

Garw Valley Walk 3

Up to 11 Km (7 miles)
4 to 4½ Hours

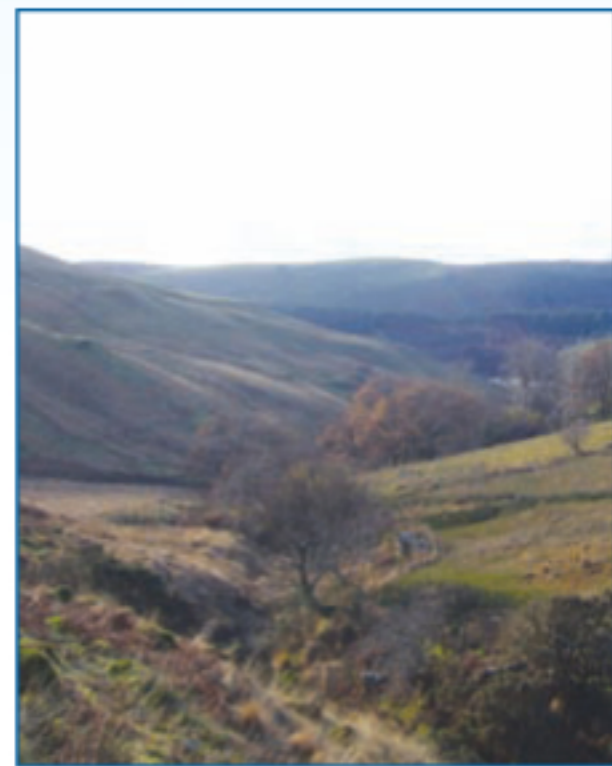
This leaflet describes a circular walk starting and ending at Parc Calon Lan, Blaengarw. On the way you will be exploring the exposed uplands of the Garw valley, the ridge of Mynydd Llangeinwyr and the secluded valley of Fforch-Wen. The whole route is approximately 11kms long taking about 4 hours to complete, allow a bit more time if you wish to rest and take in the wonderful views on offer. The route uses a combination of public footpaths, bridleways, the community route and maintainable highway.



View over to Ogmere Valley

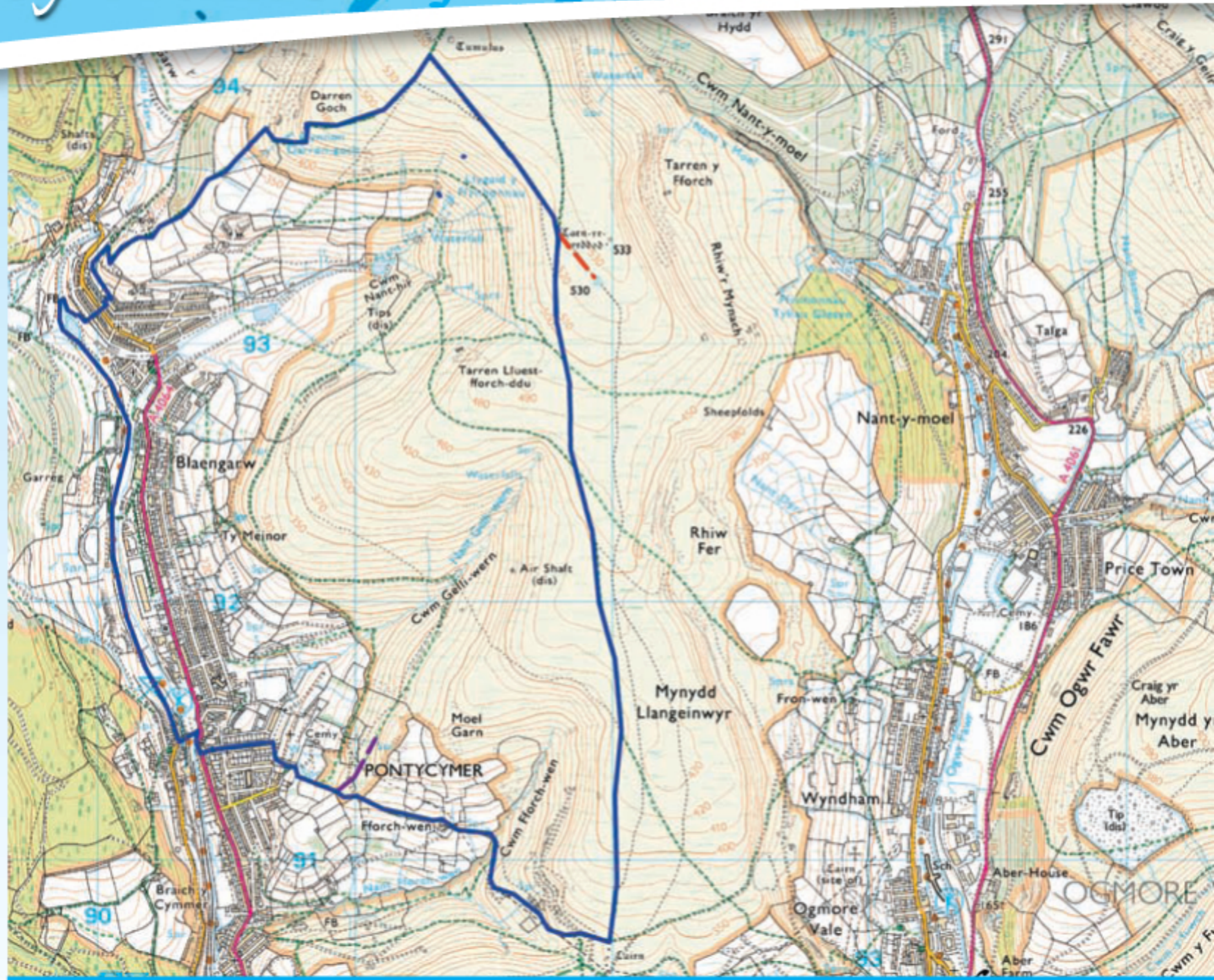
For convenience the directions below are written with Parc Calon Lan as the starting point. You could, however, equally start from any point along the route, and if travelling in the opposite direction, simply reverse all directions.

The Garw Valley is a former coal-mining community nestled in between the hillsides of the Ogmere & Llynfi Valleys. The valley comprises the highland area of Bridgend County Borough and stretches approximately 6 miles north to south rising steeply until it reaches Carn & Werfa mountains which dominate the northern region of the valley, historically referred to as the Rhyl valley but now more commonly known as Garw Fechan.



Pwll-y-Garn Forest

1 Parc Calon Lan. The park was developed in 2008 with financial assistance from the Garw Valley regeneration fund and opened that year by Huw Edwards of the BBC. The site on which the park stands was a former colliery washery. The name Calon Lan is taken from the famous Welsh hymn of



the same name that was written in Blaengarw in 1890 by Daniel James.

Leave Parc Calon Lan by heading out through the car park entrance then straight on uphill and through the street until you meet with Greenfield Terrace. Turn left and you will see a metal waymark post, follow the direction right and shortly take the bridleway on the left by the double posted pylon and go through the bridle gate.

This bridleway is well waymarked and steadily ascends to the top of the mountain and will be quite a strenuous climb in places.

Head up the bridleway following the fence on your left. Turn right at the waymark post and left at the next waymark post. Keep following this track which will pass through a bridle gate and conifer plantation to your left.

When you have reached a second bridle gate, head in a direction towards the cliff face in the hillside, cross the field towards the fence line and through another bridle gate.

Continue climbing keeping the fence to your left and through another bridle gate. Keep following the waymarkers directing you towards the top of the mountain.

2 Cwm Garw. A geological feature of the Garw Valley is the distinct three conjoined cirque glacier. The head of the cwm is shaped in the form of three bowl-shaped depressions which were carved out by a valley glacier through a process of ice thawing and re-freezing. The area you are now in is known locally as Darren Goch.

Nearing the top of the mountain a faint track runs along the top of the hill crossing over a fault line in the land, then continues ascending in a north-easterly direction. Follow the waymarkers until you reach a well defined track.

At the waymark post with a footpath sign turn right and head south along the well defined track where you will see a trig point on your left after approximately 1km.

VIEWPOINT! Fantastic views on offer from this point and whilst walking along the ridge. Panoramic views of South Wales from Cardiff to Gower and out to the Bristol Channel. If you have binoculars at hand you can just pick out the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

Close to the trig point you will see a stone cairn, named Cairn-yr-Hyddod. Walk to the cairn and you will be rewarded with a view towards the summits of the Brecon Beacons.

3 Cairn yr Hyddod. An ancient burial chamber or round cairn which dates back to the late stone age/ early bronze age. Its purpose is thought to be part of religious ceremonies or rituals that relate to burying the dead. The cairn has been much disturbed by small casual excavations and has been built up with piles of stone.

Continue south following the track along the top of the ridge, known as Mynydd Llangeinwyr, for about 3 kms.



The Red Kite