

BRIDGEND CIRCULAR WALK

LEAFLET 3 (VALE SECTION)

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet describes a 13 Km (8 Mile) section of the Bridgend Circular Walk. You should be able to complete this section of the walk in 4 hours but allow more time if you are thinking of visiting some of the sites identified in this leaflet or if you simply want to enjoy the countryside. The villages of Coychurch, and St. Brides Major have most of the things you will need by way of facilities.

For convenience purposes the directions below are written with the village of Coychurch as the starting point for this section of the walk. You could however equally start from Merthyr Mawr or any point along the route, and if travelling in the opposite direction simply reverse all the directions.

Before starting the walk from Coychurch you could visit the Church of **St. Crallo (1)** and the **Tombstone of Thomas Richards (2)** which can be found in the churchyard. Further details on these sites of interest can be found in Bridgend Circular Walk leaflet (2).

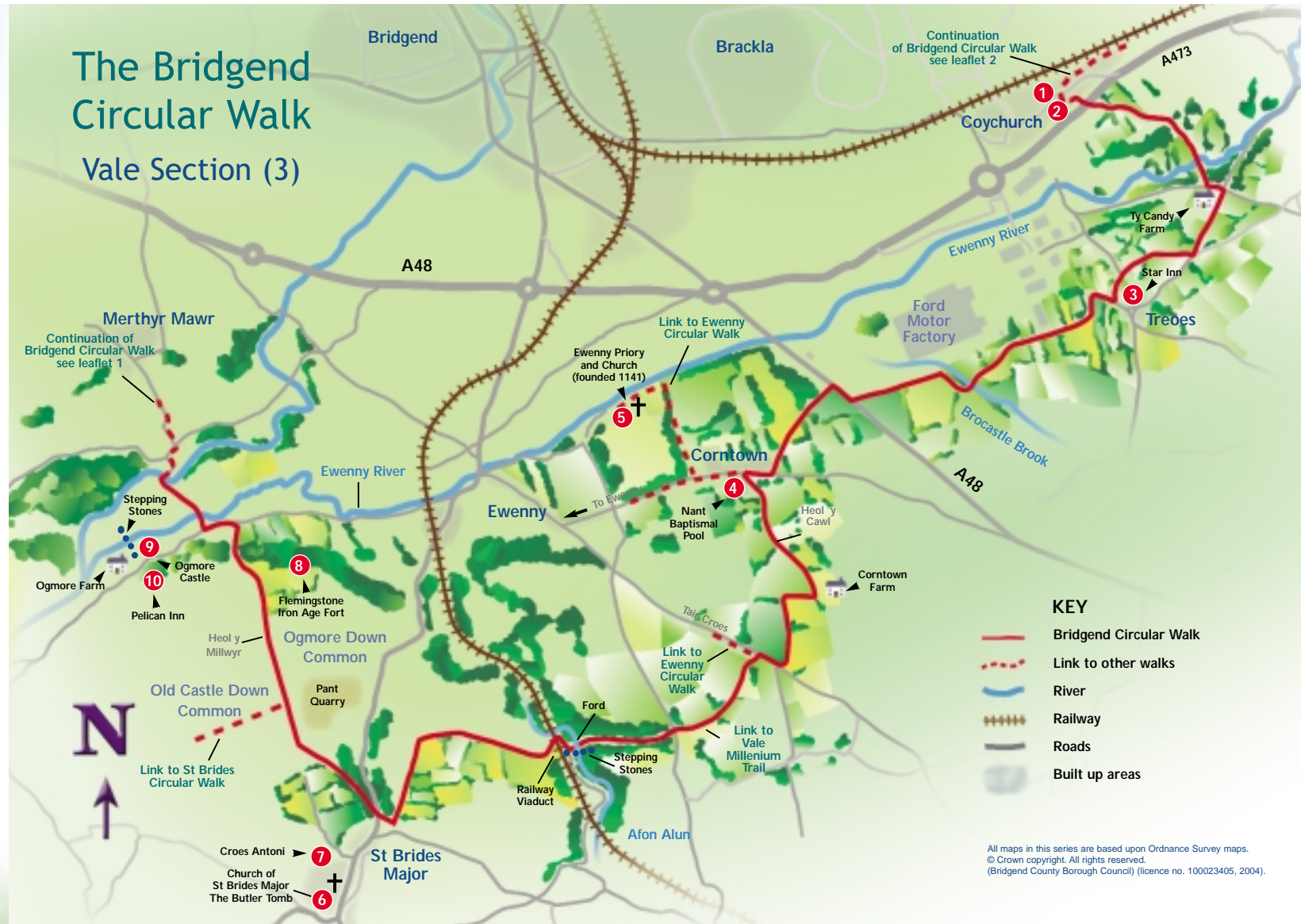
To begin this section of the walk leave the Main Road in Coychurch Village and follow the road between the properties known as Isfryn and Coychurch Cottage. Then take the public footpath on your left which runs between Nos. 28 and 29 St.

Mary's View, walk across the road and follow the signposted footpath between Nos. 22 and 23 St. Mary's View. Cross over the stone stile onto the verge of the A473. Take care when crossing this dual carriageway and follow the way-marked tarmac path across the central reservation. Use the steps and follow the waymarked footpath over a stone stile and a wooden stile and continue across the field. Pass through three kissing gates to a point where you come to a small wooded area. Go over another stone stile and follow the well-defined path through the woods and through the metal kissing gate. Follow the waymarks across the first small field and over the



The Bridgend Circular Walk

Vale Section (3)



KEY	
	Bridgend Circular Walk
	Link to other walks
	River
	Railway
	Roads
	Built up areas

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wooden deck board heading for the large river bridge in front of you. Go over the bridge and continue straight ahead until you reach a wooded area, walk through the wooded area where you will note an old derelict farmhouse. The footpath then goes through two field gates and comes out on a country road.

To continue the walk, turn left and walk along the road until you come to a road junction. At the junction turn right past Ty Candy Farm and walk along the road for approximately 500 metres until you come to a property known as Tyn y Caeau. At this point you will note a wooden footpath sign on your right hand side, go through the double field gate (remember to close the field gate behind you) and head in the direction of the way-marks across 2 fields and over 2 wooden stiles. Once you have gone over the second stile head towards the wooden signpost near the road, turn left and follow the pavement. You are now entering the village of Treoes on a street called Glan-y-Nant.

In the centre of the village of Treoes you will find a number of Grade 2 Listed buildings including **The Star Inn PH (3)**, which is a characterful village house with a thatched roof. Some parts of the building date from the mid to late 17th Century. Opposite The Star Inn is Treoes Farmhouse also Grade 2 Listed as an early to mid 19th Century Farmhouse, which is unaltered.

Continue along Glan-y-Nant then take the street on your right hand side called Parc Newydd. Keep walking along Parc Newydd and then turn left past the property known as Old Barn. Continue along this road past the property known as Ty Deri at which point the footpath follows a rough access track for some distance to a point where a field gate will be straight in front of you.

Go through the field gate and continue almost straight ahead until you see a wooden footbridge over Brocastle Brook, go over the two wooden stiles at either end of the footbridge and turn right following the waymark arrow until you come to another wooden footbridge across another brook. Go over both stiles on this footbridge and then turn right heading towards the Ford Motor factory. Climb over the wooden stile in the fence line and

turn left. Follow this public footpath, which is bounded on one side by a hedgerow and post and wire fence and the other by the security fence of the Ford factory. Continue along the footpath for 800 metres until a point where you come to a wooden stile. Go over the wooden stile and up a set of concrete steps. At the top of the steps turn right and follow the stone dust path along the verge of the A48 until you get to a wooden sign post which is waymarked across the road. Take care when you are crossing the road and use the central reservation.

Follow the stone dust path which is waymarked into the Bridgend Golf Complex. From here go over a wooden stile and follow the tarmac access track until you see a gap in the hedgerow where there are the remnants of an old stile, go through the gap and head towards a steel stile which is situated in the boundary of a football field, go over the steel stile and across the football pitches to a point where you will see a tall metal gate in the hedgerow near the road. Go through this gate and turn right along Corntown Road towards the village of Corntown, using the grass verge for a short distance then the pavement.

The Nant Baptismal Pool (4) in Corntown was once used for baptising people. However, it is thought that the last baptism was performed here at the turn of the 20th Century. More recently it has been used for watering cattle. The pool is fed by groundwater and overflows into "The Nant", which eventually flows through the ground of the Ewenny Priory and into the Ewenny River.

In the village there are also some Grade 2 Listed buildings which include Corntown Court which has 17th or 18th Century origins and Corntown Farm which has 14th Century origins and is an important frontage in the centre of Corntown Village.

Choice: At this point continue along Corntown Road to a point where there is a footpath on your right hand side which leads to the grounds of **Ewenny Priory (5)** or just continue along the road for approximately 1km which will bring you into the



Village of Ewenny. There is also a link to the Ewenny Circular Walk.

Ewenny is a unique rural village just south of Bridgend situated on the edge of the Ewenny River. In the village you will find a grocery store, a craft shop and café.

The highlight of the village is the Ewenny Priory and Church.

In 1141 the Church of St. Michael became the beginning of the Benedictine priory of Ewenny granted to the Abbey of St. Peter at Gloucester together with the churches of St. Bride's Major, St. Michael at Colwinston and the Manor at Lampha. The Priory and church was founded by Norman nobleman, Maurice de Londres and is widely regarded as one of the finest fortified religious buildings in Britain. The village of Ewenny is also home to Ewenny Pottery founded in 1610 and still worked by the same family. It is the oldest working pottery in Wales.

To continue on the Bridgend Circular walk - Shortly after entering Corntown take the turning on your left hand side signed for Heol y Cawl and Nant Lias. You will also note a wooden footpath sign pointing up the track towards Corntown Farm. This track is steep in places. When you get to the gates of Corntown Farm you will note a wooden stile on your right hand side. Go over the wooden stile turn left and follow the field edge path. Follow the path into the corner of the field where the route turns right and the field edge path continues again with the boundary on your left hand side. You will come to a point where on your left hand side there is a wooden stile and a double field gate either go over the stile or, if the field gate is open, go through the double field gate.

At this point, if you wish to stop and take a breath, on a clear day the view is quite spectacular and you should be able to see Bridgend Town and beyond. Continue straight ahead from the wooden stile and double field gates and follow the field edge path with a dry stone wall on your left-hand side. This eventually turns into a hedgerow. Keeping the hedgerow on your left hand side continue along the footpath until you note a wooden way-mark post with a way-mark arrow indicating that you bear

right, continue along the field edge path through a field gate out onto the road where the footpath is sign posted in the verge.

Turn right at this point and follow the road which is known as Tair Croes, until you note a public bridleway signpost on your left hand side. Continue along the bridleway, which is bounded on both sides for a short distance before it runs into an open field. Keeping the field boundary on your left hand side continue along the field edge bridleway through the wooded area (please note that the surface of this section of path can be wet at times, so wear suitable footwear). As you come out of the wooded area follow the direction of the way-mark arrow and keeping the field edge on your left hand side continue along the bridleway to a point where you go through a small copse area onto a track that widens and terminates on the road.

Choice: At this point you can also take the Vale Millennium Trail which is waymarked.

To continue on the Bridgend Circular Walk cross the road and proceed straight ahead along the tarmac lane until you come to a ford. Use the stepping stones over the Afon Alun, then walk along the bridleway on your right hand side. Continue along the bridleway for a short distance, through a field gate and under the viaduct. Immediately after the railway viaduct turn left through the bridleway gate and follow the track for a short distance.

Keeping the fence line on your left hand side go up the steep embankment where you will see a way-mark post with the Bridgend Circular Walk logo in front of you (Note: this section of route is very steep). Approximately 30 metres up the steep embankment turn right where you will see a defined track: this section of the route is also quite steep so take care when walking.

Follow the route through the gorse and bracken until you come to the wide open track on top of the Old Castle Down Common. Turn right at this point and follow the well defined and waymarked bridleway until you get to a point where you will note an old dry stone wall. Proceed straight ahead with the wall on your left hand side until the wall ends. Turn left at this point and follow the well-defined path. Continue along the route until you come to a

property known as Brynawel House. The bridleway continues along a rough access track for a short distance until a point where you will note a wooden waymark post on your right hand side. Follow the direction of the arrow on the post and continue until you come to an opening where you will see a waymark post in front of you. At this point turn right and walk for a short distance until you come to the road that leads into the village of St. Brides Major.

To go into St. Brides Major turn left and go over the cattle grid. The village will have most of the facilities that you will need.

The parish Church of **St. Bride's Major (6)** was built in the 12th Century and is dedicated to St. Bride (an abbreviated form of St. Bridget) a 5th Century Irish Saint. The Church has many interesting features and is well worth a visit.



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The most interesting feature of the church is an incised sepulchral slab or coffin-lid beneath the altar where it was placed in 1854. The engraving on it shows Johan le Botiler (Butler) of Dunraven. On the North side of the church is a window containing a fine tomb chest (The Butler Tomb) which dates from around 1540. The Churchyard Cross rests on a pedestal on 5 steps, which are indented and worn, caused it is said, by pilgrims kneeling in prayer.

To continue on the Bridgend Circular Walk cross the road and follow the direction of the arrow on the signpost along the tarmac track which runs up an incline. When you get to the top of the track take the bridleway that is waymarked with the Bridgend Circular Walk logo across the Ogmores Down Common. Continue on the bridleway for a short distance until you come to an opening, at which point turn right and follow the route on the wide track in the direction of the wooden telegraph poles. Pant Quarry will be on your right hand side, it is fenced off and you will see notices saying 'Keep Out'. Continue along the wide track over the common. At this point the bridleway follows a section of what was an old Norman military road, Heol y Millwyr, (the road of the soldiers), which

was used by troops commuting to garrison Ogmores Castle below. In the other direction the road was probably used via the Croes Antoni to the Norman castle at Castle Upon-Alun. **Croes Antoni (7)** can be found just to the north west of St. Brides church.

The remains of this stone cross incorporate a cup shaped depression which used to be filled with holy water for use by pilgrims arriving at the Church of St. Brides.

Without deviating from the wide grass track continue straight ahead where you will note Southerndown Golf Course on your left hand side. Follow the telegraph poles (one of which has a Bridgend Circular Walk waymark on it) until the route becomes bounded on both sides. Continue to a point where there are two routes ahead of you and a field gate on your right hand side. Take the lower route, again following the line of telegraph poles. At this point if you look up to your right you will note the remains of the **Flemington Iron Age Fort (8)**, this is less well known than the one on the cliffs at Dunraven, and it occupies the high ground above the best water supply in the whole area.

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Go through the wooden field gate and follow the section of bridleway that is bounded on both sides by dry stone walls. Continue until you will come out on the road near the Schwyll Pumping Station. At this point turn left and follow the pavement.

Choice:

- If you wish you could visit **Ogmores Castle (9)** and Castle Tea Rooms. Ogmores Castle was built during the conquest of the South Wales Coast, the Normans built 3 Castles at Ogmores, Newcastle and Coity (see leaflet 2 for information on Coity Castle). William de Londres built Ogmores Castle as early as 1116 on the South bank of the Ewenny River where it commands a strategic position. The Castle was not completed in one period, one building was added in Tudor times, and was kept in repair until the 19th century as a court of justice, a prison and also to receive court fees, rents and other dues.

- Or spend some time at the ancient **Pelican Inn (10)** overlooking the castle.

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After visiting Ogmores Castle cross the River Ewenny via the stepping-stones to return to Merthyr Mawr. However, you must take care as the tides can be exceptionally dangerous as they change very quickly and you could be isolated on the wrong side of the river. Story has it that these stones were built for the convenience of a love stricken girl who lived in Ogmores Castle. Her lover lived across the river at Merthyr Mawr and their tryst was impeded by tides and floods. The stepping-stones enabled them to meet each other and they married in July 1233. The bridegroom was William de Breose.

- Ogmores Farm situated next to the Castle is one of the oldest established working farms in Glamorgan although the present farmhouse dates from the 17th Century a lease of the farm is known to one John Walsh as long ago as 1490.

Just before you get to a cattle grid cross the road you will note a Merthyr Mawr Coastal Path waymark arrow embedded on an old stone. Walk through the kissing gate along the tarmac footpath and over the bridge across the River Ewenny. From the bridge continue straight ahead across the field towards the stone stile heading towards the swing bridge. Go over the stone stile, turn right, across the swing bridge which spans the River Ogmores, you have now reached the car park in Merthyr Mawr and reached your destination of Merthyr Mawr Village.

Merthyr Mawr Village is an idyllic little settlement, as picturesque as they come, with an outstanding collection of Thatched Dwellings beautifully positioned around an old Village Green.

Thanks to the following for helping to either prepare the walk and text or for sponsoring the leaflet:



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Leaflet 3



BRIDGEND CIRCULAR WALK



13km (8 miles) 4 hours

At this point you can:

- Continue on the next section of the Bridgend Circular Walk (see leaflet 1)
- Or retrace your steps to Coychurch

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

The going is generally easy although a few sections of the route are steep and may also be wet in places. Remember to wear suitable clothes and good shoes/boots and take food and drink with you. Follow the Countryside Code and when you are on roads, keep to the right and make use of verges whenever you can.

It should be easy to follow the route using the map and instructions inside this leaflet. When walking the route try and look out for the Bridgend Circular Walk logo that will be situated on stiles, gates and posts along the route. Directional waymarks with yellow and blue arrows will assist you as to which direction to walk in once you are on a public footpath or bridleway. We also recommend you refer to the OS Explorer Map 151 Cardiff and Bridgend.

For further information about this walk, to pass on your comments and suggestions or to report any practical problems on footpaths in the Bridgend Area please contact the Rights of Way Section, Environmental and Planning Services Directorate, Morien House Bennett Street, Bridgend Industrial Estate, Bridgend, CF31 3SH (telephone 01656 642537 or 01656 642516). For any practical problems on the section of route in the Vale of Glamorgan area contact the Rights of Way Officer on 01446 704810.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

There are number of bus routes that link to this section of the Bridgend Circular Walk

Coychurch village has 3 regular bus services departing from Main Road 44, 62 and 244. The services operate every 15 minutes, daytime Monday to Saturday and travel to Bridgend via Brackla the Journey time is 12 minutes.

If you wish to get to or from St. Brides Major there are 2 services to chose from. The 145 - Bridgend and Llantwit Major via Ogmores-by-sea every hour in each direction, Monday to Saturday and 6 services

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on a Sunday. Please note; the 145 departs from outside the Farmers Arms PH. The 146 service travels between Bridgend and Cardiff Wales Airport 3 times a day, Monday to Saturday. The journey time from St. Brides Major to Bridgend is 16 minutes.

Corntown is linked to Bridgend and Cowbridge with the V4 service. There are 5 services in each direction, Monday to Saturday. Journey time to Bridgend and Cowbridge is 15 minutes.

Ewenny is serviced by bus services 145, 146 and V4. There is one bus service linking Treoes to Bridgend and Cowbridge. It operates 5 times a day, Monday to Saturday. Journey time to Bridgend is 10 minutes and to Cowbridge 30 minutes.

For further information on bus times and service numbers telephone Bridgend County Borough Council's, Public Transport Section on 01656 642559 or The Vale of Glamorgan Public Transport Section on 01446 704687 or the National Bus Enquiry number on 0870 6082608.

CAR PARKING

The car park at Merthyr Mawr is a rough surface situated on the bank of the River Ogmores near the swing bridge.

ACCOMMODATION

To make a reservation or to obtain information on accommodation contact one of the Heritage Coast Tourist Information Centres. These are at McArthur Glen Designer Outlet off Junction 36 of the M4 (telephone 01656 654906) and at John Street, Porthcawl (telephone 01656 786639) or Llantwit Major Visitor Centre (telephone 01446 796086).

For further general information about the Bridgend area you can contact us via e-mail at

tourism@bridgend.gov.uk

or for information on the Vale of Glamorgan area contact

tourism@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can visit us at

www.bridgend.gov.uk