial in pre-history, later served as a location for the *Doctor Who* serial *The Pirate Planet*.

In a 2005 poll of *Radio Times* readers, Dan yr Ogof was named as the greatest natural wonder in Britain. The former village school is now the Glyntawe Outdoor Centre, an activity centre run by Dulwich College.

In 1878 opera singer Adelina Patti made her home at nearby Craig y Nos Castle.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

[For the alternative starts in **Glyntawe**, **Pen y Cae** or **Ynyswen**, go to page 8 and pick up the directions under the respective sub-heading]

Alight from the bus in Craig y Nos by **Craig y Nos Castle** and walk in a southerly direction along the road's pavement (i.e.: against the direction of travel if coming up from Swansea/Neath, but in the direction of travel if coming down from Brecon). In 70m you pass **Pentre Riding Stables** (and B&B) on the opposite side of the road.

**In another 60m you have a choice:**

**For the Alternative Start over the Cribarth Plateau**, go to page 8 and pick up the directions under the respective sub-heading.

**For the main walk**, *turn left* at a corner of the wall on your left, along a signposted footpath through a double wooden field gate down a gravel car wide track. In 60m go through a metal kissing gate and *turn right* along a stepped path with a railing on the left zig-zagging down into the **Cwm Tawe** (the Tawe – or Swansea – Valley) and in 100m – at the bottom of the steps – you emerge into a grassy area. *Turn right* to a lime-washed timber cottage (part of the Craig y Nos estate and built in the 1880s for the then owner, the opera singer **Adelina Patti**). But **[!]** then *turn away from the cottage* across the grassy area to the left (35°). In 60m you reach the banks of the **Afon Tawe** (Tawe River) by a T-junction with a gravel path and *turn left* along it.

In 120m *turn right* to cross the river over a two-railed metal footbridge (notice Adelina Patti's initials in the middle of the wrought iron railing (in red)). *Turn right* on the other side of the bridge and follow a narrow path along the river. Ignore a left forking path and in 190m *turn left* with the path over a two-railed plank bridge and *turn right* at a T-junction of paths. In 40m *turn left* with the path along a lake. In 40m ignore a stepped path down to the left and continue along the lake. In 125m *fork right* along a boardwalk, away from the path, and in 40m – when the boardwalk ends – continue along a winding path through a wooded area. In 70m you cross a stream on a plank bridge and then *turn left* over a ditch to emerge back on the path at a T-junction.

*Turn right* along the path and in 30m *bear right* at a T-junction with another – more prominent – path (this is the return route), with the river again on your left. In 50m, and 20m before a high two-railed bridge over the river, **[!]** *turn right* at a three-way junction of paths with a **Beacons Way** marker post, uphill into a wood. In 30m you walk through a wooden gate at a T-junction of paths with a Beacons Way marker on the gate. **The track from the left is the route from the northernmost Alternative Start in Glyntawe.** *Turn right* along the bridleway.

**\*)** You walk initially between fences and trees, but after a while have a drystone wall on the left with a field visible behind the trees and on the right the **Tawe River** at times audible below and the **Cribarth** mountain plateau visible on the opposite side of the valley. In 600m you pass a house on your left (**Rhongyr-uchaf** on the OS map) and in 50m walk through a metal field gate. In 25m *turn right* along a tarmac lane leading to the house and in 60m *turn right* with the lane, ignoring the continuation of the Beacons Way bridleway turning left through a metal field gate.

In 450m *turn right* at a T-junction with a road, now in a wider, **open part of the Tawe Valley** and in 200m, where the road turns right to cross the river towards the A4067, continue in the same direction along a tarmac lane (a signposted bridleway – **LLwybr Ceffyl** in Welsh). In another 200m the tarmac lane turns right towards a house (**Pen-**

**tŵyn**) and you continue in the same direction along a bridleway between hedges. In 500m you *bear right* at a T-junction with a tarmac lane and in 170m reach a T-junction with a road coming up from the A-road in **Pen y Cae**. **This is the route from the Alternative Start in Pen y Cae**. *Turn up left* along the road.

**\*\***) In 360m, just after crossing a bridge over the **Nant y Ffin** (stream) in a steep stretch of the road and just before a converted chapel and a small burial ground on the left hand side (on the OS map), **[!]** *turn right* over a stile to the left of a metal field gate, signposted 'Footpath – Ynyswen, Abercraf'.

**\*\*\***) Continue along a car wide grassy path between bushes and in 40m *veer right* (290°) downhill through bracken with a low wooden signpost on the right. In 70m you reach the **steep cliff towering above the Tawe River** by a yellow marker post and a warning sign '**Danger – Steep Cliff**'. *Turn left* along a clear path a little set back to the left of the drop. The following stretch is well waymarked and very scenic with generally very good views of river, valley, cascades and the mountains opposite, as you broadly follow the cliff edge, while crossing a few stiles and streams along the way.

In 400m you cross a railed plank bridge over a stream that's marked but unnamed on the OS map and *veer left* with some markers away from the cliff edge. In 70m you *turn left* through a metal gate and *turn right* immediately on the other side of it to follow a grassy path between young trees. In 65m you go through a metal field gate and continue in the same direction along a rocky holloway between tree-lined drystone walls. In 125m the track widens and in 90m you continue in the same direction over a stile to the left of a metal field gate into a large pasture, ignoring a left turning car wide track (a bridleway leading to **Glyn-Llech-isaf**, on the OS map). Continue broadly along the left hand field boundary but aim for a car wide earth bridge about 50m to the right of the bottom left corner and cross a stream over that bridge and in 20m *turn left* with the car wide track on the other side.

In 60m *turn right* over a stile and continue to the right of a collapsed drystone wall and a line of trees. In 120m you walk through a drystone wall gap into the next field and continue in the same direction and in 150m exit from the field over a stile into a lightly wooded area to continue in the same direction with a wire fence on the right. In another 150m you go over a stile, by a farm building a little to the right and in 40m go through a metal gate and continue in the same direction to the left of the farm's driveway, separated by a fence. In another 40m turn right through a metal gate onto the driveway and turn left along it towards a road at a T-junction. *Turn down to the right* along the road and in 90m a footpath joins from the right through a wooden kissing gate, signposted 'Ynyswen, Abercraf'.

**This is the route from the southerly Alternative Start points in Ynyswen.**

**\*\*\*\***) In 15m *turn left* through a wooden kissing gate (signed '**Sgwd – Waterfall**') and follow a clear undulating path through a narrow forested valley all the way to the **Sgwd Henrhyd** (Henrhyd Waterfall).

**But in more detail:** in 50m you have the **Nant Llech** ('slab stream') close down below on the right; in 200m *bear right* at a T-junction with a broader track coming down from the left through a metal field gate; the footbridge over the river on the right 60m further along is a **prime viewing point** up to the beautiful waterfall a little further up the river; when level with the fall in a further 60m, there is an opportunity to climb down to the bank for an even better view (unless the river is in spate); here you pass the ruins of **Melin-Llech, a former woollen mill** and soon after its silted up millpond on the left, and in 55m use a boardwalk over a boggy area.

The path passes a landslipped area and in 700m you go up some steps to cross a stream joining from the left; the path then rises up the valley flank to continue high above the river and several hundred metres further along you pass a bench with an integrated **audio-point** (in both languages). You cross another tributary stream over a bridge; the path rises higher still and you go through a wooden gate and up a stepped path to then continue along a level stretch to descend back to the river bank and in 200m pass another beautiful waterfall where the path is led over some duckboards; walk up some steps and past another audio-trail station (with signs of another landslip on the opposite river bank). In 140m you reach a **signposted three-way junction of paths**. The path from up left descends from a car park ('maes parcio' in Welsh).

Continue in the same direction (signed 'Sgwd – Waterfall') and in 50m *turn down to the right* to cross a wooden plank bridge over the **Llech** (views of the waterfall from here in low-foliage winter) and continue steeply up some steps on the other side to follow a clear path to the plunge pool at the bottom of the **Sgwd Henrhyd (Henrhyd Waterfall)**. In 130m you have the first full views of the 29m drop and of the path on the right that enables you to walk 'behind' the fall itself, as well as a path dropping down to the pool on the left for some more great views.

Return to the **signposted three-way junction of paths** and *turn up right* steeply towards the car park. You pass by another audio-trail station along the way and in 170m, as the path levels out, go through a wooden gate and in 30m through another one into the car park. *Turn right* towards a road and *turn up left* along it (but *turn right* down the road for a 200m out-and-back **diversion to the bridge over the Llech River** just above the top of the waterfall).

In 450m you pass a large transponder mast on the right in a field and directly afterwards, where the road turns left and a footpath joins from the right, you continue in the same direction over a metal stile into a large grassy sloping field, signed 'Cylchdaeth – Circular Route Ynyswen'. You head downhill on a bearing of 325° towards a (not initially visible) boardwalk, followed by a two-railed footbridge, across a large boggy area at the bottom of the drop 130m away, to then continue in the same direction towards a second boardwalk another 130m away. From there you continue towards the top right end of a line of trees 180m away (335°).

At the tree line corner ignore a metal field gate ahead and *turn right* along the fence through the reedy grass and *curve left* with the fence. In another 50m you pass a yellow marker post and in 80m have a small stream on the right below in a gully. In 130m you pass a metal field gate and in 20m go over a stile onto a road at a T-junction and *turn right* along it with a signpost. In 430m you have a converted chapel on the right (an artists' studio) with a small burial ground and immediately afterwards find a stile on your left to the left of a metal field gate, signposted 'Footpath – Ynyswen, Abercraf'.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For a return to the Alternative Start Points in Ynyswen**, *turn left* over the stile and pick up the directions above at the triple asterisk \*\*\*).

**For the Main Walk**, continue in the same direction down the road, immediately crossing the **Nant y Ffin** (stream) on a road bridge. In 360m a tarmac lane joins from the right, this is the morning route from Craig y Nos.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For lunch at the Pen y Cae Inn or for finishing the walk in Pen y Cae**, continue in the same direction along the road, cross the Tawe River on a road bridge and in 130m

reach the A4067 through Pen y Cae at a T-junction. The **Pen y Cae Inn** and a **bus stop for services to Craig y Nos, Glyntawe and on to Brecon** are a little to the left.

**For the Main Walk**, or a finish further along in Glyntawe, you *turn right* along the tarmac lane. In 170m you *bear left* along a bridleway between hedges and in 500m continue in the same direction, where a tarmac lane joins from a house on the left (**Pen-tŵyn**). In 200m pass a bridleway (**LLwybr Ceffyl** in Welsh) signpost and continue in the same direction in a wider, **open part of the Tawe Valley** along a road at a bend. In 200m **[!]** *turn left* along a tarmac lane.

In 450m, by a house, ignore the Beacons Way bridleway turning right through a metal field gate and *turn left* along a tarmac lane. In 60m *turn right* with the lane and in 25m *turn left* to pass another house (**Rhongyr-uchaf** on the OS map) on the left. You walk along a bridleway with a field on the right and the Tawe at times audible below on the left and the **Cribarth** mountain plateau visible on the opposite side of the valley. You have a drystone wall on the right, and later walk between fences and trees, and in 600m the Beacons Way turns left through a wooden gate, where the bridleway continues in the same direction.

**Here you have a choice:**

**For an extension to Glyntawe**, you continue in the same direction along the bridleway and pick up the directions below under **Glyntawe Finish**.

**For the Main Walk, finishing in Craig y Nos**, you *turn left* through the gate downhill through a wood. In 30m **[!]** *turn left* at a three-way junction of paths by a **Beacons Way** marker post, with a high two-railed bridge over the river 20m off to the right, and the river now on your right. In 40m continue in the same direction along the river, ignoring a left fork (the morning outbound route). In 80m emerge in an open grassy field and follow the river and in 100m the path continues on tarmac.

In 60m *turn right* across a two-railed bridge over the Tawe River. A wooden field gate on the left leads into the grounds of Craig y Nos Castle (permissive access), but *turn right*, soon with the **Afon Llynfell** (stream) on your right, a tributary to the Tawe flowing out of the **Dan y Ogor cave system** not too far away. The lane *turns left* to the left of an ornamental lake and in 40m you *turn left* to the right of a redbrick building into the car park of **Craig y Nos Country Park**, where you *turn up right* along a paved then stepped path towards the recommended tea stop, the **Changing Seasons Tea Rooms & Restaurant** 60m away. **For the bus stop** walk up to the A 4067 to the left of the tea room and *turn left* along it for 150m.

## Alternative Starts and Finishes

### **Cribarth Plateau Start:**

Walk past a layby and in 70m *turn right* to cross the road by a 40 mile speed limit sign on the other side to continue with a 'Geological Trail – Llwydr Daearegol' and 'To Open Hill – Tua'r Mynydd' signpost through a wooden kissing gate or over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate. There are three info panels in the area at the start of the **Craig y Nos Quarry Heritage Trail**. In 60m, by a wooden barrier with a 'Danger – Perygl' sign, as well as a couple of **Standing Stones**, [!] *turn hard right* back on yourself and continue up some steps and along a narrow steep path ascending the wooded hillside.

You climb steadily out of the valley with **Craig y Nos Castle** visible below and in 350m emerge from the trees on the open hillside. In 20m *turn left* along a fence line, still steeply uphill. In 220m climb over a ladder stile across a drystone wall and enter the **Open Access** land of the **Cribarth**. [!] *Turn right* along the fence and wall on your right, ignoring a clear path further uphill, to go over a limestone crag and then descend with the wall on the right. In about 200m you have some **Shakeholes** to the right across the wall, before crossing an area of limestone debris along a clear path.

You ignore a stile in the fence on the right and *veer right* with the fence and in 60m, after a gentle re-ascent and just before a metal field gate on the right, [!] *turn hard left* along an unmarked but clear grass path (200°) towards the limestone crags of the Cribarth. The gradient increases after 60m and in 130m you pass a hillock on your left. In about 200m you pass a knoll on your right and in 50m a shakehole on your left. In 40m cross a wide grassy track and continue in the same direction (230°). In 100m the path levels out and you can see a drystone wall ahead. In 100m you *bear right* with the drystone wall at a corner along the course of a dismantled tramway.

In 150m *veer right* up a grassy slope to a trigpoint visible half right ahead on a low top. From the trigpoint and its neighbouring storm shelter *veer left* back down the top to re-join the drystone wall and continue in the previous direction. In 400m, where the wall turns left, continue ahead briefly and then *curve left* with a path to skirt a steep drop on the left and in 90m go over a stile in the wall with a footpath signpost. *Turn right* to walk along a clear grass path through the slope a little to the left of the wall (210°) and in 200m *bear up left* with the path away from the wall (150°), ignoring a right fork broadly towards the wall.

You pass a lone large boulder and head for a low footpath marker post 80m away, where you *bear right* towards a stile. In 50m you *turn left* [!] *before the stile*, signposted 'Ynyswen'. Follow a grassy path downhill through heather and bracken with some scattered limestone and with **Abercraf** village visible in the valley a little to the right and **Ynyswen** a little to the left. In 370m *turn right* with the path at a fence corner on the right to further descend through a boggy area (partly on a wooden boardwalk) and then *turn left* over a stile into a pasture to follow its right hand boundary (75°).

In 250m leave the field in its far right corner over a stile and in 20m *turn right* at a junction with a farm track with a three-way signpost on the right through a metal field gate. *Veer left* immediately in the direction of the signpost through another metal field gate in 20m and follow a car wide grassy track with a wooded area on the left and a barbed wire fence on the right (due E). In 350m cross a stream on some stepping stones just before a stile and [!] *turn right* before the stile to follow the stream downhill. In 100m you cross a plank bridge over a tributary stream and in 50m pass a stone barn on your left and in 70m walk through a field gate and continue in the same direction towards some houses in **Ynyswen**. In 75m you walk through a rusty metal gate by a bridleway signpost and go along a tarmac path between fences.



In 40m cross a road and *turn left* along the opposite pavement towards a green and *turn right* with a tarmac path this side of the green and then *curve right* with a residential road. You walk down some steps to join the road and follow it to its end where you *turn down left* by the last house on the left along a narrow tarmac path. In 20m go through a bike barrier and *turn left* along the main road through Ynyswen. In 20m *turn right* to cross the road and continue with a wooden signpost ('Sgwd Henrhyd waterfall') through a metal field gate and along a grassy path with a wall on the right. In 60m go over a stile and *turn right* with a barbed wire fence on the left and in 200m *turn left* through a metal kissing gate and cross the two-railed concrete footbridge over the **Afon Tawe** (the River Tawe).

Pick up the directions below under **Ynyswen Start** at: "On the other side...".

### **Glyntawe Start:**

From the bus stop in **Glyntawe** by the **Tawe Bridge** turn in an easterly direction off the A4067 to walk down **Heol Callwen** (road) and in 150m pass the **Glyntawe Outdoor Centre** on the right (run by Dulwich College). In 130m the road crosses the **Nant Byfre** (stream) and in 25m, where the tarmac lane turns sharply left, you continue in the same direction through a metal kissing gate with a signposted footpath with a **Beacons Way** marker on it into a grassy field and walk along its right-hand side. In 30m ignore a metal field gate on the right and in 50m walk through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate to follow a left hand field boundary.

In 70m ignore a metal field gate on the left just before curving right around a large fenced wooded sunken bowl, in fact **a cave entrance** with a metal gate in the fence (on the OS map). In the field corner walk through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction through the next field. In 90m walk through a metal kissing gate and *turn right* along a bridleway track at a T-junction with a **Beacons Way** marker (220°), ignoring a steep path on the left (signed 'Horses keep to Bridleway'). You now have a drystone wall on the right with a field behind, and a wood on the left. In about 600m you go through a metal field gate and continue downhill and in 70m a path joins from the right through a wooden gate. **This is the Main Walk route from and to Craig y Nos** as well as to the Cribarth Plateau start.

Continue in the same direction along the bridleway and pick up the directions in the main walk at the asterisk \*).

### **Glyntawe Finish:**

In 70m you go through a metal field gate and continue uphill, with a wood on the right. In about 600m you ignore a steep path on the right (signed 'Horses keep to Bridleway') and *turn left* through a metal kissing gate with a **Beacons Way** marker into a grassy field. Cross the field diagonally to the right and in 90m walk through a metal kissing gate to the right of a metal field gate into another field corner and continue in the same direction through it.

Curve around to the left of a large fenced wooded sunken bowl - in fact **a cave entrance** with a metal gate in the fence (on the OS map) - and ignore a metal field gate on the right just behind it to continue along the right hand field boundary and in 70m walk through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate into the next field. In 50m ignore a metal field gate on the left and in 30m leave the field through a metal kissing gate onto a tarmac lane at a bend.

Turn left along the lane and in 25m cross the **Nant Byfre** (stream) to continue into **Glyntawe** village walking down **Heol Callwen** (road) and in 130m you pass the **Glyntawe Outdoor Centre** on the left (run by Dulwich College). In 150m you reach the A4067 at a T-junction with a bus stop for services to Neath and Cardiff on your left, and the one for services to Brecon opposite a little to the right. The **Tafarn y Garreg** pub is to the right 400m along the road, **The Gwyn Arms** 200m to your left.

### Pen y Cae Start:

From the northbound bus stop shelter in Pen y Cae by the **Pen y Cae Inn**, with the inn in your back, cross the A4067 a little to the left and walk down a road. In 130m you cross the **Afon Tawe (Tawe River)** on the road and in another 40m a tarmac lane joins from the left. **This is the Main Walk from Craig y Nos.**

Continue in the same direction up along the road and pick up the directions in the main text at the double asterisk \*\*).

### Ynyswen Start:

- If starting from **St. David's Church**, cross the A4067 and walk down a track to the left of a house (with a signpost for 'Sgwd Henrhyd waterfall') and in 350m *turn right* through a metal kissing gate and cross the two-railed concrete footbridge over the **Afon Tawe** (the River Tawe).
- If starting from the **Ynyswen Main Road** bus stop, walk downhill along the A-road in a south westerly direction (i.e.: against the direction of travel if coming up from Swansea/Neath, but in the direction of travel if coming down from Brecon) and in 180m *turn left* with a wooden signpost ('Sgwd Henrhyd waterfall') through a metal field gate and continue along a grassy path with a wall on the right. In 60m go over a stile and *turn right* with a barbed wire fence on the left and in 200m *turn left* through a metal kissing gate and cross the two-railed concrete footbridge over the **Afon Tawe** (the River Tawe).

On the other side:

in 20m ignore a right turn over the railed footbridge across the **Nant Llech** (stream) to continue in the same direction up some steps (signed 'Waterfall'), pass an audio trail post and at the top continue through a wooden kissing gate. In 130m you go through a wooden kissing gate onto a road where you *turn down right* (signed 'Waterfall' and 'Return to Abercraf').

Pick up the directions in the main text at the quadruple asterisk \*\*\*\*).

### Ynyswen Finish:

Follow the path with a wire fence on the left and in 130m go through a wooden kissing gate to descend some steps. At the bottom of the steps, by the **confluence of the Llech and the Tawe**, ignore the **Llech Bridge** on the left and continue in the same direction and in 20m **cross the Tawe** over a two-railed concrete footbridge with a metal kissing gate on the opposite side.

On the other side:

- for the **Ynyswen Main Road** bus stop, *turn right* at a T-junction with a signpost for 'Ynyswen' and in 200m *turn left* over a stile to reach the A4067 through **Ynyswen** in 60m through a metal field gate. The bus stop is about 180m along to the right.
- for **St. David's Church**, *turn left* at a T-junction with a signpost for 'Abercraf' and in 350m emerge on the A4067 opposite the church.