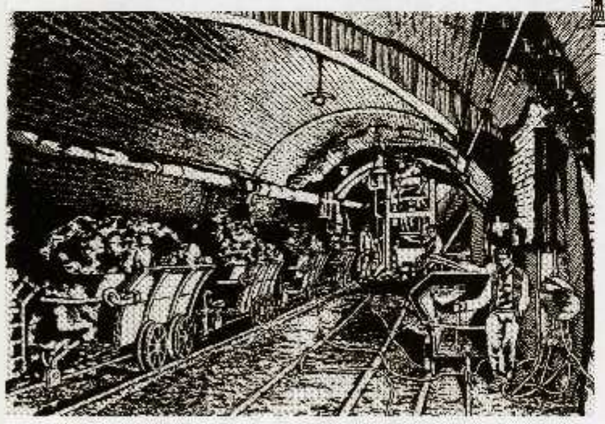
When the Dowlais Iron Company exhausted coal seams in their locality they sank deeper mines further south, (eg Bedlinog, Nantwen, Fochriw and Cwm Bargoed) to supply the ironworks and increasingly for sale to other companies.

The village of Bedlinog was built to house the workers of the new mines.

The terrible social problems associated with the rapid population increase (see Viaduct Trail, Cefn Coed) were avoided in Bedlinog because it was planned with sewage and clean water systems in mind.

Recession in 1920/30's, decline in the demand for coal and depletion of seams resulted in the Bedlinog pits closing in 1924. Bedlinog Drift remained open until 1956. Most miners went to work in the other, newer local pits particularly Taff Merthyr Colliery and Deep Navigation in Treharris (deepest in South Wales).

In the mid 1930's following disputes between two rival unions, South Wales Miners Federation and Spencer Union, there were strikes and an alleged riot in Bedlinog which resulted in 52 men and women receiving prison sentences.



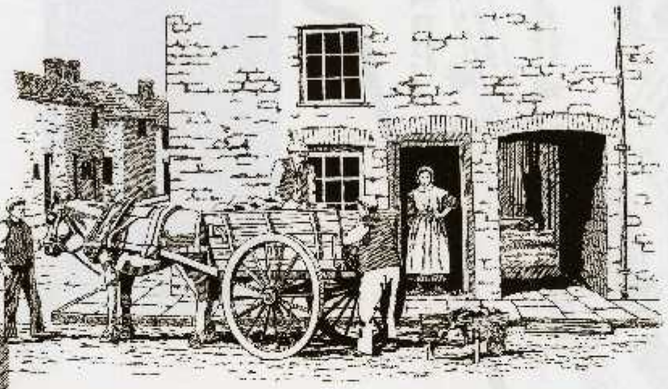
Colliery bottom level, typical of pits in the area mid to late 1800's

Lefel ar waelod y lofa, nodweddiadol o lofeydd yn yr ardal, canol i ddiwedd y 1800au.

The close community of Bedlinog was typical of the South Wales valleys mining areas. National economic recessions and strikes disrupted the community. World War 2 ended the recession but changed the community because men left to join the Forces, there was an influx of city evacuees and women worked in factories for the first time.

GWILYM TRAIL

BEDLINOG



A delivery of coal to a miner's cottage. *Mynd â glo i fwthyn glowr.*

FACTFILE / FFEIL FFEITHIAU

- Above and around Bedlinog are many ancient burial places over 3,000 years old and a Roman road meets the camp at Gelligaer.
- Prior to the sinking of Bedlinog pits the small hill farming community in the area was known as Cwmfelin (the area around the current village square).
- Birthplace of Reverend Gwilym Davies 1875, founder of "Peace Messages of Children of Wales to Children of the World" in 1922. 18th May has become recognised worldwide as International Goodwill Day.
- Uwchben Bedlinog ac o gwmpas mae yna nifer o gladdfeydd o Oes yr Haearn dros 3,000 o flynyddoedd oed, ac mae ffordd Rufeinig yn cyrraedd y gwersyll yng Ngelli-gaer.
- Cyn cloddio gweithfeydd Bedlinog, gelwid y gymuned fermio fach leol yn yr ardal yn Gwmfelin (yr ardal o gwmpas sgwâr y pentref).
- Man geni'r Parchedig Gwilym Davies 1875, sefydlydd "Negas Heddwch Plant Cymru i Blant y Byd" ym 1922. Caiff 18 Mai ei gydnabod ar hyd a lled y byd fel Diwrnod Rhyngwladol Ewyllys Da.

Pan ddisbyddwyd y glo yn y gwythiennau lleol gan Gwmni Haearn Dowlais, dechreuwyd agor gweithfeydd dyfnach tua'r de, e.e. Bedlinog, Nant-wen, Fochriw a Chwm Bargod, i gyflenwi'r gweithfeydd haearn ac yn gynyddol ei werthu i gwmnïau craill.

Working the coalface was difficult, where tunnels through the seams of coal were often no deeper than 36cms.

Roedd gweithio'r ffas lo yn waith anodd, a ni fyddai'r twneli drwy'r gwythiennau'n aml yn ddyfnach na 36cm.

Codwyd pentref Bedlinog ar gyfer gweithwyr y gweithfeydd glo newydd hynny.

Cafodd problemau cymdeithasol dychrynllyd a oedd yn gysylltiedig â chynnydd cyflym yn y boblogaeth (gweler Llwybr Bucket Town, Cefn-Coed) eu hosgoi ym Medlinog gan fod y lle wedi ei gynllunio gyda systemau carthffosiaeth a dŵr glân.

Golygodd y dirwasgiad yn y 1920au a'r 1930au, y dirywiad yn y galw am lo a'r ffaith fod y gwythiennau wedi dod i ben fod gweithfeydd glo Bedlinog wedi cau ym 1924. Parhaodd Gwaith Drifft Bedlinog ar agor tan 1956. Aeth y rhan fwyaf o'r glowyr i weithio yn y gweithfeydd eraill mwy newydd lleol gerllaw, yn cnwedig Gwaith Glo Taf Merthyr a Deep Navigation yn Nhreharris (y dyfnaf yn Ne Cymru).

Yn y 1930au ar ôl anghydfodau rhwng dau undeb, Ffederasiwn Glowyr De Cymru ac Undeb Spencer, cafwyd streiciau a gwrthryfel honedig ym Medlinog, a olygodd fod 52 o ddynion a merched wedi eu carcharu.

Roedd cymuned agos Bedlinog yn nodweddiadol o gymoedd glofaol De Cymru. Byddai dirwasgiadau economaidd cenedlaethol a streiciau'n tarfu ar y gymuned. Daeth yr ail ryfel byd â diwedd i'r dirwasgiad, ond

newidiodd y gymuned gan fod y dynion wedi gadael i ymuno â'r Lluoedd Arfog. Cafwyd llif o fewnfudwyr o'r dinasoedd, a dechreuodd merched fynd i weithio mewn ffatrioedd am y tro cyntaf.

QUOTES: ALL PREPARED FROM A REPORT BY ALUN MORGAN MA, MERTHYR EXPRESS, AUGUST 1974

I GYD WEDI EU PARATOI O ADRODDIAD GAN ALUN MORGAN MA, MERTHYR EXPRESS, AWST 1974

"At one time there were easily 250 policemen here, from Liverpool, Bristol and around here, apart from Merthyr Borough. Merthyr Borough would not send a single policeman there".

"There were two unions. And we had to join the union the bosses wanted us to join ... work was very scarce and we had been so long unemployed ... that we were in a way practically forced to join the union that we did not want to. The majority, I believe, of the men were forced to join that union, otherwise you could not get the work there (Taff Merthyr)".

"We were all like one big happy family...any trouble with any of us and we would all go to see what we could do to help one another. But once that strike came it ruined everything".

CHILDREN / PLANT:

Coal was not only used to heat houses but also to make steam which powered engines and machines. When the coal found on the surface ran out, underground mines were dug to get more coal.

Underground mines, such as Bedlinog, were very dangerous places to work. The tunnels sometimes collapsed or poisonous gases escaped which stopped workers breathing or even exploded. They were particularly dangerous places for children to work.

The mineowner saved money by employing children, because lower wages could be paid to them.

Dyddai glo'n cael ei ddefnyddio nid yn unig i gynhesu cartrefi, ond hefyd i greithrestin ager i yrru peiriannau. Pan ddiodd y glo ar yr wyneb i ben, cloddi gwythiennau o dan y ddaear ei cloddio i gael rhagor o lo.

Roedd gwaithfeydd o dan y ddaear, fel yw Medlinog, yn lleoedd peryglus iawn i weithio. Weithiau byddai'r mewnfa'n disgyn neu nwyon peryglus yn ffoimio ran atal y gwythiennau rhag cyllu ymlaen, neu hyd yn oed yn ffrwydro. Roeddem ohw'n bennau ifanenig o beryglus i blant i weithio.

Byddai perchennog y gwaith ido'n ambed aman drwy gyfrwy plant, oherwydd gellid rhu cyllogen is ddrên ohw.

Un o'r rasaon y byddai'n rhaid i blant ee gymeud oedd dal drysau'n agored i adael awyr i mewn i'r rwnel er mwyn i'r glowyr allu anadlu. Roedd hanno'n daeg arwydus ohenyddd byddai'r plant yn ond yn gorfod eistedd lyd ar 10 awr neu rayor mewn tywyllwch dwyr yn y gwaith oer, gwlyb a oedd fel rhew yn llawn llygod.

This project has been sponsored by
Noddwyd y cynllun hwn gan

Produced by /
Cynhyrchwyd gan
Groundwork Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff at Merthyr Tydfil Heritage Trust, Pontsticill Lido Heritage Centre, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1AG

THIS LEAFLET IS ONE OF A SERIES OF 10 HISTORICAL WALK LEAFLETS IN THE MERTHYR COUNTY BOROUGH.

MAE'R DAFLEN HON YN UN O CYFRES O 10 O DAFLENNI AR DEITHIAU CERDDED HANESYDDOL YM MWRDEISTREF SIROL MERTHYR.

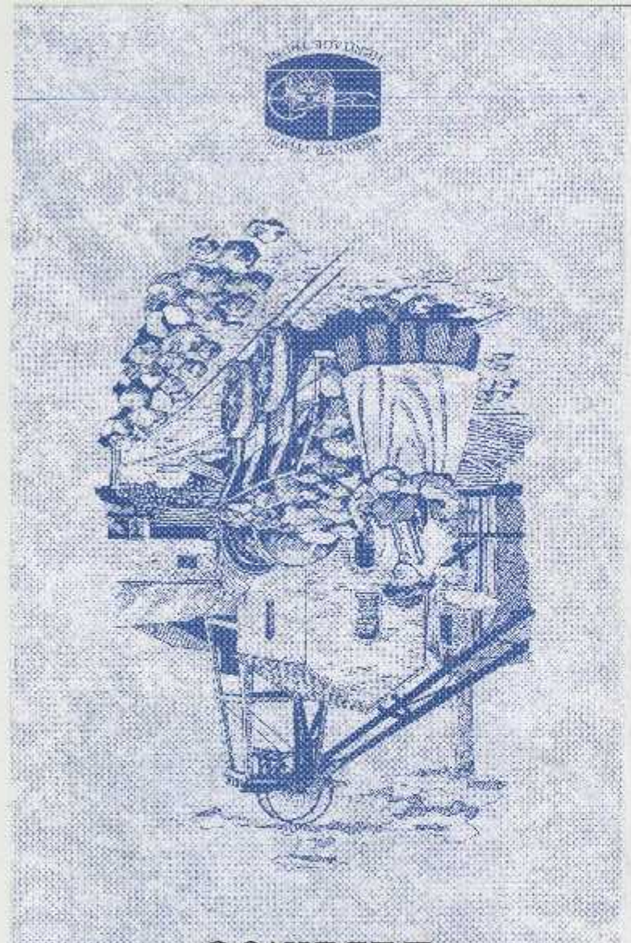
Gellir cael rhagor o wybodaeth hanesyddol o:

Llyfrau	**Merthyr Tydfil**	01685 723357
Llyfrgelloedd	**Dowlais**	01685 723351
	Treharris	01443 410317
Amgueddfa	**Cyfarthfa Castle Museum**	01685 723112
	Amgueddfa Castell Cyfarthfa	
Amgueddfeydd Sirol	**Merthyr Tydfil Historical Society**	
	Cymdeithas Hanesyddol Merthyr Tudfil	Mr. T.W. Hollins, 52 Chester Close, Hedgerow, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 1SW

(Provided a sense of place on the geology, social, natural history of the area considered or described.)

(Darparu ymdeimlad cyffredinol o'r ardal o safbwynt daeareg, hanes cymdeithasol, hanes naturiol y rhan dan sylw neu'r ardal a ddisgrifir.)

Merthyr Tydfil & District Naturalists Society
Cymdeithas Naturiaethwyr Merthyr Tudfil a'r Cylch



GWILYM TRAIL

BEDLINOG

8

GWILYM TRAIL

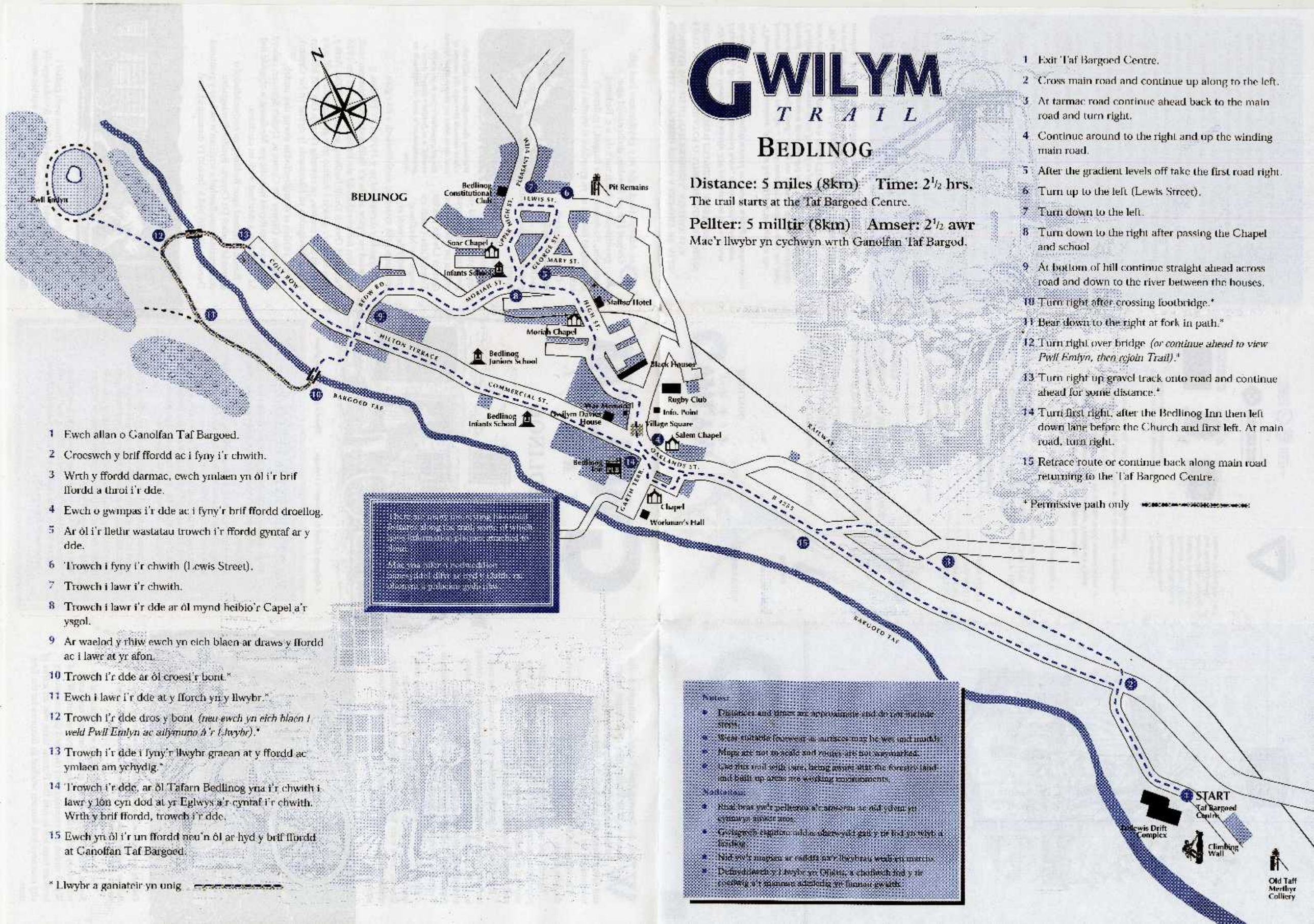
BEDLINOG

Distance: 5 miles (8km) Time: 2½ hrs.
The trail starts at the Taf Bargoed Centre.

Pellter: 5 milltir (8km) Amser: 2½ awr
Mae'r llwybr yn cychwyn wrth Ganolfan Taf Bargod.

1 Exit Taf Bargoed Centre.
2 Cross main road and continue up along to the left.
3 At tarmac road continue ahead back to the main road and turn right.
4 Continue around to the right and up the winding main road.
5 After the gradient levels off take the first road right.
6 Turn up to the left (Lewis Street).
7 Turn down to the left.
8 Turn down to the right after passing the Chapel and school
9 At bottom of hill continue straight ahead across road and down to the river between the houses.
10 Turn right after crossing footbridge.*
11 Bear down to the right at fork in path.*
12 Turn right over bridge *(or continue ahead to view Pwll Emlyn, then rejoin Trail).**
13 Turn right up gravel track onto road and continue ahead for some distance.*
14 Turn first right, after the Bedlinog Inn then left down lane before the Church and first left. At main road, turn right.
15 Retrace route or continue back along main road returning to the Taf Bargoed Centre.

* Permissive path only



1 Ewch allan o Ganolfan Taf Bargoed.
2 Croeswch y brif ffordd ac i fyny i'r chwith.
3 Wrth y ffordd darmac, ewch ymlaen yn ôl i'r brif ffordd a throi i'r dde.
4 Ewch o gwmpas i'r dde ac i fyny'r brif ffordd droellog.
5 Ar ôl i'r llethr wastatau trowch i'r ffordd gyntaf ar y dde.
6 Trowch i fyny i'r chwith (Lewis Street).
7 Trowch i lawr i'r chwith.
8 Trowch i lawr i'r dde ar ôl mynd heibio'r Capel a'r ysgol.
9 Ar waelod y rhiw ewch yn eich blaen ar draws y ffordd ac i lawr at yr afon.
10 Trowch i'r dde ar ôl croesi'r bont.*
11 Ewch i lawr i'r dde at y fforch yn y llwybr.*
12 Trowch i'r dde dros y bont *(neu ewch yn eich blaen i weld Pwll Emlyn ac ailymuno â'r Llwybr).**
13 Trowch i'r dde i fyny'r llwybr graean at y ffordd ac ymlaen am ychydig.*
14 Trowch i'r dde, ar ôl Tafarn Bedlinog yna i'r chwith i lawr y lôn cyn dod at yr Eglwys a'r cyntaf i'r chwith. Wrth y brif ffordd, trowch i'r dde.
15 Ewch yn ôl i'r un ffordd neu'n ôl ar hyd y brif ffordd at Ganolfan Taf Bargoed.

* Llwybr a ganiateir yn unig

There are many interesting historical features along the trail, some of which are illustrated on the map.

Mae yna nifer o nodweddion diddorol ar hyd y llwybr, rhai ohonynt wedi eu darlunio ar y mapiau.

Notes:

- Distances and times are approximate and do not include stops.
- Wear suitable footwear as surfaces may be wet and muddy.
- Maps are not to scale and routes are not waymarked.
- Use this trail with care, being aware that the forestry land and built up areas are working environments.

Nodiadau:

- Rhai bras yw'r pellteroedd a'r amseroedd ac nid ydynt yn cynnwys unrhyw aros.
- Gwisgwch esgidiau addas oherwydd gall y tir fod yn wlyb a llithrig.
- Nid yw'r mapiau ar raddfa na'r llwybrau wedi eu marcio.
- Defnyddiwch y Llwybr yn Ofalus, a chofiwch fod y tir coedwig a'r mannau adeiledig yn faenau gwaith.