



Themed Walks No. 1

Churches of the Valley Walk

Churches of the Valley walk at a glance

Distance	6km
Time	3 hours

Churches of the Valley Walk

Magnificent views of the Tywi Valley can be enjoyed during this walk in which you will be immersed in history and culture of three spectacular churches.

Look out for

Panoramic views of the truly enchanting Tywi Valley and historic buildings which offer windows into the area's history and culture.

Don't forget to

Follow the footpath marker signs. Also be aware that the narrow lane road sections will require you to walk with great care of traffic.

Be aware

There is very limited car parking at the start of the walk in Llangathen. It is possible to park in Llandeilo and travel by bus to Broad Oak which is in easy walking distance to Llangathen Church.

Be prepared

We recommend that you are equipped with a map and compass with the skills to use them, as well as suitable footwear and clothing for the terrain, ground and weather conditions.



TYWI AFON YR OESOEDD



TYWI A RIVER THROUGH TIME

THE ROUTE

1 Llangathen Church

The walk begins at Llangathen Church (Grid Ref SN693256). The church itself is an architectural treasure, dedicated to St Cathen, said to have been king of Dyfed and of Brecon in 675. Its sturdy thirteenth century tower is as fine as any in Carmarthenshire, and the nave comprises three late medieval family chapels – Berllan Dywyll, Cadfan and Aberglasney. Several yew trees of great antiquity shade the graveyard.

One of the church's most outstanding features is the elaborate Rudd 'bedstead' monument, completed in 1616, and believed to be 'the best of any village church in Wales'.



The panoramic view of the Tywi Valley from here is truly enchanting. It defines the picturesque which captivated and inspired the youthful John Dyer, poet and painter, brought up in nearby Aberglasney. You can see nearby Grongar Hill which made his reputation.

Set off eastwards through the village, gateways and gaps in the hedge reveal delightful vistas of Tywi scenery: Dinefwr castle topping the trees, the river shining as it winds, the Black Mountain with cairns of the Druids dotted on the sky-line, Paxton's Tower and Carmarthen and Breconshire Vans, far off.

Cross the road at Cilsane, and the Myddyfi brook by the footbridge beside the ford. Follow the lane until you reach Penybanc farm entrance. Here, ahead of you, is the beginning of the public right-of-way.

If you make diagonally for the far top corner of the meadow, you will find a wooden stile from where the path leads on beside the stone wall of the Deer Park, through kissing gates and follow the path to the left. Continue on this path, past Dinefwr Farm until you reach the main drive to Newton House. Turn right and follow the path until you see a set of gates on your left. Go through the gates and follow the path to your left that leads to Llandyfeisant church.

2 Llandyfeisant Church

Once described as a cathedral in miniature, Llandyfeisant is consecrated to St Tyfei, the martyred son of St Teilo's sister. It was the family church of Dynevor Castle (Newton House) and its estate workers for many centuries.

It is said to be built on the site of a Roman temple 'upon which the foundation of the northern angle is said to rest'. Walls of Roman construction were discovered in levelling the churchyard in 1811, and a pot of Roman coins was unearthed some 300 yards distant. A Roman milestone from Trecastle is somewhere built into the perimeter wall.

Llandyfeisant is now deconsecrated, but still a beautiful and magical building.

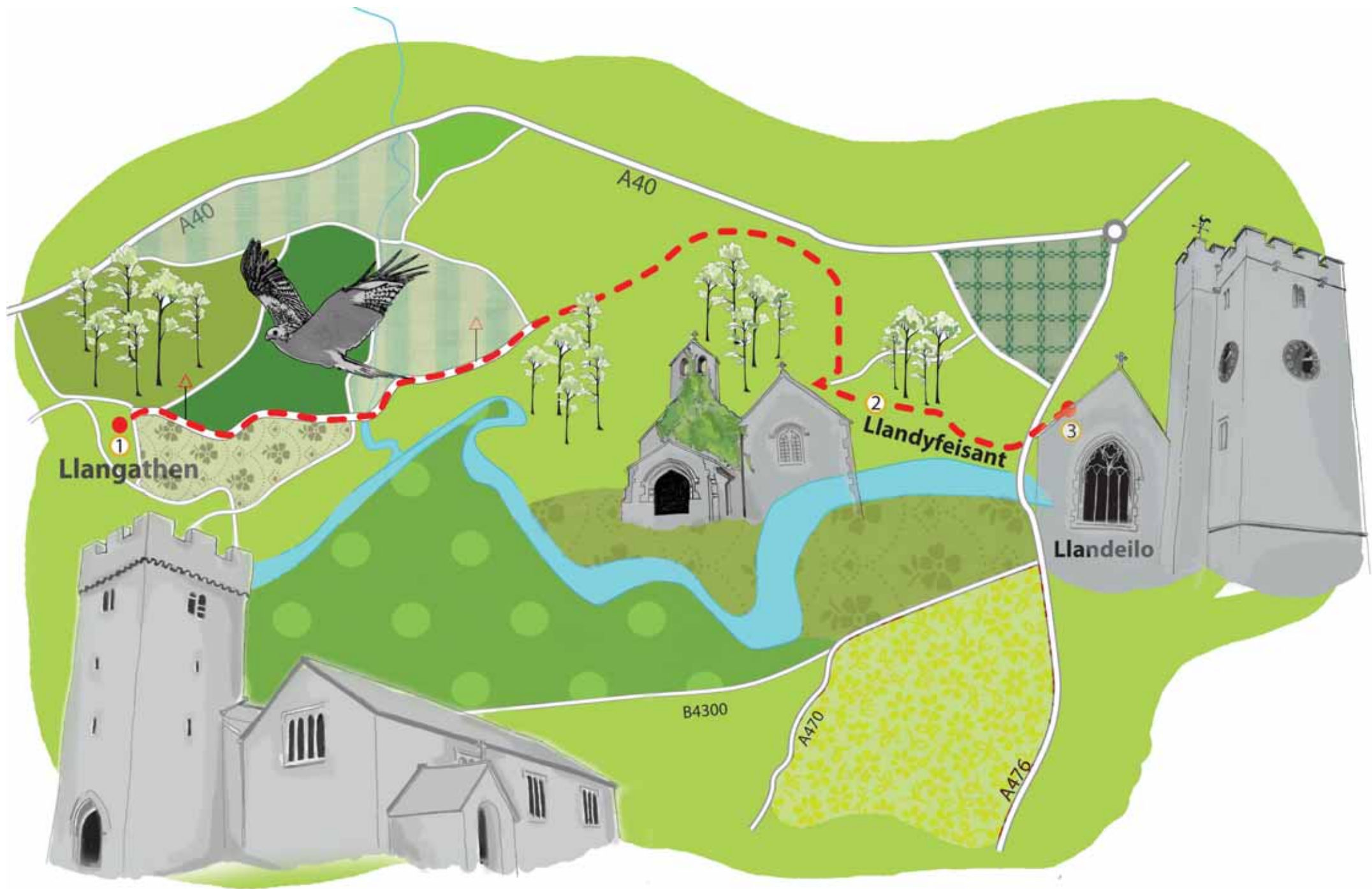
Take the path, now asserted as a Roman road, towards Llandeilo bridge, (or loop upwards through lovely beech and mixed hardwoods to Penlan Park). Once you reach Llandeilo Bridge, take a left up the rather steep hill until you reach St. Teilo's Church on the right.

3 St. Teilo's Church — Llandeilo Fawr parish church

The church is built adjacent to the site of an important 6th century Celtic foundation dedicated to St Teilo, a contemporary of St David. Surviving from antiquity to the present are two stone crosses of the 10th century; the square Perpendicular military tower of the 13th century and evidence of an ancient Baptistry.

In 1848-50, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott was responsible for designing the rebuild of the church. Local builder William Williams who had just completed Llandeilo's splendid single-span stone bridge was the building contractor.

The tower houses a digital display of the 8th century Llandeilo Gospels, the originals of which are kept at Lichfield Cathedral.



Taking further steps in the Tywi Valley

The Churches of the Valley Walk is one of a series of 6 themed walks that have been created to encourage access to the Tywi Valley. The walks have been made possible thanks to local farmers and landowners and the Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd Project that is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Rural Development Plan.

For further information on any of the Tywi Afon yr Oesoedd themed walks please visit

www.tywiariverthroughtime.org.uk



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