

Llynfi Valley Walk 5

Up to 8 Km (5 miles) 3½ Hours

This leaflet describes a walk from Maesteg Station to Caerau through the Llynfi Valley countryside and requires you to make your own way back to your starting point. The route is approximately 8km (5 miles). The walk should take approximately 3 to 3½ hours to complete but you should allow a bit more time to enjoy the views of the countryside. The route uses a combination of maintainable highway, public footpaths and public bridleway.

For convenience the directions below are written with Maesteg Station as the starting point. You could, however, equally start from any point along the route, and if travelling in the opposite direction, simply reverse all directions. There is also a link to Llynfi Valley Walks 1 - 4 from here.

Leave Maesteg Station. Turn right onto Castle Street and then left onto Talbot Street. Follow Talbot Street to the junction with Llynfi Road.

1 **Maesteg** means Fair Fields in Welsh. There have been settlements in the Maesteg area for the past two thousand years. Maesteg was a rural village until the start of the 19th century when techniques developed during the Industrial Revolution enabled an Iron Works to be opened, and Maesteg expanded into the town that is present today.

Turn right on to Llynfi Road and follow the road to Maesteg Sports Centre

2 **The Old Parish Rugby Ground**, home of Maesteg Rugby Club, is adjacent to the walk at this point. Welsh Rugby Internationals of note from Maesteg include Gwyn Evans and J.J. Williams.

3 **The Sports Centre** stands on the site of the old Corn Stores and Iron Works, including a truncated iron furnace, dating back to 1828. It housed a beam engine (possibly two) and air pump to supply the furnace with blast. Both the furnace and blast engine house have been incorporated into the Sports Centre Building. The 'Corn Stores' (in which fodder for horses was stored) is now the entrance to the centre.

Pass in front of the sports centre and follow the pavement to the concrete steps on the left hand side. These steps will lead you to Maesteg Welfare Park which is locked between 9pm & 8am. To follow the alternative route between these times turn left in front of the sports centre and take Nantycrynwd Albert. At the end of the road turn right on to Court Road & then right on to Neath Road. You will now rejoin the main route. To continue on the walk through the park, at the top of the steps turn right. Follow the left hand path through the park to Neath Road.

Cross the road and continue down the hill to the junction with Salisbury Road and Vicarage Terrace. Follow Vicarage Terrace until you see a signed public footpath on the left hand side. It is a cobbled, steep path and may be slippery. Follow the footpath through a copse and into a field.

VIEWPOINT! From the field, views may be seen across Maesteg.

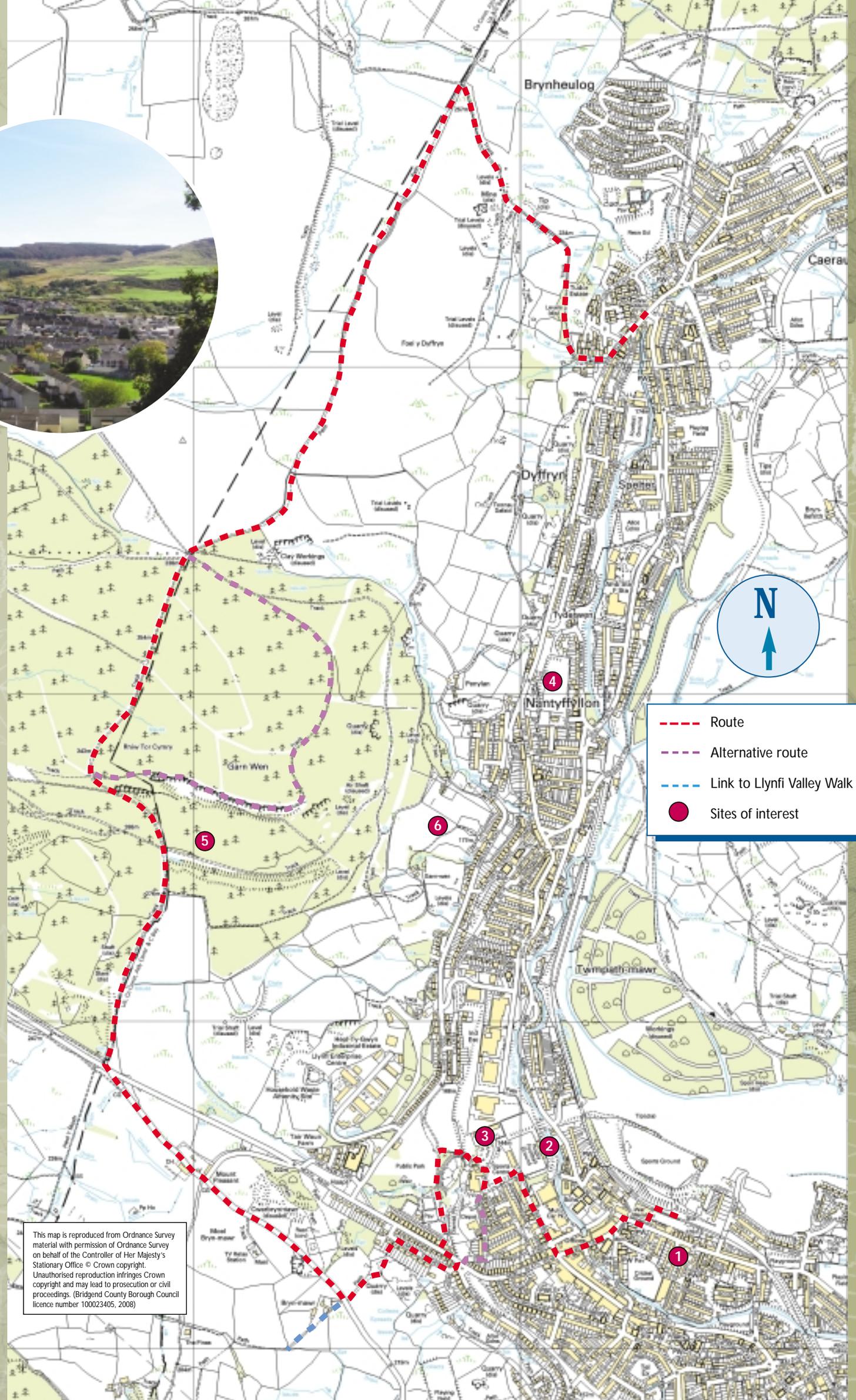
Turn right and follow the field edge path to a wooden stile, exiting onto Keir Hardie Road

CHOICE! To continue on this walk turn right. Alternatively, cross the road and take the signed public footpath ahead of you to link into the Llynfi Valley Walk 2.

Turn right and continue along Keir Hardie Road. Views may be seen on your right across Maesteg and Nantyyffyllon.

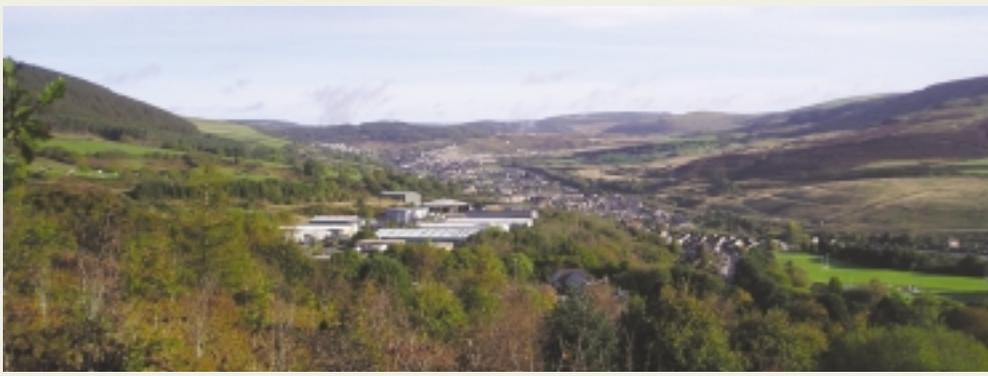


View of Caerau



- Route
- Alternative route
- Link to Llynfi Valley Walk 2
- Sites of interest

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View across Nantffynon

Sir John Bowring, later Governor of Hong Kong (1854-59), bought up the iron works in **4** Nantffyllon and Maesteg in 1843.

Financial disaster ensued and he left Maesteg in 1848. However, for a period during the 19th Century, Nantffyllon was called Bowrington. His

legacy can still be seen in Nantffyllon as John Street is named after him, and Charles Row is named after his brother.



Garn Wen forestry



View across to Swansea

As you continue along the road, you will see Garn Wen Plantation on your right and the Golf Links on your left. On a clear day views of the Singleton area of Swansea are visible, including Singleton Hospital.

Continue past the golf club house and along the lane, exiting on to Neath Road. Cross Neath Road and take the signed public footpath that is directly in front of you into the Garn Wen Forestry Commission woodland. Pass through a metal kissing gate. Continue along a flat, gravel surface track. Views can be seen across Maesteg on your right hand side.



View across Maesteg

Continue to follow the track to the cross roads of the forestry tracks. Continue straight ahead

following the waymarked path (Coed Morgannwg Way). The path becomes much steeper (1:4 gradient).

5 The Coed Morgannwg Way is a long distance path (36 miles) running from Margam Park to Dare Valley Country Park. It uses ancient Celtic Tracks and passes close to a number of Bronze and Iron Age settlements.

VIEWPOINT! views can be seen across to Swansea Bay and Mumbles. On a clear day the Cefn Bryn on the Gower can be seen. Views can also be seen across Maesteg as far as Aberthaw power station near Cardiff.

A picnic bench is situated at the top of the incline. The main route continues along the forestry track directly in front of you to the convergence with a number of other forestry tracks by a metal field gate and a wooden stile on your left hand side. However, you can use the route shown in purple on the map, but this may be wet at times. Climb over the stile and take the waymarked public bridleway on your right, keeping the field boundary on your right.



View across Swansea bay

VIEWPOINT! There are views over Bryn Heulog and the upper reaches of the Llynfi Valley on your right.

6 The Llynfi Valley played an important part in the industrial heritage of South Wales. Iron ore was mined from surrounding hillsides and there

were six collieries in the area, of which Coegnant was one, in existence from 1882 to 1981.

You will pass through two bridlegates before emerging out on to the open mountain side of Foel y Dyffryn. You will be able to see an old dry stone wall in the distance. Follow the waymarked field edge bridleway keeping firstly the fenceline on your left, and then the dry stone wall. Follow the bridleway for approximately 1.8 km (1.1 miles) around the contours of the hillside.



Drystone wall at Foel y Dyffryn

The track will begin to descend and you will start to see the first houses of Bryn Heulog. Continue until the bridleway meets a rough track on your right at the foot of the mountain. Take this track.

In this area you may see birds of prey such as Red Kites.

Follow the track to the farm yard of Dyffryn Farm. Exit the farm yard via a metal field gate and continue to follow the track until its termination on Dyffryn Road. Turn left and continue along the road to the Navigation Hotel Public House. At this point cross the road to the bus stop where you can catch the bus to Maesteg Bus Station, returning you to your starting point.

Advice and information

The going can be steep and may be wet and slippery in places. Remember to wear suitable clothes and good shoes/boots and take food and drink with you and be prepared to get fit! Always follow the Countryside Code. When you are walking on minor 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 Walk logo that will be situated on stiles, gates and posts along the route. Directional waymarks with arrows will assist you as to which direction to walk in once you are on a public right of way. We also recommend you refer to the OS Explorer Map 166 Rhondda and Merthyr Tydfil.

For further information about this walk, to pass on your comments and suggestions or to report any practical problems on any of the paths please contact the Rights of Way Section, Communities Directorate, Morien House Bennett Street, Bridgend Industrial Estate, Bridgend, CF31 3SH (Telephone 01656 642537 or 01656 642593) or by e-mail at rightsofway@bridgend.gov.uk



Wind farm

Countryside code

Respect
Protect
Enjoy



- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

Follow the Countryside Code wherever you go. You will get the best out of the countryside and help to maintain it now and for the future.

Public Transport

For further information on bus times and service numbers telephone Bridgend County Borough Council's, Public Transport Section on 01656 642559 or the Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 (www.traveline.info).

Car parking

There is parking provision at the following:

- On-street parking in Maesteg
- Car Park on Llynfi Road which is free and covered by CCTV 24 hours a day

Accommodation

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

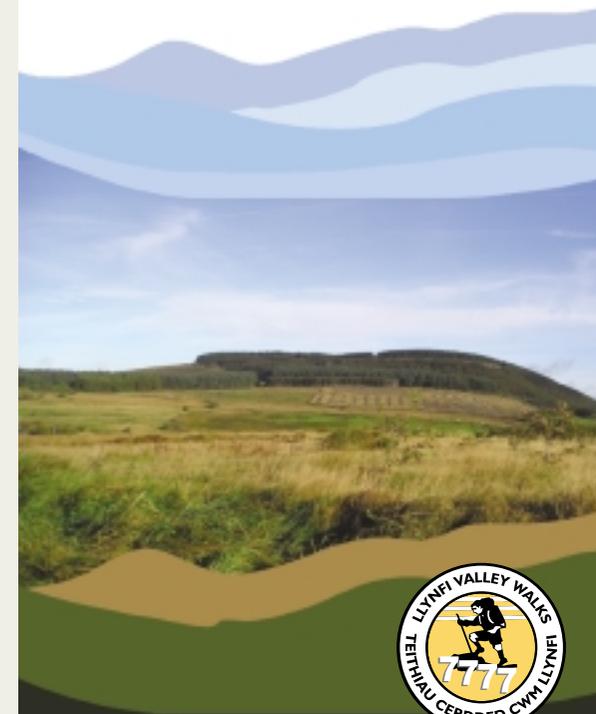
For further general information about the Bridgend area you can contact us via e-mail at tourism@bridgend.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can visit our website -which is at www.bridgend.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

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

- Countryside Council for Wales
- Bridgend County Borough Council
- Maesteg Town Council
- Barrie Evans
- Roy Meredith

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