

Higher straights

MODERATE, 12.1 km, 3h, Grid Ref.: SO047284, Wales

Walk Description

Ancient paths lead west from Brecon to the Roman fort of Y Gaer. This strategically important area contains several earlier hill forts and 'castle' mounds. Curiously straight alignments link these points and Alfred Watkins devotes the last page of his book on the subject, *The Old Straight Track*, to a study of them. See them for yourself on this walk, which begins with an attractive promenade beside the River Usk, reaches the delightful Afon Ysgir and re-enters Brecon by way of Maen-du holy well, where pins were offered by lovelorn maids.

WPT 1 [Grid Ref.: SO046284]

Go down Brecon's High Street, passing the statue of the Duke of Wellington and St Mary's Church on your left. Continue down Ship Street, approach the bridge over the River Usk, but turn right just before it. Cross the Afon Honddu, go left and turn right to follow the riverside promenade upstream with the Usk on your left. Reach a toposcope overlooking a weir near a car park. Pen-y-Fan is in sight to the south.

WPT 2 [Grid Ref.: SO034289]

Go left along a road, but very soon fork right. A signposted bridleway runs in the shade between hedges. Turn right over a stile just before its first gate, then turn left to walk with a fieldpath running parallel to the bridleway. The course of the dismantled Neath & Brecon Railway is away to your right. In the fourth field, bear left to continue with the bridleway and take it to Y Gaer.

WPT 3 [Grid Ref.: SO004298]

Turn right across Y Gaer's access lane and follow a signposted fieldpath down to the Afon Ysgir. Walk upstream with this river on your left to a bridge, which you don't cross.

WPT 4 [Grid Ref.: SO003302]

Turn right along a road and go ahead at the crossroads in Cradoc. Pass a golf club on your left, climb to a layby on your left and look out for a track on your right.

WPT 5 [Grid Ref.: SO027309]

Turn right along the track which climbs to open moorland. Enjoy fine views from Pen-y-crug hillfort at its summit and continue down to a stile waymarked with a yellow arrow, near a corner in a fence shaded by trees.

WPT 6 [Grid Ref.: SO031301]

Cross the stile to follow the waymarked footpath (yellow arrows) downhill to the edge of Brecon, where you find an enchanting well (Maen-du) on your left.

WPT 7 [Grid Ref.: SO039295]

Bear left along the perimeter road of a housing estate. This leads to the B4520 on your left. Turn right to walk along the pavement of this road downhill into Brecon, passing the cathedral on your left. Cross the Afon Honddu, go right and bear left back up the High Street to the start. You can take your pick of refreshments.

Terrain

Fieldpaths; hedged bridleway which may be muddy; quiet roads

Suitable

children, dogs

Parking

Brecon

Town

Brecon

Refresh

Fieldpaths; hedged bridleway which may be muddy; quiet roads

Transport

Buses run to Brecon from Hereford (no 39), Swansea (63), Abergavenny (21), Merthyr Tydfil (43) and Llandrindod (47) – all places with railway stations. For details, tel 01597 826642

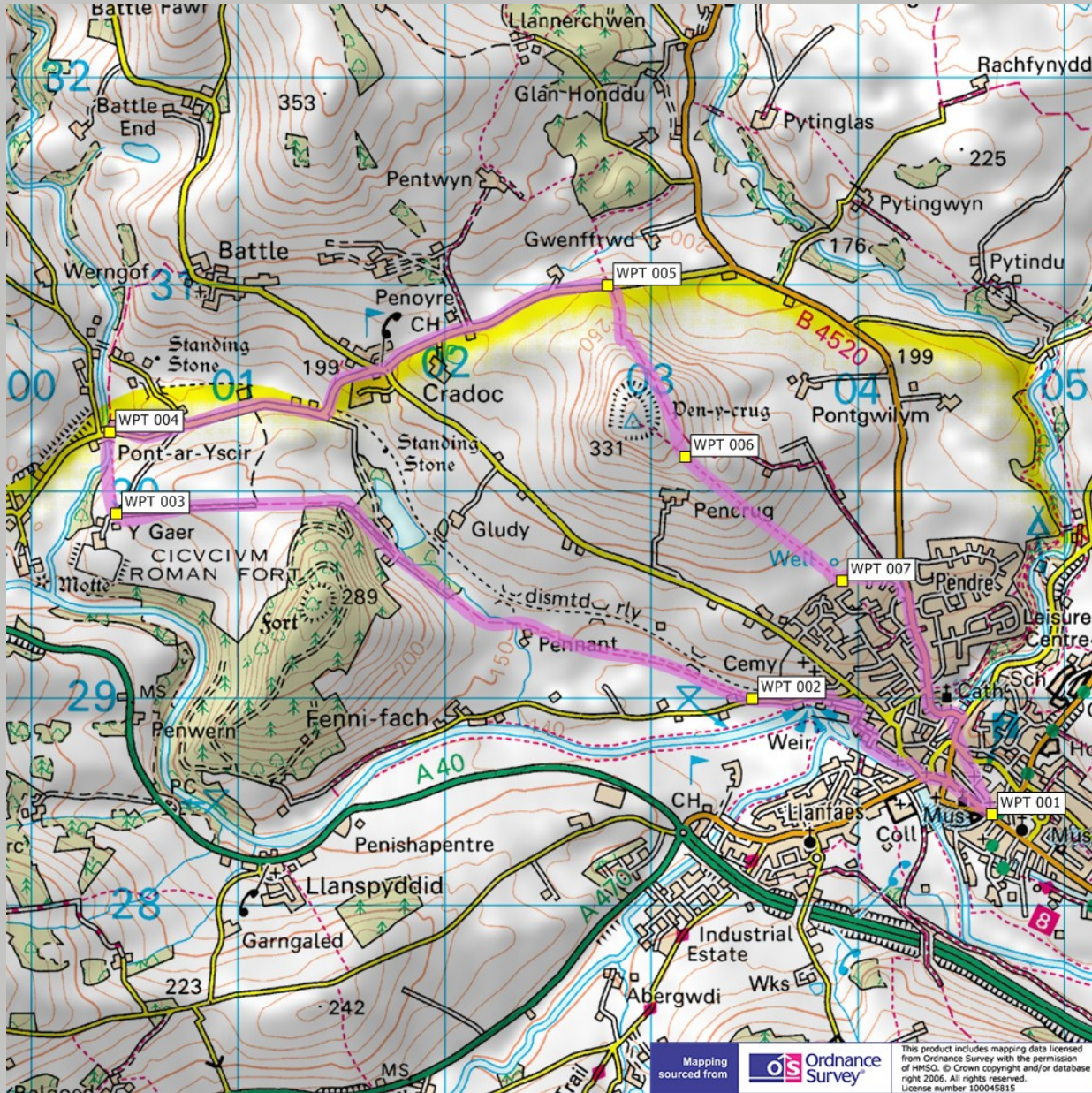


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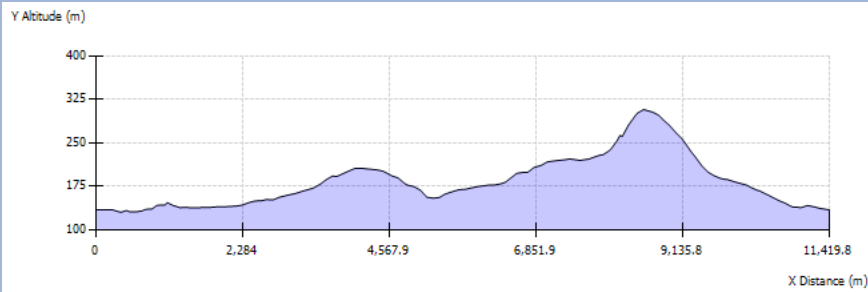
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Total Air Distance: 11,419.8 m
Total DTM Distance: 11,440.9 m
Min. Altitude: 130.6 m
Max. Altitude: 308.1 m
Avg. Altitude: 182.4 m
Total Ascent: 251.2 m
Total Descent: -251.2 m
Total Ascent Distance: 5,739.2 m
Total Descent Distance: 4,677.5 m
Total Level Distance: 1,024.2 m
Percent Ascent: 50.2%
Percent Descent: 40.9%
Percent Level: 9%



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