

CEIRIOG VALLEY WALK

Length of walk approx. 8 miles

Duration approx. 5 hours

Information Sheet and Map (Please relate numbered points to similar numbers on map)

- 1. LLANARMON DYFFRYN CEIRIOG.** The village takes its name from Saint Garmon a 5th century French Bishop. St Garmon's churchyard contains a 'preaching' mound which may have been used for this purpose. The site is located near two yew trees which have been dated at over 1000 years old.
- 2. SARFFLE FARM.** In 1920, 500 Roman coins were found here and were sent to the British museum. In 2003 aerial photography showed evidence of a Roman marching camp above Swch Cae Rhiw, which suggests that this road may have been an old Roman road.
- 3. DOLWEN FARM.** Dolwen is an ancient farmhouse that according to tradition is associated with Owain Glyndwr the Prince of Wales, who during the 1400's led the rebellion against an English invasion. Owain Glyndwr's sister Lowri lived at Blaen Nantyr, a previous hall dating from the middle ages which stood within a few hundred yards of the existing one at Blaen Cwm. Dolwen farm has an ancient toilet as found in medieval castles.
- 4. PENTRE FARM.** The farm has been in the hands of the Edwards family for over 1000 years.
- 5.** This area of land is part of the Berwyn Ranges that has been designated as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) and a Special Protection Area (SPA). The Berwyn is the long spine of moorland stretching from Llangollen to Dinas Mawddwy and is one of the largest and most attractive areas of upland heath remaining in Wales. Moorlands are uncultivated areas with short, rough plantlife, usually on poor soils. Heather, grassland and bracken clad the steep slopes while crowberry and the occasional lesser twayblade are seen here. The heathland is of very high quality and has heather at many different growth stages.

The Berwyn also supports the most extensive area of near natural blanket bog in Wales. The gently contoured ridges are blanketed with deep wet peat dominated by heather, heathland mosses and cotton grass. The attractive white flowered and orange berried cloudberry is found close to its southernmost limit of its British range.

The Berwyn has one of the most diverse moorland breeding bird populations south of the Scottish highlands with birds such as red grouse, black grouse that take cover and feed on the heather, while birds of prey like merlin, hen harrier and peregrine falcon soar high above it.

6. FFORDD SAESON (SAXON WAY) In 1165 it is thought that Henry the II crossed the Ceiriog Valley at Tregeiriog and marched along Ffordd Saeson (Saxon Way) to the bleak open moorland west of Nantyr. Here the ground is boggy and offers no shelter or fuel. He fought a rearguard action with the Welsh at Offa's Dyke at a spot called Tir y Beddau (Field of the Dead). (This land has also been designated as Open Access land).

7. PENYBRYN FARM. This farmhouse overlooking Llanarmon was the birthplace of John "Ceiriog" Hughes, one of Wales's most famous poets who was born on the 25th September 1832 and died in April 1887. The Ceiriog Centenary Hall, Llanarmon DC was built in 1932 to celebrate the centenary of the birth of John Ceiriog Hughes.

In 1923 the upper part of the Ceiriog Valley was threatened by submersion into two large reservoirs to supply water for Warrington. The area was to cover three villages (Llanarmon, Tregeiriog and Pentre Bach. There was huge objection and protest from all over Wales, a defence fund was raised and the matter was debated in Parliament. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister at the time was probably the one to save the day and the plan was dropped.