



Summary

A walk through woods and along a ridge, with views to West Gwent and Mynydd Maen in the distance and glimpses of the Usk below.

Distance: 2 1/2 miles

Time: 2 hours

Maps: OS Map 152 Newport & Pontypool

Start at: Llanbadoc Island car park, behind St Madoc's Church. OS Grid 376001

Terrain: Woodland and fields

Follow the Country Code

Follow the country code

Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work

Guard against all risk of fire

Fasten all gates

Keep your dogs under close control

Keep to public paths across farmland

Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls

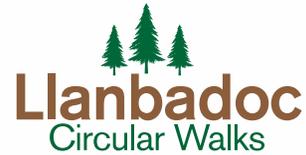
Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone

Help to keep all water clean

Protect wildlife, plants and trees

Take special care on country roads

Make no unnecessary noise



Any comments about this walk and leaflet would very much be appreciated by the Llanbadoc Community Council

www.llanbadoc.org

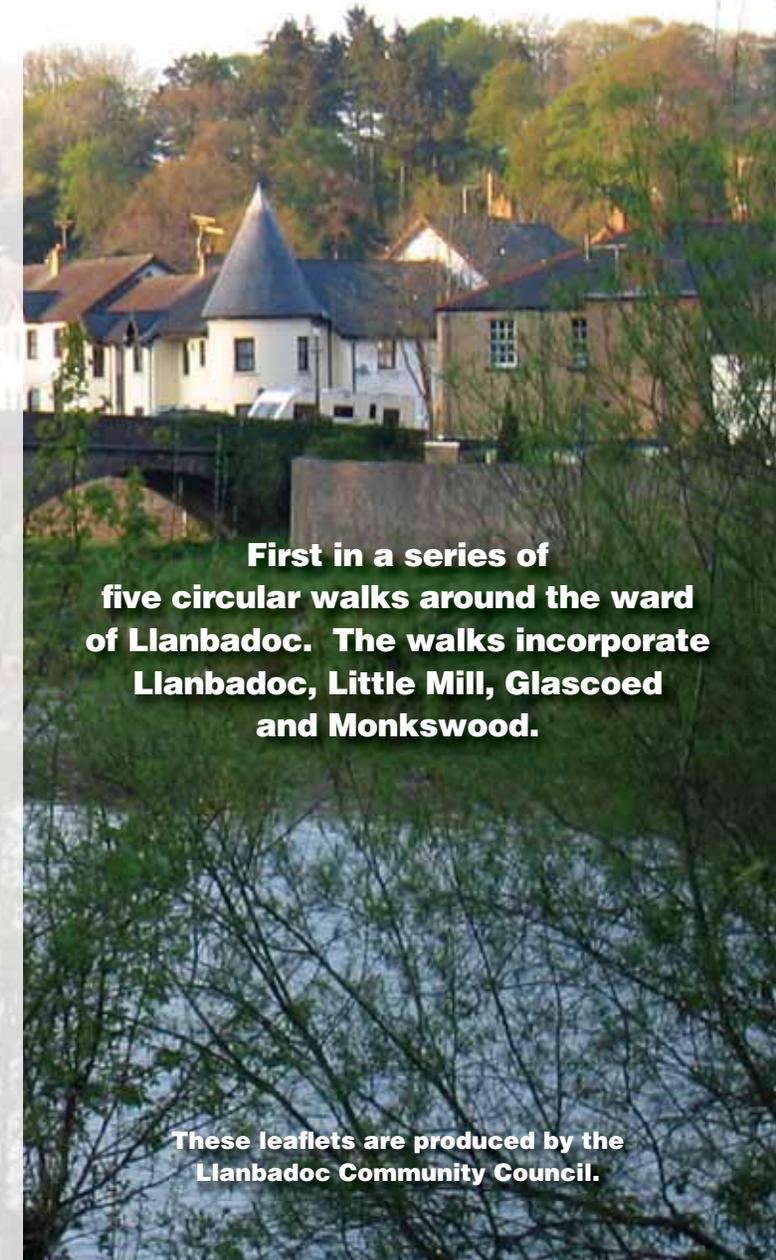
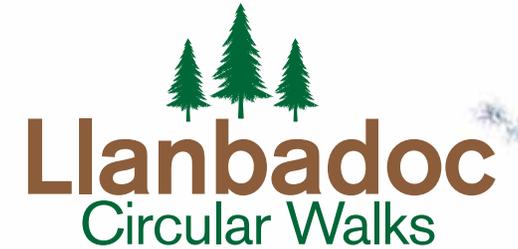
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The council would like to thank local farmers and landowners for their co-operation.



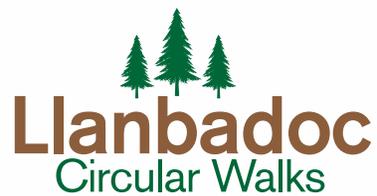
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First in a series of five circular walks around the ward of Llanbadoc. The walks incorporate Llanbadoc, Little Mill, Glascoed and Monkswood.

These leaflets are produced by the Llanbadoc Community Council.



Llanbadoc Circular Walks

Llanbadoc and St Madocs Church

The church belonged to the nuns of Usk Priory. Today only the tower, a 13th century chancel and piscina survive. The north aisle was added and much of the church remodelled in the 1870s. The Bell Inn, recalling a church bell that also gave its name to Bell Pool in the nearby River Usk, stood on the side of the church until the realignment of the road in the 1930s. A second pub, The Bridge, on the southern corner of the lane to Coed-y-Paen was converted to a private house in the 1950s.

Edward Trelawny who once lived in Twyn Bell grew the majestic cedars in the churchyard from seed. He brought the seeds from the Protestant cemetery in Rome, and they were germinated and planted in the neighbourhood.

Walk up to the main road and turn left along the pavement. Approximately 60m along the road follow the footpath sign, cross the road and take the first right at the end of the farm buildings. Follow the path around to the right, then back to the left towards the houses and begin to climb. As you reach the end of the track follow the steep wooded path and the waymarks towards Pant-y-Gwaw Wood.

As the path levels out, to your left you will see the roof of Ty Mawr Hill Farm and the Usk Valley, with Wentwood Forest in the background.

Over the next stile follow the old track, reputedly a Roman Road, to the brow of the hill where you have idyllic views of typical East Gwent countryside. Nestling amongst the trees to the south is Cilfeigan bungalow. Looking ahead, the Iron Age hill fort of Twm Barlwm can just be made out on the far side of Cwmbbran.

Follow the waymarks to a grass field with the coniferous wood on your left. Bear right over the hill to the Usk / Coed-y-Paen road.

Go through the gate onto the road, turn right for a short distance and enter the field on the left and head for the copse at the bottom right hand corner of the field. Follow the waymarks over the brook and across the driveway, which leads to Cefn Ila Farm (now part of the Usk College Estate).

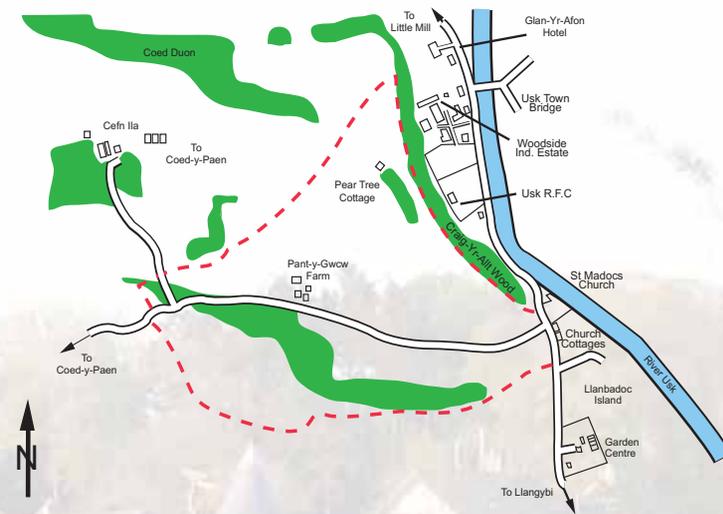
Next to Cefn Ila Farm buildings is the site of the substantial country house which for several years in the mid 19th century was the home of Edward Trelawny, the writer, and friend of Byron and Shelley.

Whilst living here Trelawny wrote his reminiscences of adventures with Shelley and Byron in Greece. The property, which housed Trelawny's private library of over 1,000 volumes, was rebuilt in the 1860s. It was converted into a convalescent home in 1925 through a donation to the Pontypool and District Hospital by the local solicitor Walter Gustard, as a memorial to, his American wife, Kate.

Many local residents knew Cefn Ila as their birthplace, as the house served as a maternity hospital after World War II until it was closed in the early 1970s. The property remained unused for sometime but was burned down in a mysterious fire, said by some to have been started by runaways from the nearby Borstal. The house has subsequently been razed to the ground, but the vestiges of its impressive gardens, including several large monkey puzzle trees, remain.

After crossing the road, cross a field and over the stile. The path then follows the lower side of a copse. Lying in the bottom of the valley is Pant-y-Gwaw Farm. The waymarked route takes you past a water pit on the right. This is one of the many ways in which farmers are avoiding pollution of waterways. Foul water is pumped from the farm buildings and allowed to percolate through the rock strata avoiding pollution. Continue through two more fields, and as you follow the marked route, to the right is the Pear Tree Cottage.

After passing through two gateways the broad vista of the Vale of Usk appears. On the flat Vale can just be seen a tower, the remains of Llancayo Windmill (now restored), the sails and workings of which were destroyed by fire early this century. To the north west, to the north of Abergavenny, is the mysterious Skirrid Fawr. Anti-clockwise to the north west, over the tree line, is the Suget Loaf to the West of Abergavenny.



Over the brow of the hill brings into view historic Usk, nesting in the valley bottom. Head for the electricity poles to give a choice of directions. Down the scarp slope will bring you to Usk Town Bridge, but our route goes right, along the top of the slope still in the field, with views, between the trees, of the town of Usk.

The waymarked route eventually leads past Twyn Bell where Edward Trelawny came to live in the 1840s. He first purchased land high above Llanbadoc Church and built The Cot, also known as The Prospect and now called Twyn Bell. The house lies by the remains of ramparts and ditches of an early promontory camp. The Trelawny family, who scandalised locals with odd habits including nude bathing in the River Usk, moved into Cefn Ila in 1846.

At the top of the lane, watch the waymarks on the left guiding you back to the car park. Take extreme care crossing this busy main road.

Before you leave look for the Alfred Russell Wallace memorial situated near the lychgate of the Church. If you drive back towards Usk the first building on the left is Kensington Cottage which once served as a school house. In the 1820's it was Wallace's birthplace and childhood home and in his memoirs he tells of catching lampreys in the river Usk to fry for breakfast. A.R. Wallace and Charles Darwin were the co-founders of the Theory of Evolution and in 1858, on Darwin's insistence, presented a joint paper on their findings to the prestigious Linnean Society.