

Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust

Ymddiriedolaeth Treftadaeth Abaty Cwmhir

Llywy Hill Community Heritage Walk

Farmland, woodland and spectacular views of the village of Abbeycwmhir



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

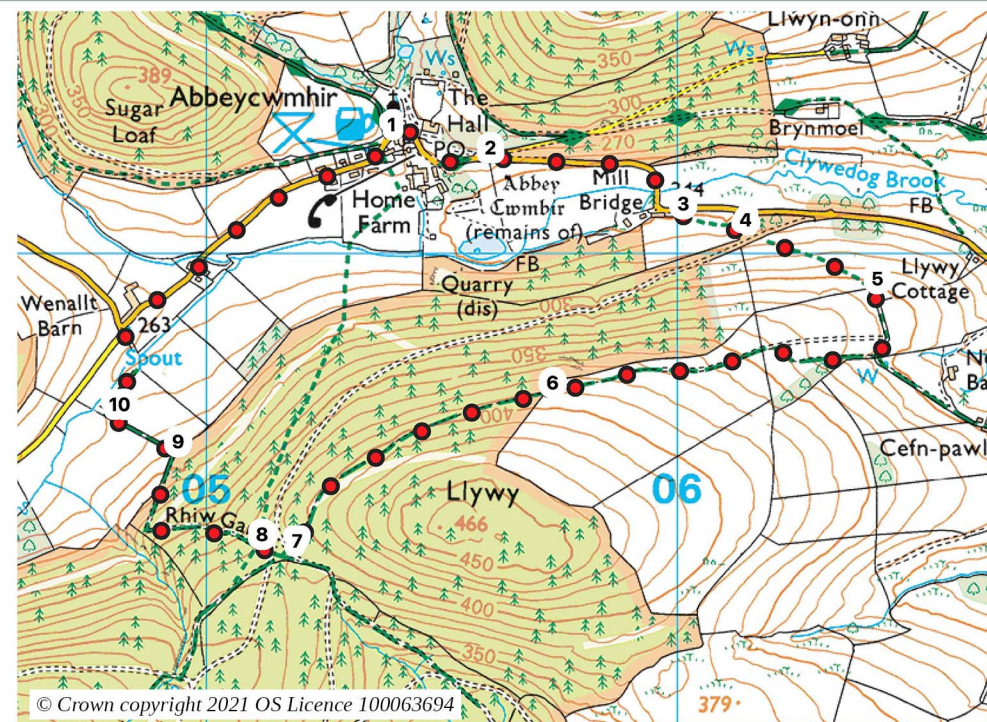


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Difficulty: Moderate.

Distance: 4.5 kilometres 2.8 miles.

Duration: 1.5 hours



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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.

You will find more information on the village heritage in the Village Community Walk Description.

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. Continue along the main village road going out of the village and cross Mill Bridge.

The road up the valley was built in 1830 by Thomas Wilson and John Severn (Squire of the adjacent Penybont Estate). The bridges were originally stone built. In the early 1930's, the Mill Bridge was swept away when the dam of the monk's fish pool, about 2 miles upstream burst, releasing thousands of gallons of water into the river. No lives were lost and damage to property was small. Both the Devannor Bridge and the Cuckoo Bridge further downstream were destroyed. The bridges you see today are modern concrete constructions.

You will see Tradesmen's Row on your right.

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. A drying kiln was situated near the mill.

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

3. Just after Tradesmen's Row you will see the wooden building and a five bar gate on the right. Go through this gate into the field and head up the field. You will pass a borehole/spring, and head towards a stile that can be found slightly down from the corner of the field (no dog stile).

4. Go over the stile continuing on the path until you meet the forest road. Cross over this road and head towards another stile in the field boundary fence ahead. Go over this stile and continue diagonally uphill. You will pass through a line of small trees. If the ground is too wet go round the top of the trees and continue on.

5. When you meet the corner of a fence line at the top of this steep hill, continue ahead with the fence line on your right to meet a metal field gate. Go through this gate and continue on with boundary hedge on your left.



View to the North

Do not take the gravel path to the right but continue ahead in the direction of the farm buildings and another metal farm gate. **Do not go through the gate**, but turn right going uphill keeping the fence line on your left.

Continue going uphill and straight ahead until you see a fence. Look out for a metal gate in this fence line to your right. Head towards this gate. Go through this gate and continue following the gravel path until it disappears going in the same direction. Keep going straight on until you reach the end of the field.

6. You will see a bridleway gate straight ahead, go through and proceed along the path between small trees. There are splendid views of Abbeycwmhir Village from this track. You can see The Hall and its gardens and St. Mary's Church to the right.

The Hall: In the 1820's Thomas Wilson built a house on the site of the building we see today. He cleared the abbey grounds to create a romantic ruin. Good progress was being made with the house and redeveloping the farms when Wilson went bankrupt. Wilson's house is hidden in the core of the present house which was much enlarged by the Philips in the 1860's. Francis Philips was a cotton mill owner and in 1837 he acquired 3,500 acres of land which was for sale around Abbeycwmhir.



View of Abbeycwmhir

St. Mary's Church was built by the Philips family in 1866 and is modelled on a Gothic style church in Brittany. The stained glass windows are by the 19th Century glass artists Heaton, Butler and Bayne and by Clayton and Bell. The rose window is said to be the best in Radnorshire. The church interior was designed to reflect the new style of Anglican worship adopted by the Victorians. On each side of the churchyard there is a large, ancient yew tree, indicating a sacred site that has been used for a long time.

The trees are thought to be more than 1100 years old.

7. You will meet a forestry road, turn left towards waymarker post and then turn right onto short path. Follow this to a second waymarker post and another forestry road, Cross over to a grass track straight ahead. Take this grass track downhill.

8. Almost immediately the track splits into two. Avoid the track to the right and proceed straight ahead. Continue straight ahead avoiding the crossing track which leads off to the right and left. This is Rhiw Gam. Continue down this grassy path which turns to the right near the edge of the forest.

Rhiw Gam is part of an ancient routeway which linked Abbeycwmhir with Nantmel. It fed into a much wider network of tracks which spread out in all directions.

9. At the edge of the forest the path swings round to the left where there is a 5 bar metal gate. Go through this gate and continue downhill with the hedge and fence line on your right.

10. At the bottom of this track you will meet another gate, go through and follow the track to the right. At the next 7-bar metal gate, go through and turn left where the track crosses the brook. At the end of this track go through the next field gate to meet the road. The Wenallt Barn can be seen on the opposite side of the road. Turn right here and continue through the village back to the start.

Wenallt Barn, rebuilt in 1919, used to be a small farmstead with buildings round three sides of a square yard. Aerial photographs of "parchmarks" in dry summers have indicated possible buried structures in this area. Wenallt Barn is thought to be on or near the location of a monastic building, possibly a farm or watermill.



Looking East towards Lower Cwm Hir

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

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