

# A yomp in the heather

HARD, 17.5 km, 4h 30min, Grid Ref.: SO312221, Wales

## Walk Description

An exhilarating yomp over high heather moorland in the Black Mountains is followed by a descent to Llanthony Valley, also known as the Vale of Ewyas. The hamlet of Llanthony comprises the ruins of a 12th/13th-century priory, the Abbey Hotel, the Half Moon Inn, a couple of farms and a 13th-century church on the site of a chapel built by St David in the 6th-century. The return leg along the valley provides the chance to visit Cwmyoy's lovely church, famous for its leaning tower, the result of a landslide.

### WPT 1 [Grid Ref.: SO311222]

Walk up the narrow lane beside the entrance to the car park, almost opposite the Queen's Head. Ignore all branching paths. Eventually, pass through a gate on to common land. Keep straight on. After leaving the common at another gate, keep straight on along a green lane bounded by stone walls.

### WPT 2 [Grid Ref.: SO287232]

As the lane widens, choose which wall to follow. For the best views, stay with the R-hand wall, and then keep straight on when the wall turns a corner. The path swings L to a stone post (where Richard de Clare was murdered by Morgan ap Owain in 1135). Turn R and then take the R-hand path a little further on at a fork. Go L at the next fork. As you climb higher, a massive cairn comes into view, marking Garn Wen. Pass R of the cairn and continue on a clear path, swinging slightly L to cross a flat-topped rise and then descending to a saddle at Bal Bach.

### WPT 3 [Grid Ref.: SO273267]

The saddle is marked by a pile of stones. Turn R and go down until a signpost (Beacons Way) directs you R to Llanthony. Follow frequent signs and waymarks down to the valley, eventually crossing the Afon Honddu and passing a farm to emerge on a road opposite a track which leads to the Abbey Hotel and Llanthony Priory. Having visited Llanthony, return to the road and turn L.

### WPT 4 [Grid Ref.: SO288276]

After 300m, take a path L. Continue across a field to a stile at the far side, then by the L-hand hedge in the next field. After that, follow the waymarks, ignoring branching paths. Go through a gate at Maesy-beran and follow a track through the farm. Go over an unmarked stile when the track turns R. Keep L through a small field, then L of a line of trees in the next field. The waymarks go roughly straight across more fields and through a ruined farm (Weild). The waymarks become less frequent, but the trodden path is clear.

### WPT 5 [Grid Ref.: SO289246]

Cross the Afon Honddu at a footbridge and proceed to road. Turn L, then, after 500m take a footpath L. Re-cross the Honddu, pass a house and look for hidden stile L. Cross a track and another stile, follow a trodden path through several meadows to a track to a lane. Cross to another path opposite, going diagonally L across a meadow. Follow waymarks to the lane.

### WPT 6 [Grid Ref.: SO299233]

Turn R, then soon L, just after a phone box at Cwmyoy. The lane soon bends L towards the church, but go straight on to join a footpath, passing a corrugated-iron shed to enter a field. Follow field edge until the hedge turns a corner, then keep going across the field to a stile. Cross the next field until you're about 50m from the far side. Go diagonally R to a stile in the corner and turn L along a road, then R at a junction. Join a footpath on the R after 550m. Head for far Lhand corner of a meadow, cross a footbridge and continue diagonally across another meadow. Meet Afon Honddu and follow it to a lane. Turn R, cross the Honddu at Pont Rhys Powell and climb to the Queen's Head.

## Terrain

Good paths, moorland and pasture; hilly but not steep

## Suitable

children, dogs

## Parking

Walkers' car park at the Queen's Head (pay at the pub)

## Town

Abergavenny

## Refresh

Good paths, moorland and pasture; hilly but not steep

## Transport

Stagecoach X3/X4, Cardiff-Hereford; Offa's Dyke Flyer for Queen's Head & Llanthony; train station at Abergavenny

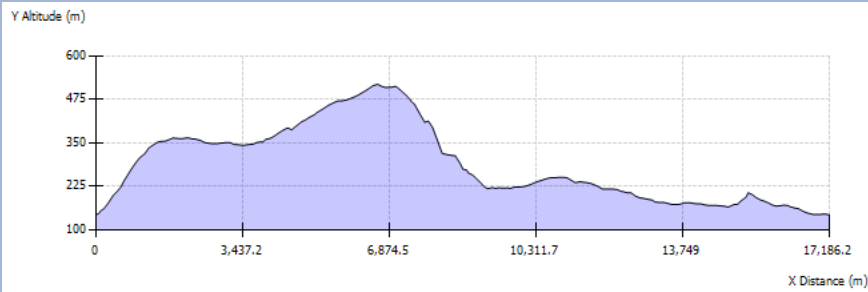
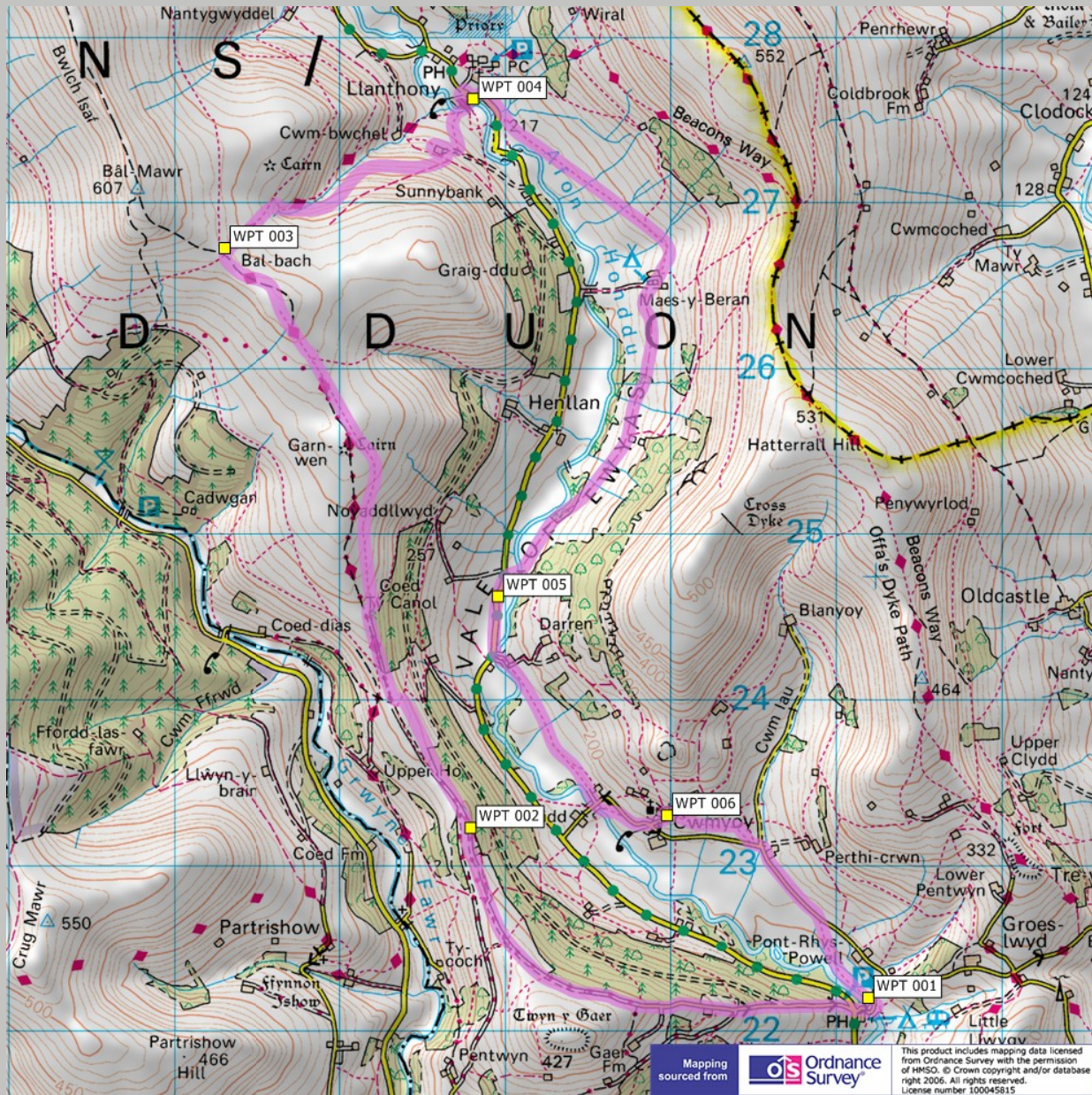


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Total Air Distance: 17,186.2 m  
 Total DTM Distance: 17,249.3 m  
 Min. Altitude: 144 m  
 Max. Altitude: 519.5 m  
 Avg. Altitude: 288.2 m  
 Total Ascent: 507.2 m  
 Total Descent: -507.2 m  
 Total Ascent Distance: 7,872.1 m  
 Total Descent Distance: 7,986.1 m  
 Total Level Distance: 1,391 m  
 Percent Ascent: 45.6%  
 Percent Descent: 46.3%  
 Percent Level: 8.1%



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