

Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust

Ymddiriedolaeth Treftadaeth Abaty Cwmhir

# Grand Heritage Community Walk

## Heritage in the village and surrounding countryside



**Start:** Start at the notice board next to the village green.

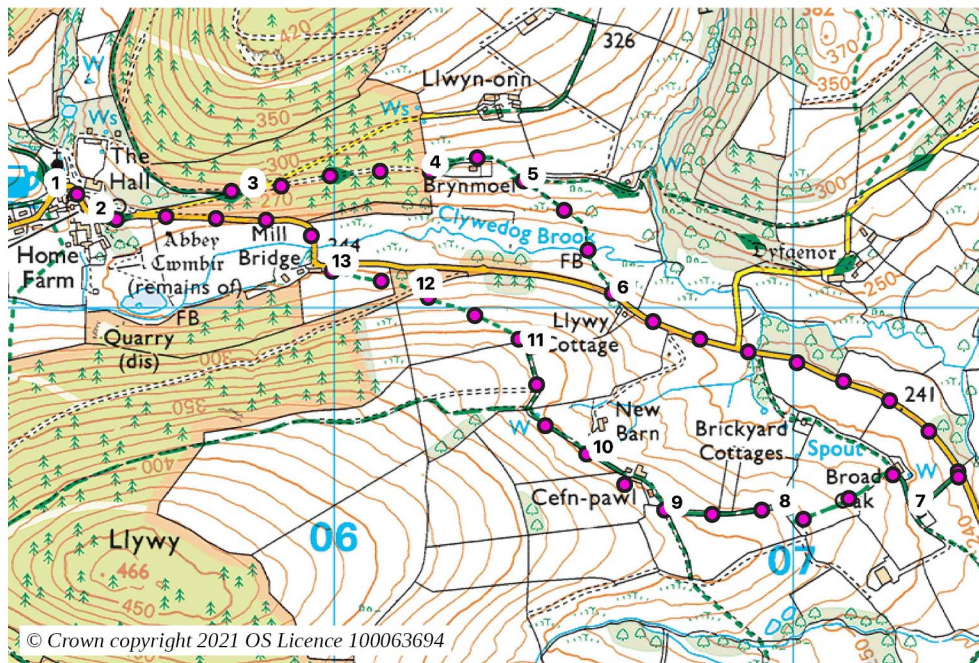


(what3words = satin.foster.directors)

**Difficulty:** Moderate.

**Distance:** 5.64 kilometers 3.5 miles.

**Duration:** 2 hours approximately.



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**1.** From the village green and with the notice board behind you, take the village road walking past the petrol pump, Cross Cottage and St Mary's Church on your left and The Happy Union on your right. Keep following the village road going past Home Farm on your right.

If you wish to visit the Abbey Ruin walk through Home Farm following the signs to Cwmhir Abbey.

**2.** Continue along the road with the Hall on your left. Take care as this is a blind corner. The Hall is no longer open to the public, but the building can be clearly seen through the gates. Take the minor road uphill signposted Valley View Barn and Garden Cottage.

**You will find more information on the buildings in the village in the Village Community Heritage Walk route description.**

**3.** A short way up this track the road splits into three. Take the right hand track to The Old Vicarage waymarked Glyndŵr's Way.

**4.** Follow this road up to the entrance pillars of the Old Vicarage. (Do not go through these gates). Go through the five bar gate on your left and follow the waymarked Glyndwr's Way, keeping the hedge on your right until you reach the corner of the hedge. At the corner head towards the pedestrian gate in the fence line diagonally to the right.

**The Old Vicarage was built in the 1890's by the Philips family to serve as the vicarage for the parish of Abbeycwmhir. One of Philip's daughters, Doris, married the Rev. Ernest Hermitage Day who was appointed as vicar of Abbeycwmhir. Their son, George Francis, was killed in the first World War. His final resting place remains unknown. He is commemorated on the war memorial at Thiepval on the Somme and in St. Mary's Church, Abbeycwmhir. The Old Vicarage is also known as Brynmoel.**

**5.** From the pedestrian gate make your way downwards in a leftwards direction paralleling the power lines. You will see a boardwalk and a wooden bridge. Go over the bridge and steadily make your way up towards the road keeping an eye out for a gate (slightly to your left and sited by a telegraph pole).

**6.** Go through the gate and turn left onto the main village road. Take care when walking along the road. Follow the village road ignoring the turning to the left. The second turning on the right gives you a good view of Brickyard Cottages, but stay on the village road and take the next turning on the right by the red letter box. This track leads to Broad Oak, the Baptist Chapel site and Cefn Pawl Graveyard. You can visit the graveyard.

**The Brickyard. Until the railway reached Penybont in the early 1860's the estate had to be self-sufficient as far as possible. This included producing building materials and other items difficult to move by carting. Bricks were made by putting clay into moulds and then firing them in a kiln. The census shows that the workers there were not local people. Since the closure of the brickyard in the 1870's the building has been made into two cottages.**

**The Baptist Chapel was built through the efforts of the Pugh family of Cefn Pawl. They wanted a chapel**

near to Abbey Cwmhir as the nearest chapel was then over four miles away. Many in the farming community preferred the less formal atmosphere of the non-conformist churches. Although the squire was a strong Anglican, he gave the land for the chapel which was completed in 1885 at a cost of £600, raised by the Pugh family and chapel members. Towards the end of the 20th Century the dwindling congregation could no longer afford to maintain the church and it closed. The site and burial ground is now maintained by a Trust.

**7.** At the top of this lane turn right onto the driveway of Broad Oak (it is a Public Right of Way). At the top of the driveway on the left you will find a pedestrian gate. Go through this gate and follow the hedge line on the left. Follow the fence line all the way round to the top right corner and the third gate.

**8.** Go through this gate into Green Lane.

**The Green Lane is part of an ancient route which linked the abbey with the monk's Rhydney Grange, a short distance away at Nantmel.**

**9.** At the top of Green Lane go through a farm gate. Ignore two gates on the left and head towards the gate to the left of the barn, slightly uphill. This section around Cefn Pawl Farmhouse is a Permissive Path. Go through this gate and head slightly uphill and then follow the right hand fence line towards a 7 bar gate. Go through this gate, keeping the fence on your right, head downhill. Duck under trees from an old hedge and head to a gate in the fence on the right. Go through this gate.

**Cefn Pawl Farm is one of the oldest farms in the area, from which the local Township, an old administrative unit from the medieval period, takes its name. Cefn Pawl was a monastic farm. The farm buildings seen today date from the middle of the 19th Century when the farm was rebuilt by the Philips Estate.**

**One local story tells of an attempted murder taking place here about a hundred years ago, the result of an argument between two of the farm hands. The offender ran away but was later caught and brought back to face justice. The farmhouse and buildings are now disused.**

**10.** Turn left and follow the track and fence line and go through a farm gate and turn right. Then follow the fence line on the right, ignoring the first gate, and go through the next farm gate.

**11.** Continue steadily downhill after a few minutes you will see the village road and the village ahead, bear left towards the village. At the clump of trees pass the spring head and head towards the stile on the fence next to the track.

**12.** Go over the stile and cross the track to a narrow track leading to another stile. Go over this second stile and head across the field towards the buildings.

**13.** Exit through the farm gate and turn left onto village road. Trademen's Row is on your left.

**The row of cottages, built by Thomas Wilson in 1830, once contained the estate smithy, the cordwainer, the miller and workshops for the carpenter, as well as the parish 'poor house'. The mill, which was sited at the end of the enclosure was demolished in 1996.**

**The wooden building to the left of the cottages was the Old Vicarage garage. It was built to house the vicar's car although the Vicarage is some distance up the hill. It was put there at a time when the road had a loose surface and cars were bad at going uphill and had poor brakes coming down hills.**

Follow the main village road and go across Mill Bridge and head back towards the village along the road.

Care should be taken when walking in the countryside. Follow the Countryside Code, keep dogs on a lead, especially near grazing stock and respect people's property and privacy. Our walks are steep and uneven in places and these can become challenging as a result of inclement weather. Forestry operations periodically take place in woodlands so please observe all forestry notices. It is advised that appropriate footwear and clothing are worn on our walks and that consideration is always given to matters of safety.

Whilst the Trust has researched all the routes for these guides, no responsibility can be accepted for any unforeseen circumstances encountered. We would however appreciate any information regarding material changes or any problems encountered. [cwmhirabbey@gmail.com](mailto:cwmhirabbey@gmail.com)

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Looking West towards the village