



<b>Walk</b>	Llantarnam Abbey landscape walk
<b>Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
<b>Distance</b>	19 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Overcast summer day
<b>Summary</b>	A largely level walk around the perimeter of the Llantarnam Abbey parkland estate, taking in Llantarnam village, followed by a separate shorter walk through the fieldscape of Pentre-bach, site of an abbey grange and possibly the original site of the abbey itself.

The walk commences northwards along the old Newport to Pontypool road that flanks the western boundary of Llantarnam Park. This boundary is marked by a nineteenth century wall, but is unlikely to follow the line of the original abbey precinct as this section of straight road was constructed to improve the old more winding course of the road.





*Figure 1: The line of the nineteenth century Llantarnam Park wall along Malthouse Road (Source: author).*

Similarly, the Magna Porta abbey gatehouse at the intersection of the main road and the driveway to Llantarnam Abbey is a nineteenth century construct, part of owner Edmund Blewitt's transformation of the house and grounds.



*Figure 2: Magna Porta gatehouse (Source: author).*

The landscape surrounding the abbey is a zone of transition between the urban and industrial edges of the Cwmbran new town and Newport's outlying suburbs and the more rural character of the Gwent countryside, the parkland of Llantarnam sequestered between the river Afon Lwyd and a parallel railway line, the Newport-Pontypool road and Malthouse Road. The medieval landscape context has been



reconfigured but not totally obliterated by waves of development over the last 250 years. So, for instance, across the main road from the abbey gatehouse the Dowlais Brook has been dammed to create several ponds to produce water power, now a haven for wildlife flanked by the factories and warehouses of the Llantarnam Park Industrial Estate, the Abbey Fields housing development across the road built on the meadowlands of the abbey precinct.

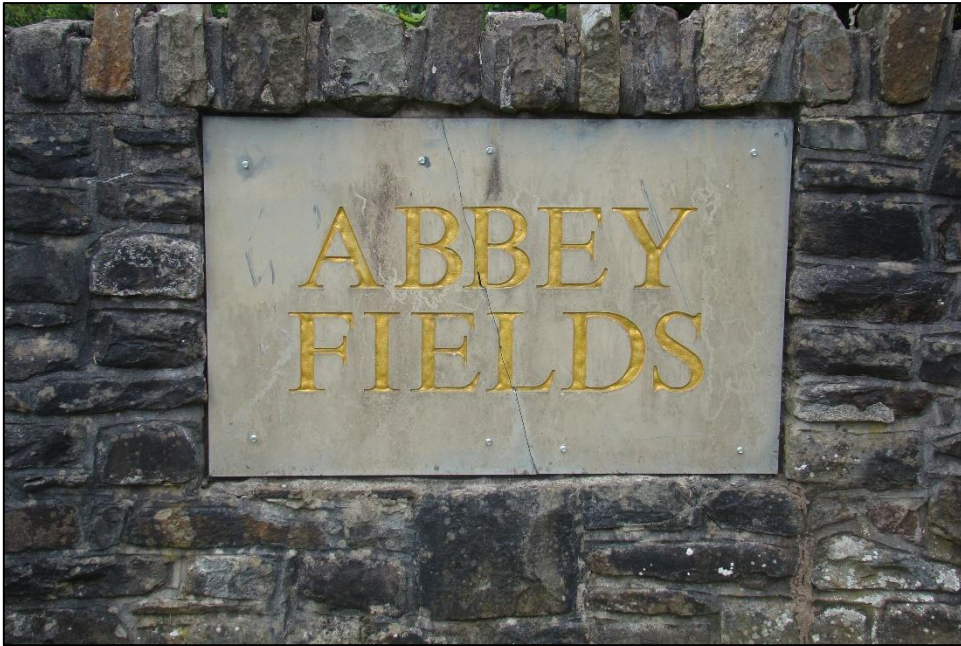


*Figure 3: Dowlais Brook pond (Source: author).*



*Figure 4: Entrance to the Llantarnam Park Industrial Estate (Source: author).*





*Figure 5: Sign at the entrance to the Abbey Fields housing development (Source: author).*

Passing through the village of Llantarnam the churchyard of St. Michael's is entered. Likely a pre-monastic religious site, the church, with an attached chapel built by the Morgan family of Llantarnam Abbey, is the centre of the village (waypoint 1). An old Right of Way footpath from the back of the churchyard through modern housing is then followed, its original route eastwards to the abbey now cut by the Newport to Pontypool Trunk Road, which also obliterated the site of the old abbey mill.



*Figure 6: St. Michael's Church, Llantarnam with the Morgan chapel to the right (Source: author).*





Returning to the main road and the Llantarnam area's post-Reformation history of Catholic recalcitrance is memorialised by a house bearing a plaque recording that 'Catholic martyr' David Lewis was arrested here in 1678. The main village lane, which originally led to the now-gone mill and on to the abbey, is now a private dead-end road, its old cottages just in view from the public road.

Continuing northwards along the main road and in quick succession the northern lodge to Llantarnam Park, a biscuit factory and bridges over the railway and Afon Llwyd are passed before the route enters a stretch of ragged scrub and woodland alongside the river. Passing under the Trunk Road, the overgrown path then opens out through fields along the northern side of the railway line (waypoint 2).

*Figure 7: Llantarnam village lane (Source: author).*



*Figure 8: North Lodge to Llantarnam Park and driveway to Ty-isaf Farm (Source: author).*



On a slight rise above the river, the field path here has a view across to Llantarnam Park that is dominated by woodland. A sequestered spot within the woods, there is no view of the abbey from here. The Public Right of Way now crosses the railway line via wooden boards, marked by a 'Stop, look, listen' warning sign. The path occupies a narrow strip of land between the railway and the gently meandering Afon Llewyd; its broad, stony course a reminder of its original name of Torfein (Welsh for 'stone breaker'). Japanese knotweed here is colonising the stony banks and islets of the river.



*Figure 9: Afon Llwyn, bordering Llantarnam Park to the north-east (Source: author).*

Crossing back to the north side of the railway line the route now runs through the village of Penthir, an unremarkable commuter village of mainly modern and nineteenth century housing stock.

Entering the undulating fields and wooded brakes of the area of old parkland below the scarp of Lodge Wood atop which stands the town and Roman camp of Caerleon, the route crosses Malthouse Road and tracks the lane and then a field path to Park Farm (waypoint 3). This area is the southern-most stretch of the old monastic estate, though it is unclear as to whether the land of Park Farm was part of the Magna Porta home manor of the abbey. Although the immediate environment is ostensibly rural, there is an uneasy mixture of birdsong and insects, farm animals with the harsher tones of industry and vehicles fills the air.





*Figure 10: Lodge Wood, looking south-east towards Caerleon, possibly the southern edge of the abbey's lands (Source: author).*

Looking towards the abbey site, it's striking how relatively unremarkable the topography of rolling fields and woods is. A landscape which does not seem to conform to traditional notions of Cistercian foundations in remote and wild places. However, this is a practical, secluded location at the confluence of a larger river and a brook.

Passing the unkempt farm yard and buildings of Park Farm and the line of the old driveway to the park is followed north-westwards back towards the abbey. Regimental rows of solar panels now fill the fields won from Park Wood in the nineteenth century, a new crop rising.



*Figure 11: Solar panels on the site of Park Wood (Source: author).*



The old roadway from Park Farm towards the abbey is now in part a thin band of woodland, a brake, with substantial (perhaps 100 years old?) oaks now occupying the route of the track, perhaps colonising from a roadside line of older trees (waypoint 4).



*Figure 12: Trees occupying the old roadway from the abbey to Park Farm (Source: author).*

The roadway follows a low rise from which views north and westwards open-up, with Llantarnam village across the shallow valley of the Dowlais Brook and, more distant, the abbey lands of Llanderfel on the side of Mynydd Moen and Twmbarlwn hillfort atop the southern end of the mountain ridge.



*Figure 13: Llanderfel and Mynydd Maen looking north-west from the ridge-top track between the abbey and Park Farm (Source: author).*



Closer now to the abbey site, at Pen-y-Park Farm, and from this elevated position, the modern abbey buildings now come partially into view between the surrounding woodland.



*Figure 14: Llantarnam Abbey, looking north from Pen-y-Park (Source: author).*

Following the line of an old footpath, the slope above Dowlais Brook is descended to the abbey driveway (waypoint 5). This was probably the continuation of the route from Park Farm and Caerleon beyond but is not visible on the ground. The driveway is walked to the bridge over the brook, perhaps the position of the original gatehouse at the boundary of the abbey precinct, from which part of the nineteenth century formal gardens come into view.



*Figure 15: The abbey drive and bridge over the Dowlais Brook, looking east (Source: author).*





*Figure 16: The formal gardens of the abbey, looking east towards the house (Source: author).*

A Public Right of Way right-angles northwards off the drive alongside the Trunk Road and up to The Abbey housing estate, the ghost of an old footpath from the village. Today the route follows another public path on the south side of the drive up to the wall bounding the parkland along Malthouse Road. Again, elevation allows a look back towards the site of the abbey and its surrounding park. The woodlands and the slightly sunken location of the abbey mean that it is generally hidden from view, even when relatively close-up. The abbey is in no-sense on show, was this the case when the medieval abbey was extant? Is this related to its Welsh patronage, hidden from Anglo-Norman eyes?



*Figure 17: The line of the Dowlais Brook and drive to the abbey, looking north from the edge of the park (Source: author).*



At the wall an archway gate leads into Malthouse Road, the pastoral scene behind a contrast to the roadside area of fly-tipping beyond the gateway, a few paces along the road leads to a bridge over the speeding traffic of the Trunk Road that cuts through the park. This scene demonstrates the edgeland character of the landscape around the abbey site. In contrast to the area around Llanthony Priory and Tintern Abbey, set within more obvious heritage landscapes, there is little scope here for a monastic-themed walking route. Today's circular route around the abbey site has been constructed from a mix and match of existing fragments of Public Rights of Way with some minor sections outside of public access. Little of the route has had the abbey site in view, though a Permissive Path now gives closer access to the abbey environs.



*Figure 18: Llantarnam Park looking westwards with the ridge of Mynydd Maen looming in the background (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: Gateway in the park wall (Source: author).*



*Figure 20: The Newport to Pontypool Trunk Road running through the parkland around Llantarnam Abbey, located over the hill (Source: author).*

The first part of the day's walk is completed by following Malthouse Road to its junction with the old Newport road at Croes-y-myalch Farm ('Cross of the blackbirds').



*Figure 21: Croes-y-myalch Farm (Source: author).*

A short car journey down the lane to Pentre-bach and the start of the second part of the walk. Outside Pentre-bach the current owner was awaiting an estate agent as the family, not able to afford the upkeep, were selling the farm which had been bought by her parents. She informed me that the massive old barn, thought to be the



original house built by the Morgan family, was known as 'The Great House' and built from the same bricks as the gentry farmhouse attached to Raglan Castle.



*Figure 22: The massive barn at Pentre-bach farm (Source: author).*



*Figure 23: Entrance to the barn (Source: author).*



*Figure 24: The barn (Source: author).*

Pentre-bach is a large courtyard farmstead, now disused.



*Figure 25: Pentre-bach farmyard (Source: author).*

The walk followed a Public Right of Way up along the ridge after which the abbey grange here (Cefn mynach – ‘monk’s ridge’) was named. The track, which becomes a sunken lane as the gradient is gained, passes to the east side of large irregular curvilinear enclosure above the farmstead, one of several around the farm that are larger and different in character to the prevailing fieldscape; perhaps the result of assarting and/ or remnants of the grange farm operation.





*Figure 26: Large enclosure above Pentre-bach farm (Source: author).*

Further north, the path crosses the middle of another large rounded field, divided down the middle by a hedge along which the path leads, with trackways entering it at both north and south (waypoint 6). The eastern edge of the enclosure is bounded by the remaining woodland of Limekiln Wood. Looking back downhill to Pentre-bach in a hollow in its small valley and it becomes possible to imagine this as the peaceful spot for Llantarnam abbey's original location.



*Figure 27: Eastern side of the large circular enclosure, the remains of Limekiln Wood beyond (Source: author).*



*Figure 28: Western side of the large circular enclosure, the ridge of Mynydd Maen beyond (Source: author).*

The footpath was followed along the top of the ridge to a crossroads with extensive views northwards to the Mynydd Maen uplands and Cwmbran town and the lower Afon Llwyd valley containing the abbey precinct to the south, Newport and the coast in the far distance (waypoint 7). From here, Cwmbran is a 'new town' vision, a mix of housing and woodland.



*Figure 29: The Cwmbran suburb of Henllys built on the lands of the Dorallt grange (Source: author).*





*Figure 30: The southern limits of Cwmbran new town, looking north (Source: author).*

Descending the ridge eastwards fields are negotiated to reach the Newport to Pontypool canal towpath and then a path struck out southwards back to Pentre-bach via Pant-glas farm and a large field with evidence of previous sub-division on the lower slope of the ridge.



*Figure 31: Pant-glas farm looking south-east towards the lower Afon Llewyn valley containing the abbey precinct to the right (Source: author).*



*Figure 32: Looking south along Cefn Mynach ridge towards Pentre-bach (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	Cwmbran landscape walk
<b>Date</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
<b>Distance</b>	20 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Cloudy, clear summer day
<b>Summary</b>	A largely level walk around the areas of Cwmbran new town formally part of the Magna Porta manor, including wooded and more open green spaces in an urban setting.

The walk commences at the church of St. Michael's in Llantarnam village, taking in the *cul-de-sac* lane opposite which runs parallel with a silted-up ditch running into a culvert under the main road. This ditch forms part of the system of leats which fed the now demolished corn mill in the village and likely date to the monastic period.

From here a long straight stretch of Llantarnam Road is followed, leading directly from the old access road to the abbey into the centre of the new town of Cwmbran. This road follows the line of the route between the abbey and both its granges and manorial lands to the north and also forms the start of the pilgrimage way to the shrine at Penrhys further to the west. A main route into the town, this old road is now utterly suburban, lined by ribbon development, a mix of some larger Victorian and Edwardian houses, unremarkable housing stock from this period and the mid-twentieth century, and modern-day developments.





*Figure 1: The mill leat opposite the church (Source: author).*



*Figure 2: Llantarnam Road looking north-west (Source: author).*



Part-way along the road the site of Scybor Court grange (latterly Court Farm) is passed (waypoint 1). The school built on the site of the demolished farm during the development of the new town in the 1960s has now itself been replaced by a new housing estate, 'St. Michael's Gate' (this name a reference to the local church but perhaps a missed opportunity to remember the medieval grange). Further along the road, the grange is memorialised in the 1950s council housing of the 'Court Farm Estate', including Court Farm Close and Court Farm Road (is this association with social housing the rationale for the new private sector estate utilising a different name?). Further progress along the road brings more nomenclature linking the area to the abbey: Llantarnam Dental Practice, Llantarnam Primary School, Court Road Industrial Estate etc.

The land farmed by the medieval grange here is uniformly flat, forming the broad flood-plain of the Afon Lwyd a few hundred metres to the east. The old flood meadows of the grange that have not been concreted over form one of the recreational areas created as part of the planned new town, now the site of a large boating and fishing lake and a golf course.



*Figure 3: Court Farm Close, part of the 1950s estate built on the agricultural land of the monastic grange of Scybor Court (Source: author).*

Passing the green space of Oakfield Park, sited on an old area of woodland at a junction of old roads and populated by remnant oak and ash. Further greenery is observed at a roundabout marking the junction of the old road with one of the new access routes through the town. This is the marshy place bordering the lands of Scybor Court grange to the south and the abbey's Gelli-las grange to the north: the industrial zone along the riverside here interspersed with more open green space and mature trees.



*Figure 4: New town roundabout looking north with entrance to Court Road Industrial Estate to right (Source: author).*

Across the roundabout a remnant field, crossed by the embankment of a disused railway line, also contains a hollow which may have been the line of the stream bounding the territory of the two granges.



*Figure 5: Remnant field at boundary of Scybor Court and Gelli-las granges (Source: author).*





*Figure 6: Grange Road (Source: author).*

The old track up to Gelli-las (still called Grange Road) is passed, now a residential street and service road for a supermarket and industrial units (waypoint 2). Approaching the centre of Old Cwmbran, the small industrial settlement that preceded the new town and the housing stock becomes a mix of mid-nineteenth century cottages and late century worker's terraces; the area now somewhat down at heel.

As the post-war trunk road into the centre of the town is bridged the old road curves westwards and climbs up the small hillock on which the medieval chapel of St. Dial's, a stopping place on the pilgrimage route to Penrhys, stood. As the hill is climbed the character of the route changes, St. Dial's Lane, bounded by an old wall and then hedge-lined, is now lined by fields: a rural snapshot amidst the urban new town (waypoint 3). From a field containing a ruined barn, the site of Llanderfel pilgrimage chapel and the

surrounding grange can be seen high on the side of Mynydd Maen looming in the distance to the west. This low river terrace hillock provides a prominent viewpoint and landmark in the landscape, probably explaining the location of the chapel here.



*Figure 7: Section of old wall on lane up to St. Dial's (Source: author).*





*Figure 8: The rural character of St. Dial's Lane (Source: author).*



*Figure 9: Looking west towards the uplands of Mynydd Maen towards the site of Llanderfel chapel on the distant hillside (Source: author).*



The steep northern slope of St. Dial's sloping down to the adjacent town centre has preserved it from development. The jumble of post-war buildings forming central Cwmbran, complete with distressed concrete multi-story car park and landmark tower block, now overlying the grange farm of Gelli-las.



*Figure 10: Central Cwmbran on the site of the Gelli-las grange (Source: author).*

A further stretch of 'country lane' hollows below tree-lined banks and desire paths through an overgrown field, bushes and trees now reclaiming the site of the long-demolished St. Dial's House, and most probably the medieval chapel, are explored. The approximate site of the old settlement along the lane is now unremarkably taken by a small Victorian terrace and a bungalow. As the lane strikes north alongside allotments, the open space to the south is now the scene of a rising housing

development, part of the Cwmbran neighbourhood which takes its name from the medieval chapel.



*Figure 11: The site of St. Dial's House, and probably the medieval chapel, looking southwards (Source: author).*

Descending from St. Dial's, the lane runs alongside one of the modern roads through the new town to a roundabout and the line of the pilgrimage route continues westwards towards Llanderfel as a series of walking and cycle paths. This route will be picked up again later in the walk but now a westward diversion through the remaining woodlands of the Freshwater suburb is followed. Here, remnant trees and dingles are intermixed with the housing of the new town, pathways running through the green spaces and linking residential areas with roads, schools and other infrastructure. The retention of significant woodland within the new town fabric is the result of a mix between idealism - the creation of the liveable, spacious neighbourhoods such as Fairwater and Greenmeadow with plenty of green areas –



and pragmatism, with tree cover largely confined to the more difficult and marginal terrain alongside the courses of streams and steeper-sided gulleys.



*Figure 12: St. Dial's Lane beside the modern road through the western suburbs of Cwmbran (Source: author).*



*Figure 13: The route of the pilgrimage way picks up again via the footpath on the other side of the roundabout (Source: author).*



*Figure 13: Remnant woodland inter-mixed with new town housing in the Freshwater area of Cwmbran (Source: author).*

In this elevated western part of the new town, open and green prospects are juxtaposed in places with some rather tired-looking housing stock. A public footpath followed through the block of woodland below Cwmbran High School comes to a dead-end at the school gates (waypoint 4) and meandering, sometimes litter-strewn, desire paths eventually lead to the old lane of Graig Road still zig-zagging its nineteenth century course up through Fairwater, a hidden away but still extant artery for cyclists and dog-walkers masked by suburban closes. This route would have



provided a more direct route up to the open common of Mynydd Maen from the abbey, by-passing the hilltop pilgrims diversion of St. Dial's.



*Figure 14: Housing in the Greenmeadow area of Cwmbran (Source: author).*

Here rural tranquillity is found again as the lane crosses a stone bridge in a dingle carrying a fast-flowing stream down from the hillsides around Llanderfel. The arboreal spell somewhat broken by the litter collecting around the information board at the start of the holloway that runs uphill towards Landerfel (waypoint 5). As the board attests, this part of the pilgrimage route is now well publicised. However, less well-known or promoted is the fact that the line of the route east from here to St. Dial's can also be traced on the ground, preserved as a series of walkways through

1970s housing and crossed by new roads – a linear piece of history stubbornly retaining its place in the modern-day topography.



*Figure 15: The old lane through Fairwater disappears into the trees on the curve of this residential close (Source: author).*



*Figure 16: Bridge carrying the lane, hidden away behind the suburban closes (Source: author).*

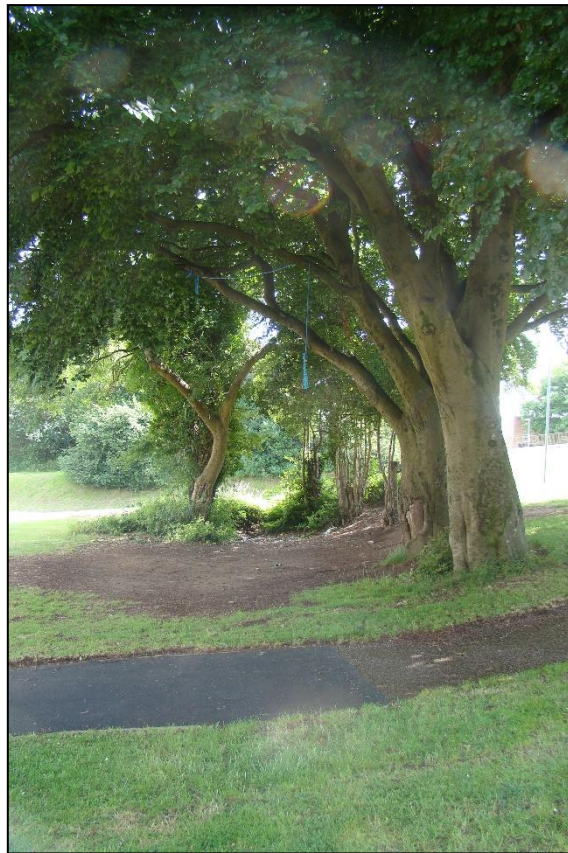
This route eastwards and downhill, back towards the centre of town, is now followed. A footpath, sometimes following sections of well-worn holloway flanked by the



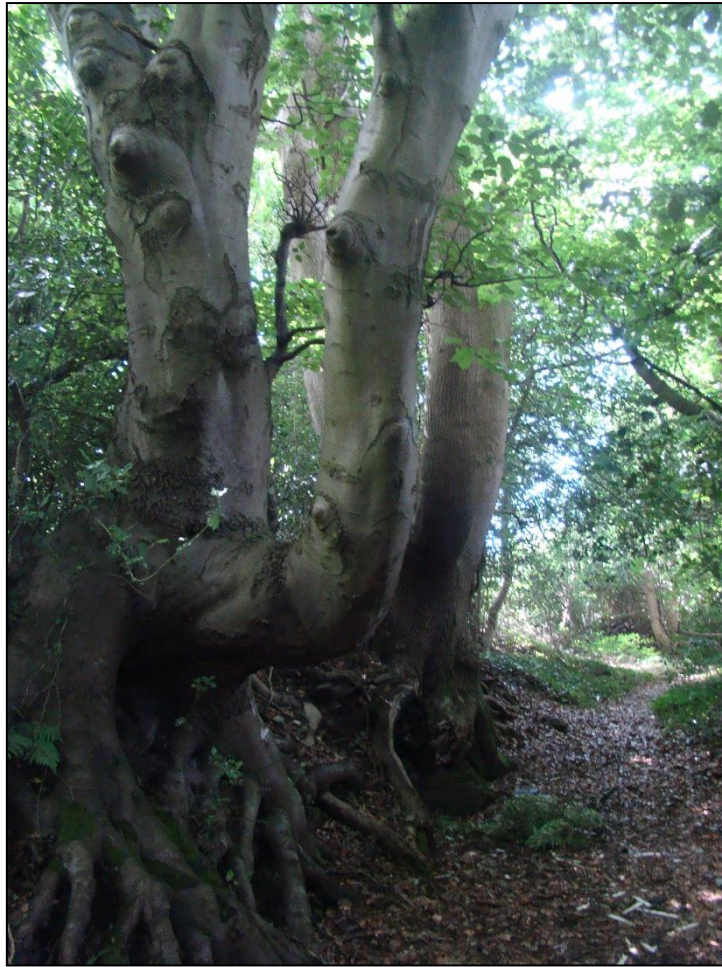
mature remnants of out-grown beech hedges, at others the memory of the old track only preserved by a line of trees or a depression alongside the tarmac path.



*Figure 17: The line of the pilgrim route from St. Dial's to Llanderfel, now a hollow line behind garden fences (Source: author).*



*Figure 18: A further section of the track, preserved as a line of trees (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: A more well-defined section of the track, lined by beech (Source: author).*

Crossing a busy through road, a further piece of rural history within the contemporary townscape is observed: Greenmeadow 'community farm', its farmhouse partly dating to the seventeenth century, home to post-medieval tenants of the Magna Porta manor and perhaps their monastic period predecessors (waypoint 6). A public footpath traverses the perimeter of the farm leading into steep woods shielding the noise and grime of the large central industrial zone of Forge Hammer, previously the site of railway yards and a nut and bolt works. Emerging from the woods, an oasis of grass in the form of a large oval pasture is walked through (preserving the shape of a



prominent enclosure alongside Church Wood as recorded on the 1887 Ordnance Survey map).



*Figure 20: Greenmeadow community farm (Source: author).*

Hard by the industrial estates, the valley of the Cwm Bran Brook holds a nature reserve along a series of silted-up and wildlife diverse industrial ponds and weirs. Yet another quiet semi-natural place in close proximity to the busy urban apex.



*Figure 21: Industrial pond returned to nature, Forge Hammer (Source: author).*

Leaving the stream, the walk strikes north along the towpath of the Pontypool to Newport canal towards the northern-most part of the abbey's Magna Porta lands at Pontnewydd, the gently rising section here lined by a series of deep locks (waypoint

7). The canal dissects the manor from north to south, the precursor to later further linear communications routes in the form of railways and roads.



*Figure 22: The Pontypool to Newport canal looking southwards (Source: author).*

From the canal the route runs through the centre of the industrial village of Pontnewydd, later part of the northern suburbs of Cwmbran and named for a crossing over the Afon Lwyd dating from at least the seventeenth century, now marked by a nineteenth century bridge. Looping southwards having crossed the river, the site of the Gelli-las grange farmstead is now approached. Along the riverside some of the grange's water meadows are preserved as sports fields. Surrounded by roads, a multiplex cinema, a multi-story car park and a supermarket, can be found, somewhat incongruously, the Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, housed in the nineteenth century upgrade of the old farmhouse of Gelli-las (which took the name of Llantarnam Grange) and standing in the remains of the ornamental gardens surrounding the house (waypoint 8). Although it is hard to get a sense of a medieval agricultural estate in this setting and on the long walk back down Llantarnam Road, it



is at least reassuring to know that this particular grange farm has an on-going and distinct afterlife having so nearly been demolished in the 1960s.

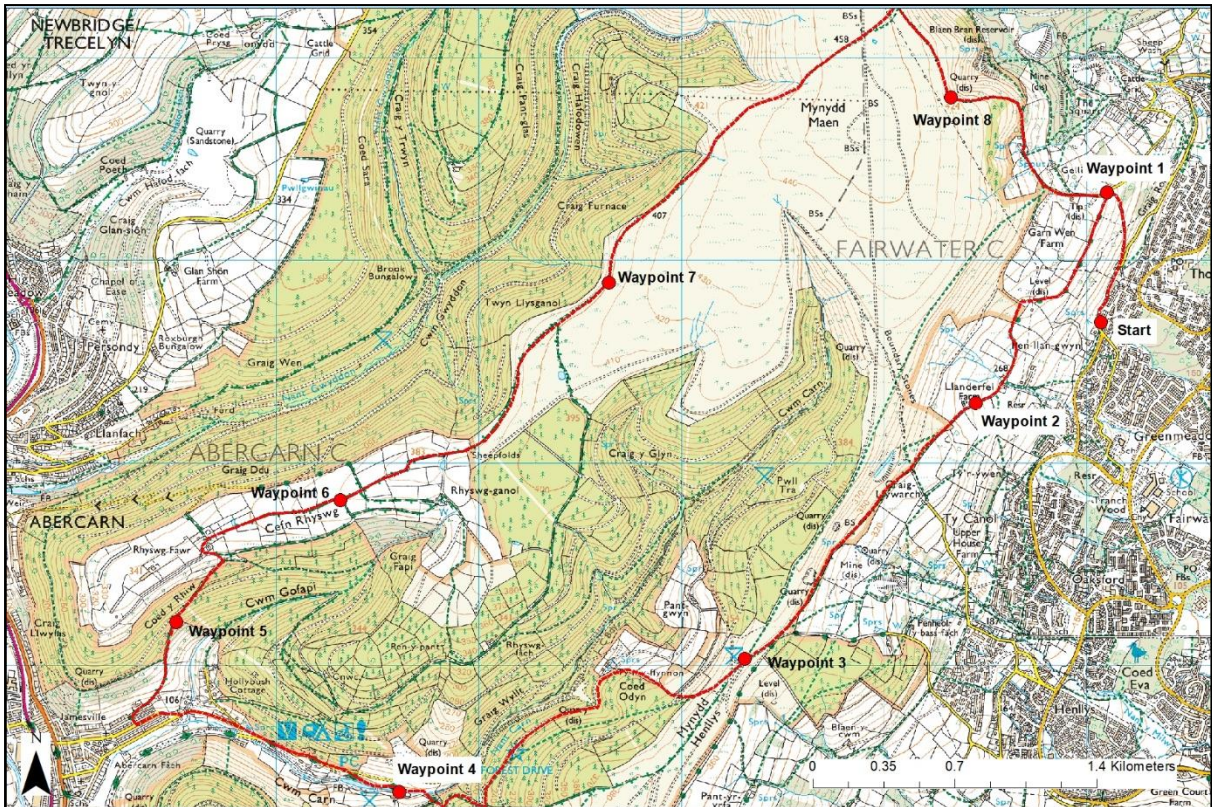


*Figure 23: Sports fields occupying some of the water meadows of Gelli-las grange between the Afon Lwyd and the railway line (Source: author).*



*Figure 24: Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	Mynydd Maen and Rhyswg landscape walk
<b>Date</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2017
<b>Distance</b>	20 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Sunny and cloudless summer day
<b>Summary</b>	A long walk largely along steep valley sides and upland ridges taking in the Llantarnam holdings of Llanderfel and Rhyswg and the upland common of Mynydd Maen.  Accompanied for part of the route by Dr Madelaine Gray.



Figure 1: Signpost for the 'Pilgrims Route' (Source: author).



The walk commenced at the Graig Road traversing the lower slope of Mynydd Maen, climbing the sunken 'pilgrims way' of Hollow Lane to Llanderfel chapel. This trackway has been noted as being lined with large quartz conglomerate boulders which may have been used to assist waymarking for those following the route to the chapel and the pilgrim route further west to Penrhys. These boulders are known locally as 'pudding stones' to their appearance as if spotted with raisins and occur in the local geology, above the Old Red Sandstone layer and below the coal seam outcropping and mined along the valley sides.

Turning sharply left the route towards Llanderfel joins a contour track along the hillside that may have been an existing routeway from the north to the pre-monastic chapel there (waypoint 1). These tracks, now hillside pathways, have the remnants of early twentieth century metalling, now largely overgrown as they slipped out of use as through-routes when the roads of Cwmbran were upgraded and expanded as the new town expanded.



*Figure 2: Hollow section of the track to Llanderfel (Source: author).*

As is common for the abbey's lands across the hillsides of Mynydd Maen, the trackway is edged by outgrown beech hedges. A sign of the use of the beech native to the area as hedge-wood when wood and wood pasture were cleared to make way for tracks and enclosures. As Llanderfel farm is approached the sunken pathway becomes very overgrown with bramble, fern and bracken.



*Figure 3: Looking south towards the site of Llanderfel chapel (field in the centre) from the trackway to the chapel north of Llanderfel Farm (Source: author).*



*Figure 4: Llanderfel Farm (Source: author).*





Beyond the farm the track climbs southwards, a ditch alongside carrying the small stream that flows down the hillside through the chapel enclosure. There is now no sign of an entrance track branching from the main way which becomes deeply sunken as it passes the chapel site (approximately 3-4 metres deep), with its surface showing some signs of paving and also sandstone revetment blocks in its bank (waypoint 2). When the chapel was an upstanding building is would presumably still be visible from the track.

*Figure 5: Climbing sunken trackway passing the Llanderfel chapel site (Source: author).*



*Figure 6: Paving on trackway beside Llanderfel chapel (Source: author).*





Figure 7: Revetment stone on bank of trackway beside Llanderfel chapel (Source: author).

The chapel ruin lies within a smaller fenced-off field within a larger enclosure now overgrown with scrub and small trees as this marginal upland is no longer used for agricultural grazing. The outer enclosure is banked with several large beech trees, probably outgrown hedges, now lining its course. An interpretive information board just off the passing trackway though easily missed tells the story of the chapel and includes a reconstruction drawing but the site itself is not publicly accessible.



Figure 8: Llanferfel chapel information board (Source: author).

The chapel ruin is an L-shaped collection of low, broken down walls and piles of stone, mostly now long-grown over, standing on a gently sloping and sheltered



hillside shelf. The larger section has been interpreted as a chapel and the smaller right-angle section may have been a priest house cum resting place for visitors.



*Figure 9: The chapel ruin walls looking north-east (Source: author).*



*Figure 10: The right-angle section of the ruins, possibly a priest house and resting place for visitors (Source: author).*



The chapel, on the first hillside of the steep South Wales valleys and offering expansive views north, south and east, stands at a liminal transitional area between the bountiful lands of the Vale of Usk and Westwood to the east and the highlands of the valleys to the west.



*Figure 11: Looking up to the chapel ruin from its likely approach from the south (Source: author).*

As the track climbs above the chapel site it opens out onto the hill shoulder and follows the line of a substantial broken down wall formed of sandstone and quartz blocks which marks the boundary between the open common above and the fields below. Further on, lines of substantial beech trees are the remains of a hedge marking this boundary.



*Figure 12: Track alongside wall marking the edge of the open common upland (Source: author).*



The path steadily climbs the gradient to join the ridge-top track, becoming a well-engineered, stony terrace-way (waypoint 3). To the left, a large grassed over waste tip is all that is left of Henllys colliery, active into the twentieth century, and occupying abbey lands either farmed from Llanderfel or the Dorallt grange down in the valley below.



A spring with a well-revetted stone channel holding a lead pipe issues next to the track. This is probably of relatively modern construction (perhaps relating to the colliery operation) but may be the site of a venerated spring on the pilgrim route.

Before the final climb to the ridge the track is joined by the Heol-y-fforest sunken lane from Henllys, an important route to the high ground from the abbey and its valley lands.

*Figure 13: Stony terrace-way climbing to the ridge from Llanderfel (Source: author).*



*Figure 14: Henllys colliery waste tip, looking south-east (Source: author).*



*Figure 15: Looking east across Cwmbran new town from the Llanderfel trackway (Source: author).*

From this elevated position the urban area of Cwmbran spreading below appears remarkably well-wooded, probably more so than in much of the later post-medieval period, perhaps to a similar extent to the monastic period. Looking back along the hill-side shelf towards Llanderfel and the quality of the upland pasture of the shelf becomes apparent, with farms strung across the hillside and linked by this contour track in a similar pattern to those along the Vale of Ewys around Llanthony Priory.



*Figure 16: Shelf of upland pasture, looking north towards Llanderfel (Source: author).*

As the ridge is crested expansive views westwards into the steep, forested wades of Cwm-carn and south to the Twmbarlwm hill fort at the end of the ridge come into sight. What would medieval pilgrims on route to Penrhys, who would have continued



southwards on the contour track around the side of the fort and down to Risca, have made of this symbol of their 'pagan' prehistory? The ridge-top track is wide and braided, an upland motorway.



*Figure 17: Looking south along the open moorland towards Twmbarlwm hill fort at the end of the ridge, with bosky hillside below (Source: author).*

Crossing the ridge and descending into Cwm-carn and the ruined upland farmstead of Pant-gwyn comes into sight further north towards the head of the valley. Moving south down the valley, the other side, now thick with forestry plantation, held the outlying sheep-lands of the old Rhyswg abbey grange.



*Figure 18: Pant-gwyn farmstead looking north up Cwm Carn (Source: author).*





*Figure 19: Cwm Carn valley, looking south towards the outlying lands of Rhyswg grange (Source: author).*

The route then follows sections of forest road and older sunken tracks down to the Nant-carn flowing through the valley bottom, crossing parts of the Twmbarlwm Trail, down to the (presumably artificial?) Lake Llyn (waypoint 4). Here may have been the site of a poorly documented abbey grange of Cwmcarn.



*Figure 20: Possible site of Cwmcarn grange, looking west towards Abercarn (Source: author).*

The line of Nant-carn is followed along the narrow valley floor until the Victorian industrial worker terraced streets of Abercarn are reached. Zig-zagging through the access roads of the long hill-side terraces and the brief urban interlude in this green



valley is quickly replaced by the prolonged steepness of a tree-sheltered track up to the Rhyswg ridge (waypoint 5).



*Figure 21: Upper terraces of Abercarn (Source: author).*

Running up through beech and oak woodland, initially as a banked holloway with outgrown beech, holly and oak along its margins, the track becomes a wide terrace-way following a diagonal line up to a junction with a dog-leg path up a sunken-way to Rhyswg Fawr farmstead, the probable centre of the old grange, the line of the track continuing eastwards along the side of the ridge to Rhyswg Ganol farm. The higher, still very steep, section of the track is bounded by an old bank wall on its upside, which may form part of the boundary between the hillside coppice woodland and the farm land of the grange (the lower fields of which have now returned to wood cover). The wall is built into the hillside and may have originally been topped by a fence or hedge to prevent animals from moving through (a 'lipyeat'), which grown-out trees above and now crushing the wall may memorialize.





*Figures 22 and 23: Steep track up to Rhyswg grange from Abercarn (Source: author).*



*Figure 24: Terrace-way up to Rhyswg (Source: author).*





*Figure 25: Possible section of Rhyswg grange boundary wall (Source: author).*

From this approach, deep in the valley below, the grange atop its ridge is hidden from view; its position almost like a defended Iron Age enclosure. Would such security considerations have been on the Cistercian communities mind when they crated the grange?

Passing around the grange, now a collection of separate domestic residences (some converted from the old farm buildings) and modern farm out-buildings, and a long view extends westwards including the land of Llantarnam's Cil-loydd grange.



*Figure 26: Rhyswg Fawr farmstead, looking west (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: View westwards from Rhyswg Fawr with Cil-loyndd grange lands in the middle-ground to the right (Source: author).*

The high plateau pastures and farm tracks around the Rhyswg farmsteads provide long views of surrounding hills and valleys in all directions and have a noticeable field pattern of beech hedges outgrown into bulbous shapes topping earthen banks, some also lined by stone walls. Remnant beech, the natural dominant tree cover of this area, may have been used as hedge material when the land was cleared to develop the grange, or these land divisions may have been created in a later phase of piecemeal enclosure of what were more open sheep runs, using seed from the remaining local woodlands on the valley sides.



*Figure 28: High pasture of Rhyswg looking south down the Ebbw valley (Source: author).*





*Figure 28: Enclosures of beech hedges and walls on the Rhyswg ridge (Source: author).*



*Figure 29: Outgrown beech hedge, Rhyswg ridge (Source: author).*





From the Rhyswg Fawr farmstead a trackway passes through the beech-banked fields becoming an enclosed droveway towards the open common of Mynydd Maen (waypoint 6). This lane is also lined by beech hedges, now growing over and into the stone walls below them. Which came first the walls or hedge banks?

Aside from the steep tracks up from the Abercarn valley deep below, this mountain route is the only way into the grange and the most direct route from the abbey and the Magna Porta home manor, indicating its remote and difficult to access location.

Modern sheep pens flank the track's entrance to the mountain common, marked by a stone wall bounding the final fields. Here the lane, the main route to the Rhyswg Ganol farmstead at the eastern edge of the farmed land on the ridge, shows some sections of tarmac, mostly now grown over.

*Figure 30: Droveway towards the mountain common (Source: author).*



*Figure 31: Gateway to Mynydd Maen common, looking north-east (Source: author).*



The outer wall of the grange land is still upstanding and in good condition with some larger quartz boulders visible at its base, if it does date from the monastic period it has clearly been reconstructed; no sign of a bank and ditch along it.



*Figure 32: Outer wall of grange land, with quartz boulder visible at base (Source: author).*

A moorland track follows the western side of the ridge towards the highest ground of Mynydd Maen (waypoint 7). Another track (not followed today) takes a more circuitous route along the eastern edge then follows the boundary of Magna Porta manor down to Llanderfel and onto the abbey. The sides of the valley slope away vertiginously and would only ever have been useful for woodland resources (now largely plantation). A wall, probably of eighteenth or nineteenth century origin, tracks the divide between the tree-covered slopes and the open common.



*Figure 33: Looking back westwards towards the grange from the moorland path, a now boggy sunken track to the right (Source: author).*

The track, initially bounded by a ditch, soon becomes a narrow path progressing alongside an older shallow sunken way now filled with bog grass. Ahead a featureless expanse of moorland rises to the highest ground of the common, indicated by a line of pylons. Black Welsh cattle and sheep graze the course grasses of the hillside. Was this or the eastern track the main route to the grange from Magna Porta and the abbey?



*Figure 34: Looking north-east towards the highest ground of Mynydd Maen (Source: author).*

As the highest ground is reached a dead-straight track that initially follows the manor and parish boundary south-westwards is crossed. After cresting the mountain-top, the route drops along a winding green way, rocky in parts, that tracks the northern boundary of the Magna Porta manor along the edge of the cwm from which the Cwm Bran Brook springs (waypoint 8). Boundary stones are marked on the map along this path and an example, marking the boundary of mineral rights and dated 1839, is examined. Extensive views of the full extent of Cwmbran, the former abbey lands of Magna Porta, and the low hills of southern Monmouthshire stretch away towards the distant Bristol Channel.

To the right of the path the cwm, now green and wooded with a small reservoir nestled within it, was the site of the Porthmawr Colliery, developed in the mid-nineteenth century by the Blewitt family of Llantarnam Abbey. Much evidence of this industry, pre-dating the development of the new town, has been cleansed from the landscape.





*Figure 35: Track along manor and parish boundary stretching south-westwards (Source: author).*



*Figure 36: Mineral rights boundary stone (Source: author).*

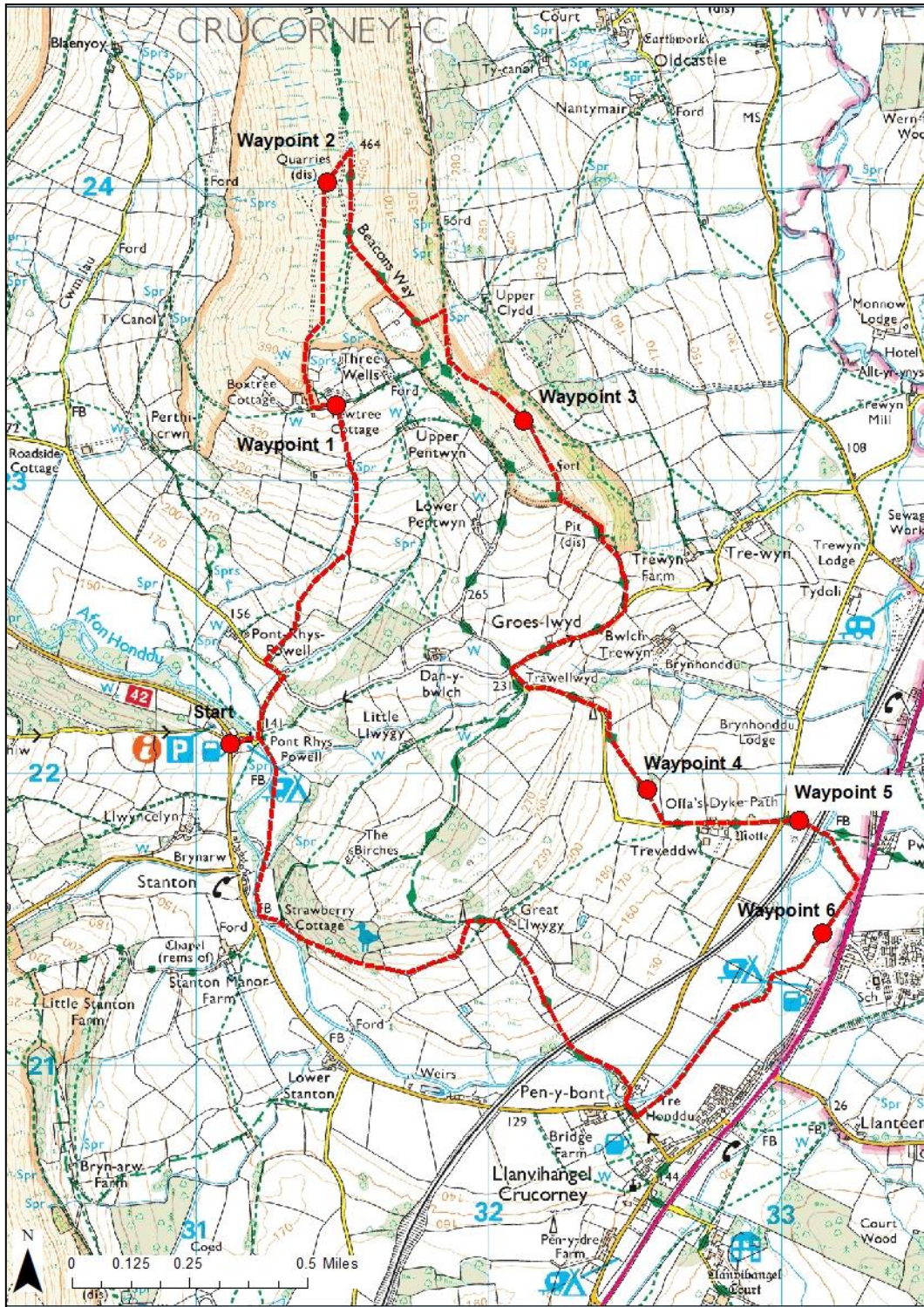


*Figure 37: Cwmbran looking south-east from the upper slopes of Mynydd Maen (Source: author).*



*Figure 38: The site of the Porthmawr Colliery (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Cwmyoy boundary and Redcastle landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2016
<b>Distance</b>	15 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Mostly sunny with some high cloud cover; good visibility
<b>Summary</b>	A walk along the line of the south-eastern section of the boundary of the Cwmyoy manor and through the Redcastle manor (see route on map above), informed by references to features in the 1612 manor survey.





*Figure 1: Boundary between Cwmyoy and Bwlch Trewyn manors formed by 'Henthoor' stream next to Pont Rees Powell Farm (Source: author).*



*Figure 2: The boundary at 'Nant y menyyn' stream (Source: author).*





*Figure 3: Looking northwards towards the mains woodlands of Cwmyoy manor (Source: author).*

Steep, boggy and quite inaccessible terrain here, would be hard going for legal clerks or surveyors carrying out the survey not used to the ground.

Stone everywhere – would have been used extensively in post-medieval period for house/ wall building.

Long, thin tube field near Public Right of Way on Trewyn side of boundary (with east field boundary marked by line of mature oaks) – for access to their upland common? Triangle of upland within Trewyn boundary gives important access to the upland grazing.



*Figure 4: High ground of Redcastle and Stanton manors, with Skirrid mountain in the background, looking south west (Source: author).*

Walking alongside the Mountain Wall bounding the cultivated land from the upland grazing – was it below the Three Wells settlement before encroachment then above afterwards? (waypoint 1 on the map). Three Wells lane not mentioned in the 1612 survey – therefore probably evidence that the settlements here developed later.



*Figure 5: Yew Tree Cottage (Three Wells) – presumably later encroachment (post 1612) on common land through which boundary follows a straight line (of white stones) (Source: author).*



*Figure 6: Large bank and ditch rectangular enclosure between Yew Tree and Box Tree (not on map but can trace on Google Earth). Similar to The Castle enclosure to the east, part of encroachment? (Source: author).*





*Figure 7: Mouth of Vale of Ewyas looking south: an area of manorial intersection: Cwmyoy, Redcastle, Stanton, Trewyn (Source: author).*

Upper boundary wall of Yew Tree enclosures: kink in wall – is this where the boundary dissects or just coincidence?

White boundary stones from the 1612 survey unlikely to be extant, except where marked on map/ HER.



*Figure 8: Extensive grassed over shallow quarry pits at point in survey that mentions quarrying (Source: author).*

If this point is 'Crossways' from 1612 survey, where was the other crossing path? No sign on modern or historic OS map or on the ground.

Deeper quarry pits further upslope. Quarries here perhaps less extensive when survey carried out? (waypoint 2).



*Figure 9: Looking south from the northern-most point of the Cwmyoy – Bwlch Trewyn boundary on the rough grazing common of Hatterall Hill, with ridge path ('Highway' in the 1612 survey) looking towards The Castle enclosure and Trewyn hill fort (Source: author).*

Mention of a 'Thatched cottage' here in the 1612 survey – was this still extant The Castle enclosure and ruin?



*Figure 10: Looking east over the land of Oldcastle manor, to the river Monnow in the centre of the picture (Source: author).*



Guessing here that the boundary takes a line directly down steep slope (alongside stream from spring east of the The Castle?), rather than following tracks (would mention if did?). Lots of white lichen covered rocky outcrops here. Down to Mountain Wall above Upper Clwyd, then follow Mountain Rhiw from Olchon up to Trewyn hillfort (waypoint 3).



*Figure 11: Line of the Mountain Wall on the eastern slope of Hatterall Hill above Oldcastle, looking north up the Monnow Valley (Source: author).*

The route stops following the boundary here and runs through Redcastle manor.



*Figure 12: Eastern portion of Redcastle manor, with Trefedw farmstead and motte in the middle ground (Source: author).*



*Figure 13: Boundary between Redcastle higher ground and Bwlch Trewyn manor (Source: author).*

'Redcastle to Longtown lane' in 1612 survey is probably the Trefedw to Trewyn lane.





*Figures 14, 15 and 16: Earthworks in field north of Trefedw farm, one of the possible sites for Redcastle church (Source: author).*



Platform in field north of Treveddw farm large enough for possible NW-SE or NE-SW orientation. Old stream bed/ possible spring site through site, remnants of field banks/ tracks. Lots of stone around, but could just be farm tip? (See rough sketch in notebook). (waypoint 4).



*Figures 17 and 18: Large stone at site (erratic?), signs of being dressed (Source: author).*





*Figure 19: Large block of worked stone by gate to the field (Source: author).*



*Figure 20: Treveddw farm – identified as possible Redcastle manorial centre (Source: author).*



*Figure 21: The motte and bailey in the 'Moat' field, south of Treveddw farm, which may give the Redcastle manor its name (Source: author).*

Struck how small the motte in Moat field south of Treveddw farm is; was it just a temporary structure during the period of initial Anglo-Norman incursion into the area rather than more permanent inhabitation? (waypoint 5).

Wyndham James who farmed here in the post-war period tells a story of an attempt to flatten the motte in the early twentieth century which had to be abandoned because a thunderstorm struck. A section that was removed can still be seen (this is also recorded in the NMR record, the site was scheduled in 1931) (Coflein, 306463; Russell James pers. comment).

No sign of earthworks around motte, but bailey etc. ploughed out (as recorded in the NMR). Could Redcastle church/ settlement have sprung up in the bailey around the motte?

Another candidate for the origin of the Redcastle name, Trewyn hillfort up the promontory of Hatterall Hill, can't really be seen from the lower-lying portion of Redcastle. Therefore, unlikely to be origin of the name, not an obvious reference point for this area.





*Figure 22: River Honddu bounding the Redcastle manor below the motte (Source: author).*



*Figure 23: Treveddw farm and lands of Redcastle manor, looking north from Pandy with field with extensive earthworks in the foreground (Source: author).*

Offa's Dyke path runs through a large field which is on the opposite side of the River Honddu from Redcastle (opposite the motte) and has extensive possible earthworks (see rough plan in notebook), including ford site, holloway (or old river bed/paleochannels?) and possible house platforms. Just outside Redcastle manor but is this a deserted medieval settlement site? No record in HER (waypoint 6).



*Figure 24: Millbrook farm, which may be the location of the 12<sup>th</sup> century inn of 'Millbrook' on the road from Llanvihangel Crucorney to Llanthony (Source: author).*

Path from Llanvihangel Crucorney bridge through the Strawberry Wood woodlands of Redcastle is part of the Beacons Way long-distance path.



*Figure 25: Redcastle manor's mix of water meadow, woodland, upland common (Source: author).*

It is noticeable here that the small manors of Redcastle, Oldcastle and Stanton adjacent to the main Llanthony home manor of Cwmyoy all have a similar morphology and land-use mix: south-facing in the lea of the uplands and containing a good mixture of river meadow, arable land on lower slopes, woodland and common hill pasture. Redcastle perhaps particularly fertile due to the glacial till that forms its higher ground.



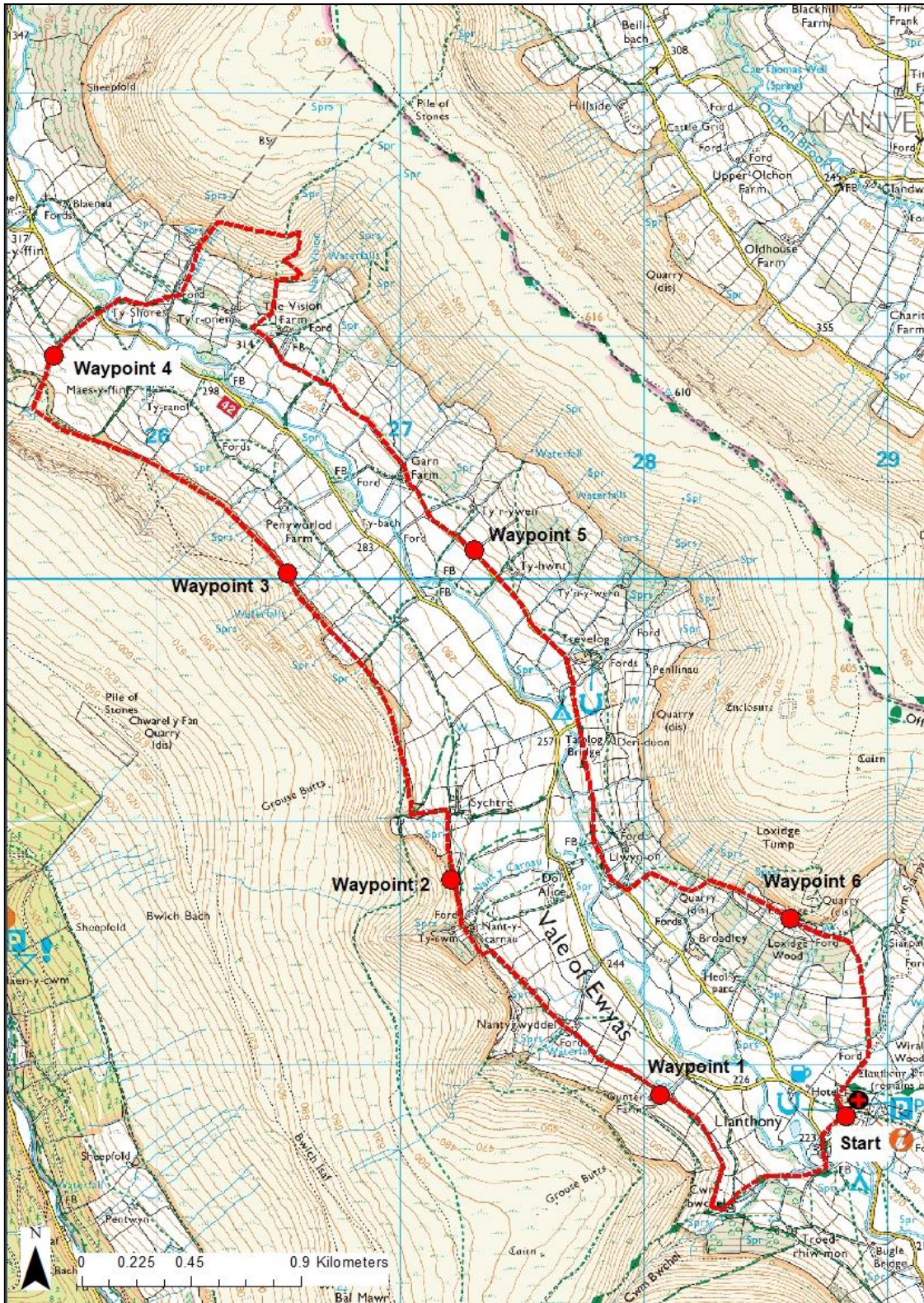


*Figure 26: Redcastle high ground, looking south from Pont Rhys Powell bridge (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: Pont Rees Powell bridge: the start and end of the Cwmyoy boundary survey of 1612 and a key medieval communication and manorial boundary landmark (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Cwmyoy north landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
<b>Distance</b>	17 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Sunny, clear skies
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the northern part of the Cwmyoy manor, above Llanthony Priory (see route on map above).





*Figure 1: Llanthony Priory looking east in its outer enclosure and parkland setting (Source: author).*

The path followed westwards above Cwm-bwchel farm is a banked section of the 'Parish road' along this side of the valley, now much overgrown.



*Figure 2 and 3: Sections of the Parish Road with stone wall bank on upslope side clearly visible (Source: author).*





*Figure 4: Site of Gunter's Farm, an abandoned 'spring line' farm (Source: author).*

The Parish Road links the 'spring line' farms such as Gunter's and runs parallel with the Mountain Wall further up slope or in places directly alongside, with regular diagonal 'rhiw' tracks up to the open common grazing land running uphill from it (waypoint 1). The pattern of farms along the valley located at the break in slope spring line at or just below the 'Mountain Wall' that denotes the boundary between the enclosed fieldscape below and the open common grazing land above



*Figure 5: Enclosed track running up from Gunter's Farm to the open common grazing (Source: author).*



This section of the Parish Road is distinct but overgrown and now little used. Although it is a Public Right of Way it is not maintained as a key walking route. Other sections of the Road are now part of popular walking paths, still used for agricultural use or part of the valley's metalled road network. The Road becomes very indistinct before and after Nantygwddel farm but can be picked up again halfway to Nant-y-carnau farm, though in poor condition.



*Figure 6: Nant-y-carnau farm, an example of the 'spring line' downslope farmsteads which originally combined living quarters and livestock in the same building (Source: author).*

The Parish Road has a different character to the rhiws that run uphill along the valley. Generally following the 250-300m contour lines it is wider and stone banked and, along with the spring line farmsteads which it links and the Mountain Wall, probably a feature of the expansion of agricultural land during the late fifteenth and sixteenth century as a new class of aspiring tenantry emerged (waypoint 2). The road raises key questions around how its construction was coordinated, did it link existing piecemeal sections of trackway and is this recorded in documentary sources? It seems likely that there would have already been some established farmsteads, enclosures and tracks here at this time, but this piecemeal development was greatly expanded to produce the pattern still observed today.



*Figure 7: View south-east down the Vale of Ewyas towards Llanthony Priory from above Sychtre farm (Source: author).*

Here the view is of a sylvan scene, though the wooded aspect of the landscape would have varied over time: largely wooded with small clearings for settlement and agriculture up to the early medieval period; larger areas of cultivated fields and meadows lower down with open wood pasture and managed woodland on the higher slopes during the medieval period; piecemeal enclosure and a general reduction in tree cover during the post-medieval period; a fieldscape largely denuded of woodland by the nineteenth century; and a return to a more wooded character in the modern period as hedgerow trees have grown larger and unmanaged woodland has returned to previously cultivated land.

Above the main spring line farms, many of which are still extant, are smaller, now generally either ruined or converted farmsteads that are part of a second wave of expansion further into the common grazing lands further up the side of the valley during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The small and irregular intake fields that developed with these farmsteads on the steep ground of the upper valley slopes above the Mountain Wall have now largely been 'reclaimed' by scrub, bracken and woodland regrowth.





*Figure 8: Ty-cwm, a now converted farmstead above the spring line farm of Nant-y-carnau (Source: author).*

The route now follows the line of the Mountain Wall to the northern boundary of the Cwmyoy manor with the Parish Road running parallel downslope through the higher enclosed pastures (waypoint 3).



*Figure 8: Possible medieval assarted fields on the eastern side of the valley. The fields rising to a higher level on this side due to its south-eastern facing aspect (Source: author).*



*Figure 9: Garn farm (centre) looking north-west towards the northern boundary of the Cwmyoy manor. An example of an old valley farm, possibly medieval in origin, with its surrounding irregular fields and later enclosures of the previously open common wood pasture climbing the hillside (Source: author).*



*Figure 10: Common grazing 'ffridd' of the upper, steeper slopes above the Mountain Wall and to the exposed ridge plateau. Now often colonised by bracken where not regularly grazed but traditionally a habitat for wild grasses, hawthorn, mountain ash and other species of upland plants (Source: author).*

The Mountain Wall path passes above Penyworlod farm. There are several farms in the study area with this name (meaning 'top of the meadow'), other examples are located at the upper limit of the enclosed pasture land below the Mountain Wall. In



this case the farmstead is further down the hillside, perhaps an older *tref* steading, above the riverside meadows in the valley bottom.



*Figure 12: Section of the Mountain Wall diving common upland grazing land to the left and enclosed intake pasture to the right (Source: author).*

The path alongside the Mountain Wall on the common grazing side is often stony indicating a constructed surface in the past as the line of the wall developed as a route along the upper slopes.



*Figures 12 and 13: Northern boundary of the Cwmyoy manor on both sides of the valley (left – eastern side; right – western side) following Nant-y-ffin stream, the wooded gully in the centre of the pictures) and then a straight line to the top of the ridge.*

The northern boundary of Cwmyoy manor follows a natural feature from the river Honddu, in both cases a stream and steep-sided gully called Nant-y-ffin (meaning 'stream of the border') and then a straight line marked by boundary stones (a few examples of which are still *in situ*) to the top of the ridge (waypoint 4).



*Figure 14: Upland stock enclosure straddling the manorial boundary (Source: author).*



*Figure 15: Deep gully of Nant-y-ffin along which the manorial boundary runs (Source: author).*





*Figure 16: Ford across the Honddu at the manorial boundary (Source: author).*

The Parish Road on the eastern side of the valley ends at the manorial and parish boundary (at the Ty-shores farmstead) and only continues further up the valley as a field path.

A holloway climbs the hill alongside the Nant-y-ffin boundary above Ty-shores farmstead to the top of the enclosed pasture from where a diagonal rhiw track traverses the upper slope southwards from a quarry or collapsed stone structure near the boundary. The line of the boundary above this point is precipitously steep to the top of the ridge: a line on the map rather than an accessible feature.



*Figure 17: The steep line of the manorial boundary in the higher part of the Nant-y-ffin gully (Source: author).*



*Figure 18: Glacial U-shape of the Vale of Ewyas looking south from the northern boundary, the parallel horizontal lines of the Mountain Wall and Parish Road (to Penyworldod farm) clearly visible on the right-hand side of the valley (Source: author).*





*Figure 19: Rhiw track climbing diagonally via a dog-leg turn to the upland grazing of Chwarel-y-fan from Penyworldod farm (Source: author).*

The route follows a metalled section of the Parish Road south from Vision Farm (waypoint 5). Decisions made about which sections of road to improve with new tarmac surfaces during the inter-war period would have a significant impact on the farmsteads and communities that were on the new road network and those that were not, with the latter more likely to be abandoned. The Parish Road is mostly metalled all the way south to Llanthony on this side of the valley, connecting a line of still working farms.

*Figure 20: Metalled section of the Parish Road on the eastern side of the valley looking south (Source: author).*



*Figure 21: Rudimentary bridge across a stream on an unmetalled section of the eastern Parish Road. Narrower than the metalled section but still bounded by hedges (Source: author).*







*Figure 22: Wood pasture character evident in the upper fields between Llwyn-on and Broadley farms (Source: author).*

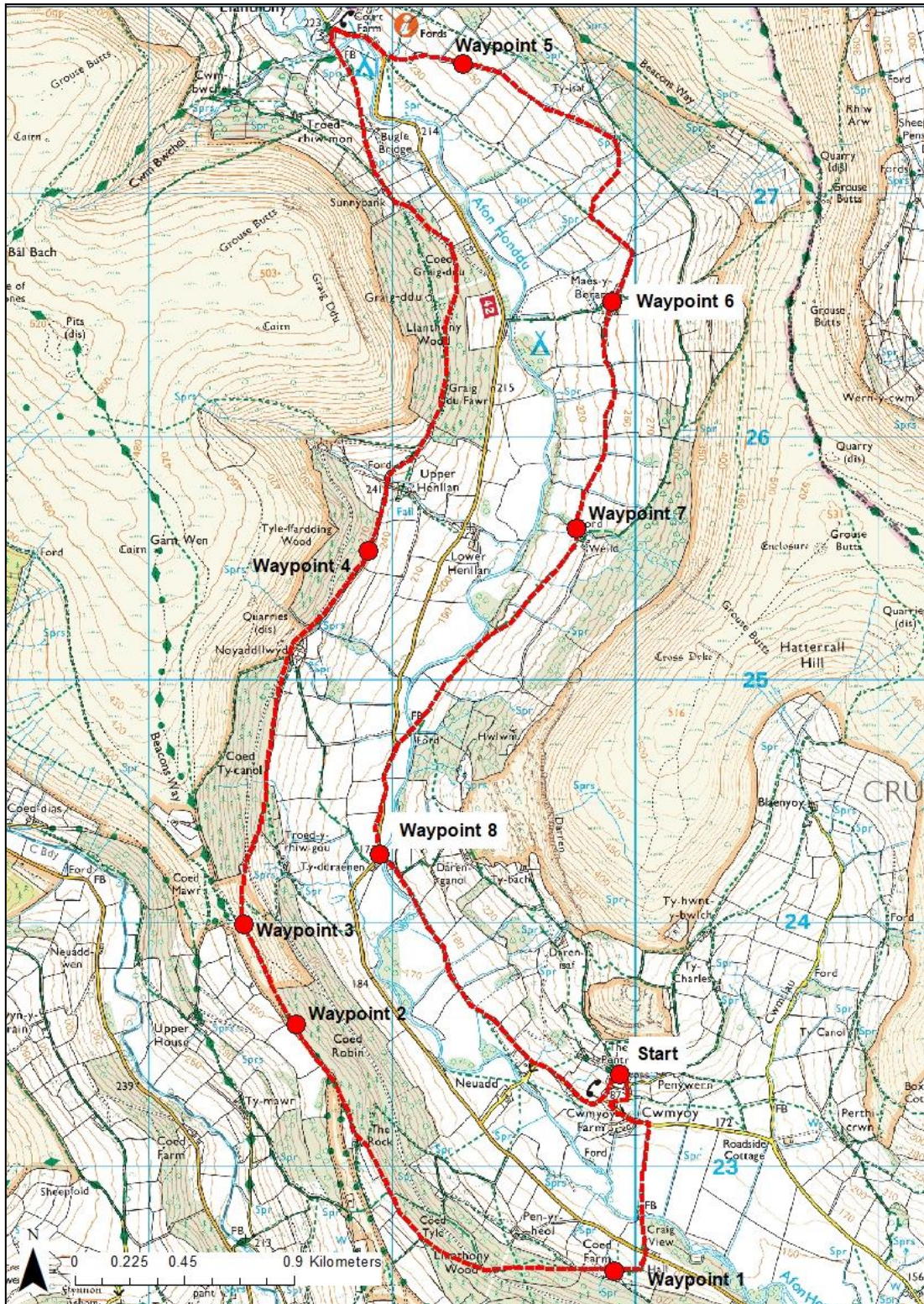


*Figure 23: Spring-line farms located on stream gulleys: Nantygwiddel (left) and Nant-y-carnau (right) (Source: author).*



*Figure 24: Loxidge farm, now in woodland above Llanthony Priory (waypoint 6)  
(Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Cwmyoy south landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2016
<b>Distance</b>	17.7 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Low cloud with rain (mist and poor visibility on higher ground) then turning to sunny spells
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the southern part of the Cwmyoy manor, below Llanthony Priory (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: St Martin's church, Cwmyoy (Source: author).*

The church now seems small, decrepit and antique. The crooked nature of the building due to its location on an area of landslip would not have been in evidence during the medieval period; it would have seemed a large and impressive building in its medieval context, and in comparison, with the wood and thatch structures of the surrounding area. Similarly, the small, winding lanes and paths around the church and the hamlet of Cwmyoy now seem like narrow back-waters but not during the pre-modern periods when they were relatively busy thorough-fares (and when many of the paths and tracks would have been wider and probably in better condition, less overgrown than now).



*Figure 2: Site of Cwmyoy farmhouse, possibly the home farm for Cwmyoy manor, now occupied by a Georgian house (Source: author).*





*Figure 3: Coed Farm, possibly the base for the Cwmyoy manor's woodland, in its woodland setting (Source: author).*

The belt of woodland that covers much of the western side of the lower Vale of Ewyas was probably subject to assarting from the late-medieval period onwards and had been largely deforested by the end of the nineteenth century, eventually being replaced by commercial conifer plantations with, more recently, native broadleaf trees being extensively replanted and now maturing.

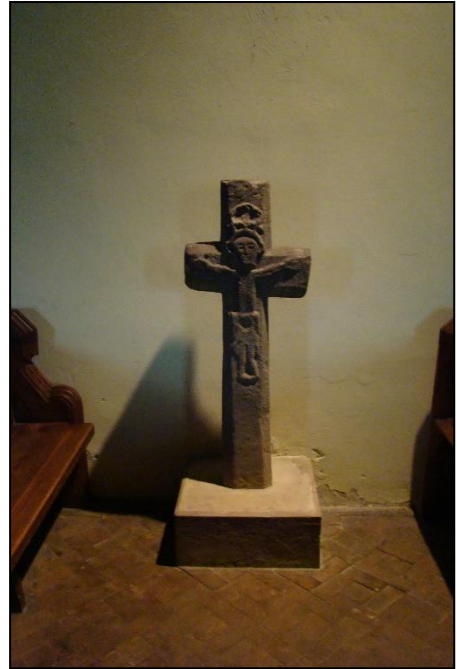
Coed Farm is now rather ramshackle, an 'old school' working farm of which there are still many examples locally, retaining not only much of the original fabric of the farmhouse and associated buildings but also the character of a mid-twentieth century farm (waypoint 1). An old stone barn is slowly collapsing, whilst the adjacent steel and corrugated iron structures stand firm. There is much rusting machinery and the ubiquitous discarded or re-used plastic feed bags in evidence around the farmyard.

'O'er there he is, in that corner', mutters the farmer as I ask directions from the farmyard to the public footpath, which is not sign-posted; his accent could be of Herefordshire or Wales but perhaps more West Country than liling.

As I leave the yard my ears fill with the barking of dogs, sheep bleating and birdsong and I climb a field luminous green from fresh rain its edge carpeted with blue bells just past their late Spring best.

Farms in the valley seem to fit into one of four broad categories:

- a) Twentieth-century hill farms
- b) Abandoned ruins
- c) Residential conversions
- d) More prosperous modern farms/ diversified businesses



*Figures 4 and 5: 'Cross Field', the uneven field in mid-shot, in which the medieval wayside cross now housed in St Martin's Church (pictured) may have been buried during the Reformation (Source: author).*



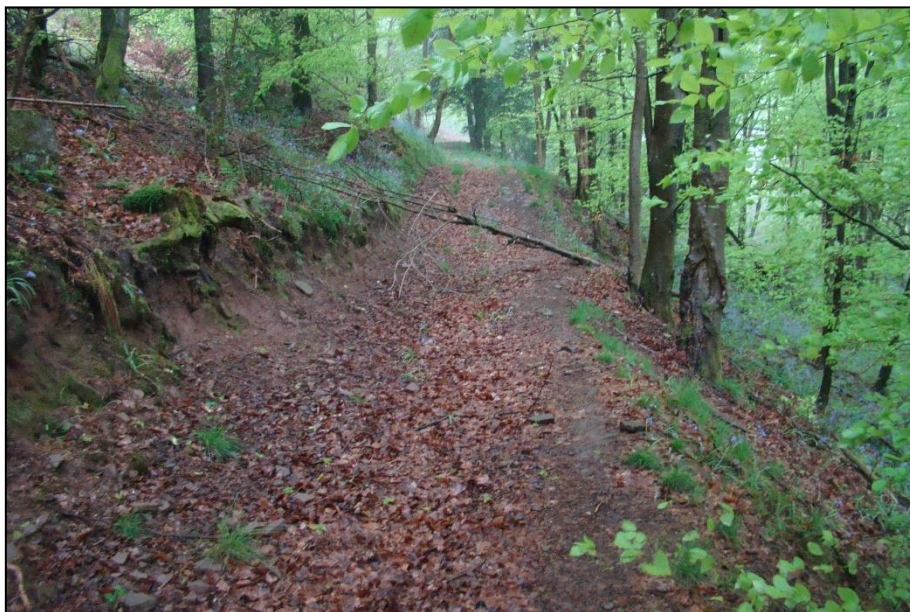
*Figure 6 and 7: The site of Cwmyoy mill on the River Honddu, now being reclaimed by nature: the decay of material culture alongside loss of memory (Source: author).*





*Figure 8 and 9: An old path through young woods, as the old woodland areas of Cwmyoy manor regenerate (Source: author).*

This upper belt of woodland here was too steep to assart and convert to pasture and was retained as the manor's main worked wood and timber resource. Now a scene of apparent 'natural beauty' but utility was the main characteristic of such areas during the medieval period. Further north the woods are named 'Llanthony Wood', a memory of their setting at the heart of the priory's home manor.



*Figure 10: Well-engineering track through the woods, now designated as a bridleway but away from the modern forestry track (Source: author).*



Such tracks have evidence of stone and cobble paved surfaces and foundations now much broken up and dispersed. When these ways were in more regular use for agricultural, forestry and through traffic it would have been in people's interest to keep in good order. They would therefore probably have been mostly in better condition than now and perhaps than received wisdom would have it.

*Figure 11; A 'rhiw' track through woodland up to the common rough grazing of the upper slopes, now reclaimed by nature. A surprisingly quick process once a path has started to be used less often, in this case due to a fallen tree, and not maintained (Source:*



The unmettled rutted track along the Fwddog ridge that traverses the western side of the Vale of Ewyas (waypoint 2), which has the remains of stone cobbles under its muddy surface, remains a yellow minor road on the modern Ordnance Survey map: a memory of the previous importance of these ridge-top routeways, which were the main communication network prior to the development of new turnpike roads during the eighteenth century.





*Figure 12; Remnants of an engineered causeway and ditch track from Troed y rhiw gou farm to the Fwddog ridge (Source: author).*



*Figure 13: Well-constructed boundary wall on the Fwddog ridge, not simply a field boundary but part of the 'Mountain Wall' that separates the unenclosed upland common grazing land from the fields below. In this case the wall also represents a*

*manorial, parish and, until the nineteenth century, national boundary (Source: author).*



*Figure 14; Dial Garreg ('revenge stone'), marking the scene of the ambush and slaughter of the Norman Marcher Lord Richard de Clare in the early twelfth century (Source: author).*

Low cloud envelops the Ffwddog ridge above the Vale of Ewyas and in this weather the site of Dial Garreg does seem a malevolent place, where deep history feels close at hand (waypoint 3). It is no surprise that myths and stories from the past were very much alive in the lives of our ancestors.





*Figure 15: Remnant of a possible causewayed rhiw path up to the Ffwddog ridge at Dial Garreg (Source: author).*

This western side of the southern part of the Vale of Ewyas contains a long bank of woodland including Llanthony Wood, Coed Robin and Coed Canol. The gradient down to the river is steeper on this side of the valley and its north-east facing aspect means that it receives less sunlight. This was therefore a logical position for the manor's main woodland resource, whilst the other side of the valley was exploited for arable and pasture. The name of the ridge above, Ffwddog ('beech trees') supports this hypothesis, and recent decades have seen the return of native beech, oak and ash in place of the commercial conifers that had been planted in these woodlands during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.



*Figure 16: New growth beech woods north of Noyaddllwyd farm (Source: author).*



*Figure 17: The on-going replacement of conifer plantation with native species in Coed Robin (Source: author).*



*Figure 18: Section of the old 'parish road' track linking farmsteads along the spring line south of Noyaddllwyd farm; one of the main routeways through the valley before the modern valley bottom road was constructed (Source: author).*

The Parish Road is a feature of the length of the valley on both the east and west mid-slope. Linking the network of farmsteads at this level, the track is in parts now disused or only used as a footpath but its construction as a well-engineered, wide banked causeway can still be discerned along much of its length (waypoint 4).





*Figure 19: Noyadllwyd ('grey hall'): a possible early example of the rebuilding of farmsteads in stone that commenced in the valley in the mid fifteenth century (Source: author).*



*Figure 20: Upper Henllan Farm: An example of the spring line farms along the valley sides (previously known as Middle Henllan farm as a farmstead further upslope, now ruined, was named Upper Henllan) (Source: author).*



*Figure 21: Boggy area of land occupied by an alder carr. A number of fields in the valley include the element 'wern' meaning alder trees of watery in their name as recorded on the 1852 Tithe Map (Source: author).*



*Figure 22: The hamlet of Llanthony, which only exists because of the siting here of the Priory (Source: author).*





*Figures 23 and 24: Sections of the disused trackway from Bugley Meadow up to the open common grazing land, named 'Old Roadway' on the 1852 Tithe Map (Source: author).*

The Old Roadway down from the Haterrall ridge to the priory is now a deeply incised holloway in parts and has become the line of the stream (now dried up) that previously flowed directly downhill along the south boundary of Bugley Meadow (waypoint 5). Further uphill, a broad drove-way appears to have been cut by two deep ditches, probably caused by water erosion since the track fell out of use, leaving a high raised middle section. This is possibly further field evidence that this track formed the main transportation route for the priory's sheep flocks from a sheepcot in Bugley Meadow to the upland grazing pasture.





*Figure 25: A ford constructed of large slabs of sandstone as the Old Roadway crosses a stream below Ty Isaf farmstead (Source: author).*



*Figure 26: A wood pasture scene above Maes y berrin farmstead: an open mix of areas of woodland and pasture was probably the dominant topography of the lower slopes of the valley hill-sides away from arable closes and other enclosures around farmsteads prior to the commencement of the piecemeal enclosure into the field system largely seen today from the mid-sixteenth century to the nineteenth century (Source: author).*





*Figures 27, 28 and 29: Sections of what was the main trackway from the priory to the home manor of Cwmyoy, since superseded by the valley road on the other side of the river but remembered in the line of a modern right of way footpath (Source: author).*

The old trackway from the priory to Cwmyoy is now a quiet field path but the lines of its bank and wider course in the landscape bear witness to its previous life as a busier thoroughfare.

This would have been a more open landscape and the track would have passed through (or delineated?) wood pasture above and arable land and water meadows below.



*Figure 30: Maes y beran: one of the old valley farmsteads on the line of the Llanthony-Cwmyoy main routeway (Source: author).*

Farms such as Maes y berrin (waypoint 6) are now linked to the modern through valley road by farm lanes climbing the hillside, which gives them the feeling and appearance of remote and inaccessible hill farms; literally ‘off the beaten track’. Before the age of the car they were on the main routeways which linked farm to farm and so were social hubs for travellers and the day-to-day business of the agricultural economy.



*Figure 31: A distinctive block of long sheep-runs from old valley routeway and Maes y beran and Weild farmsteads up to higher common grazing. Was this the Priory’s main sheep pasture area? (Source: author).*





*Figure 32: Weild farmstead: a rare example of one of the older, larger valley farms in the valley now in ruins due to nineteenth century farm consolidation (Source: author).*

Walkers pass through the farmyard of Weild (waypoint 7) on the old trackway from Llanthony to Cwmyoy (the farm name is possibly derived from the Welsh 'heol' meaning road) largely unaware that it was a substantial and long-standing farm well into the nineteenth century; just as much a relic of the valley's past as the priory ruins two miles away (Source: author).



*Figure 33: Large scoured sandstone rock on the bank of the Llanthony-Cwmyoy old trackway (Source: author).*

The route of the old trackway fords the river below Noyadllwyd farm and crosses to the other side of the valley for a short distance before passing back to eastern side at Rhyd-yr-Honddu (an old crossing point for not only this route but also the track up

and over the Ffwdog ridge to the neighbouring Groyne Fawr valley which formed PART of an onward route into Wales) (waypoint 8). This diversion skirts around the area of landslip at Darren and here the modern valley road follows the line of the old road between the two fords: a noticeably narrow, curvy and causewayed section of the metalled road.

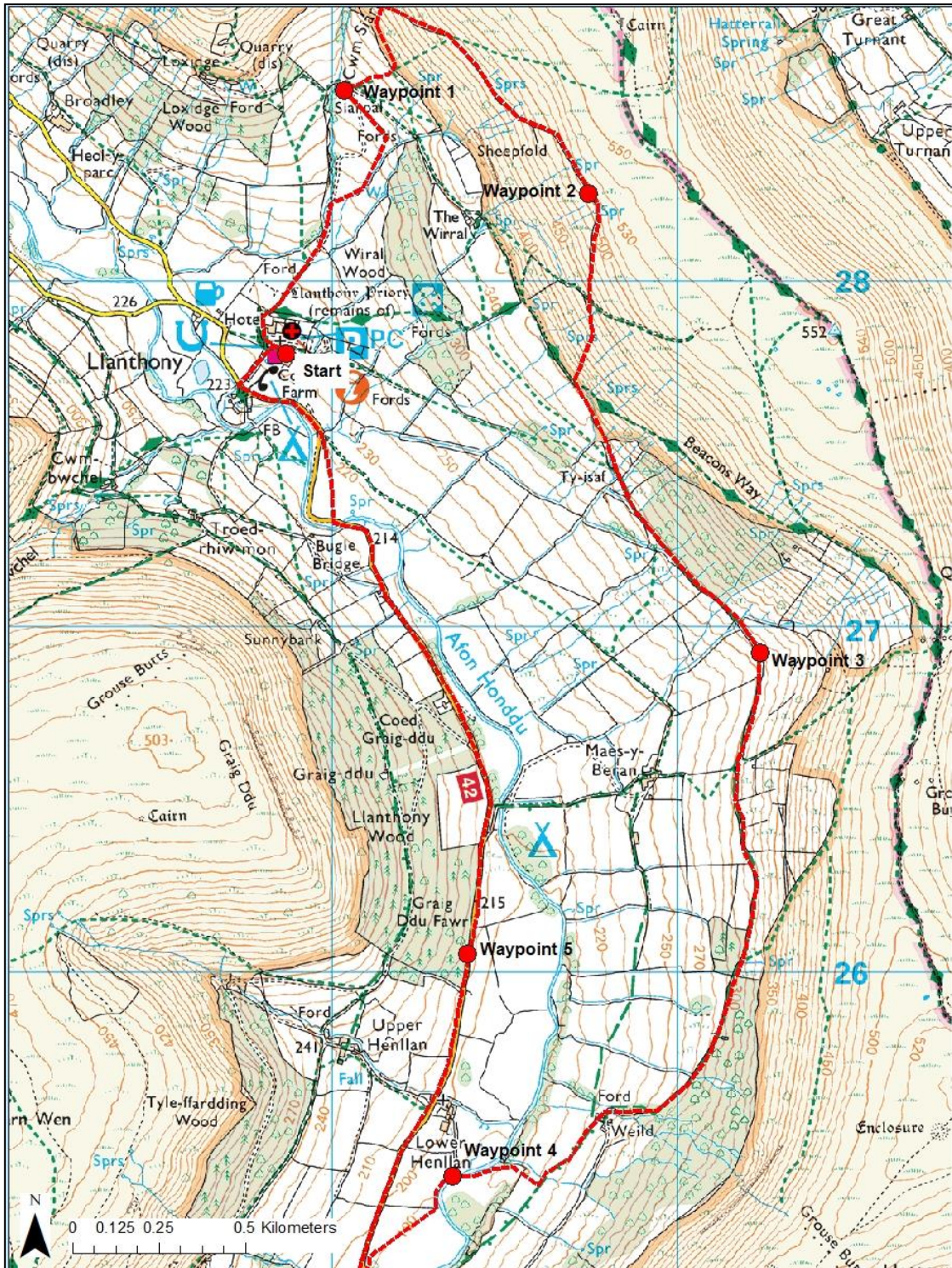


Figure 34: Causewayed section of the modern valley road (Source: author).



Figure 35: Memorial in St Martin's Church, Cwmyoy to members of the Williams family who lived at Siarpal (originally Sharpall) before it was remodelled into the site of a never-completed mansion house by Walter Savage Landor, the owner of the Llanthony Estate in the early nineteenth century (Source: author).





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Landscape of Walter Savage Landor walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2016
<b>Distance</b>	11 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Thin cloud with sunny spells
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around landscape features associated with Walter Savage Landor's early nineteenth century, largely unfinished, project to turn Llanthony into a fashionable country house estate (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: Vista of Landor's parkland landscape looking north-east towards Siarpal Cwm from Llanthony Priory (Source: author).*



*Figure 2: Mature larches, examples of the many trees planted during Landor's tenure (Source: author).*

The route initially climbed from the priory up to the site of Landor's mansion house in Cwm Siarpal, The Grove (waypoint 1), through the outer enclosure of the medieval priory, landscaped and planted with large numbers of trees during Landor's time.





*Figure 3: Looking towards the site of Landor's uncompleted mansion, The Grove. Landor's parkland vision realised two hundred years later? (Source: author).*

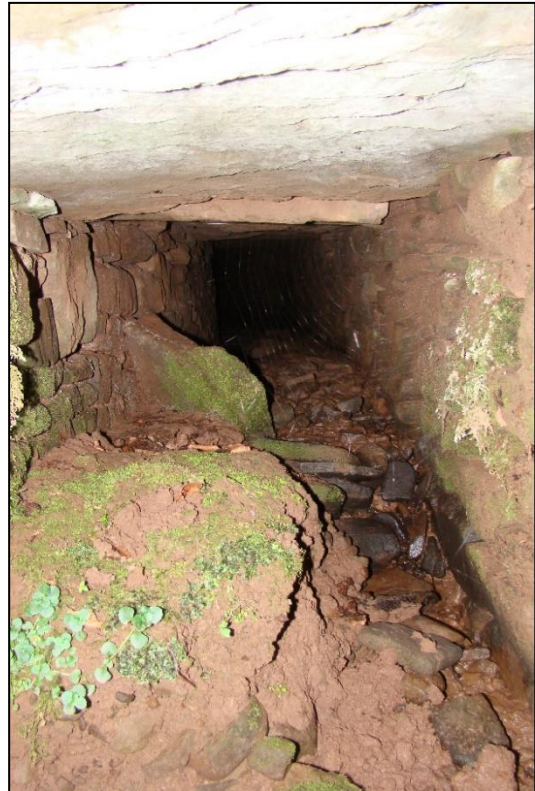


*Figure 4: Embanked approach to possible bridge site below The Grove (Source: author).*

Local lore and written chronicles on Landor's time at Llanthony talk of the construction of an approach road to The Grove through the valley, connected by new bridges and flanked with planted trees. A clear earthwork feature, possibly an embanked track, runs downhill off the modern drive up to the mansion ruin ending at the gully to the south of the house site. In the gully the remains of a well-constructed drain (surely too sophisticated to be a simple field drain for such a minor waterway?) to carry the small stream, which has now overshot the blocked drain upstream, can be observed with large amounts of stone, possibly from a bridge structure



constructed above the drain. Whether this was ever complete or not is unclear. There are no signs of a trackway on the other side of the bridge site.



*Figures 5 and 6: Site of possible bridge, with raised embankment to the left and drain in the bottom of the gully; view inside the drain (Source: author).*



*Figure 7: Ruin of The Grove mansion, little remaining of the main house to the left, recently roofed and stabilised coach house to the right (Source: author).*





*Figure 8: View from The Grove up to the upper enclosure*

The route climbs steeply to follow the outer wall of the high enclosure above Cwm Siarpal and extending south to Ty Isaf (waypoint 2). This enclosure takes in steep ground and its upper wall is at a height of 520 metres, much higher than the level of the Mountain Wall which extends around the valley and marks the boundary between the enclosed fields below and the open common upland grazing above. The Mountain Wall forms the lower boundary of this enclosure. Now filled with mature trees and indicated as a wood on the Budgen map of 1814. Was this planted by Landor as part of his parkland vision or perhaps as a wood pasture enclosure for his imported Spanish sheep?



*Figure 9: Indication of the steep, wooded nature of the upper enclosure (Source: author).*





*Figures 10, 11, 12 and 13: Sections of the outer wall of the upper enclosure (Source: author).*

The outer wall of the upper enclosure climbs diagonally at either side with a middle section parallel with the contour though with a significant kink halfway. It runs for approximately two kilometres and is much larger than other examples of intake fields in the study area.



The wall has a different character to other sections of the Mountain Wall. It is composed of a thick stone-filled bank sloped downhill, often two metres wide, with revetment layered stonework, slightly titled downslope on the upper side and with now much disturbed stone layers on top. The structure is bounded on its upper side by a parallel ditch to drain water coming down the steep slope away. Large rectangular slabs form the revetment at regular intervals and were perhaps originally secured in place on top of the bank to give it extra height. The wall may have been constructed using stone from the existing Mountain Wall which became the lower part of the enclosure boundary, with the upper section becoming its new *de facto* line. Interestingly though, this upper enclosure is not included as a recorded field, or even marked, on the 1852 Cwmyoy tithe map; perhaps an indication of residual antipathy towards Landor and his grand plans? An alternative option is that the enclosure was already in place as part of the infrastructure of the Siarpal farmstead that preceded Landor's mansion, and then subsequently forested.



*Figures 14 and 15: Examples of the regular large rectangular slabs in the wall of the upper enclosure (Source: author).*

The south-eastern portion of the enclosure wall and bank continues steeply downhill to the Parish Road at the foot of the Beer Path, but the line is hard to follow in the thick and high summer bracken.



*Figure 16: View looking south-west from the top of the upper enclosure with the parkland trees on the slope below, the priory in the middle ground and the opposite side of the valley noticeably colonised by encroaching trees and scrub when compared to photographs from the early twentieth century (Source: author).*

The route then follows the Parish Road (waypoint 3) to the ruined farmstead of Weild. The initial section to the ruin of Ty Isaf farm is abandoned, boggy and overgrown but traceable as a walled level road surface.



*Figure 17: Ungrazed upper pastures returning to scrub and wood pasture (Source: author).*





*Figure 18: Line of Parish Road above Maes-y-beran farm, now a field path in this section (Source: author).*

Pasture fields here lie on a shelf of less steeper ground above Maes-y-beran and Weild farmsteads, emphasising the benefits of this eastern side of the valley for agriculture.

The Parish Road unusually drops its level down to Weild farm before returning to its line traversing the higher enclosed pastures. Again, this section of the road is disused and overgrown.

Below Weild traces of a trackway down to the river opposite Henllan can be observed as recorded on nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps. This is the potential link between Henllan, one of the old valley farmsteads, with the main old routeway on the eastern side of the valley.



*Figure 19: Overgrown section of Parish Road down to Weild (Source: author).*





*Figures 20, 21 and 22: Landor's bridge at Henllan (Source: author).*

The remains of the bridge that Landor had constructed below Henllan stand in isolation of any road, though are linked to the farmstead by a grassed trackway (waypoint 4). The local name given to the bridge is 'Devil's Bridge' which may be an ironic moniker remembering the uneasy and difficult relationship between the poet and his tenants.

The bridge may have replaced an earlier structure, or ford, forming part of the routeway from Henllan northwards to the Weild but is orientated southwards towards Cwmyoy. This suggests that the intention was for the bridge to form part of a route from Cwmyoy to Henllan, though there is no sign of a roadway in the meadow on the



southern side of the river or the steep bank up to the old trackway on that side of the valley. The bridge may have been part of a scenic diversion from the main valley routes that was never completed. If Landor's vision included a dedicated road up the valley to Llanthony it would seem likely that the focus was on improving and linking existing sections of trackways, of which the modern valley road is perhaps the legacy rather than an entirely different route for which there is no archaeological, cartographical or documentary evidence other than the bridge sites discussed here.



*Figures 23 and 24: Landor's bridge at Henllan (Source: author).*

The high arch of the bridge would have required significant embankments on both approaches to the bridge in order for wheeled traffic to cross it. It was perhaps never fully completed or sections of the stonework have subsequently been removed.

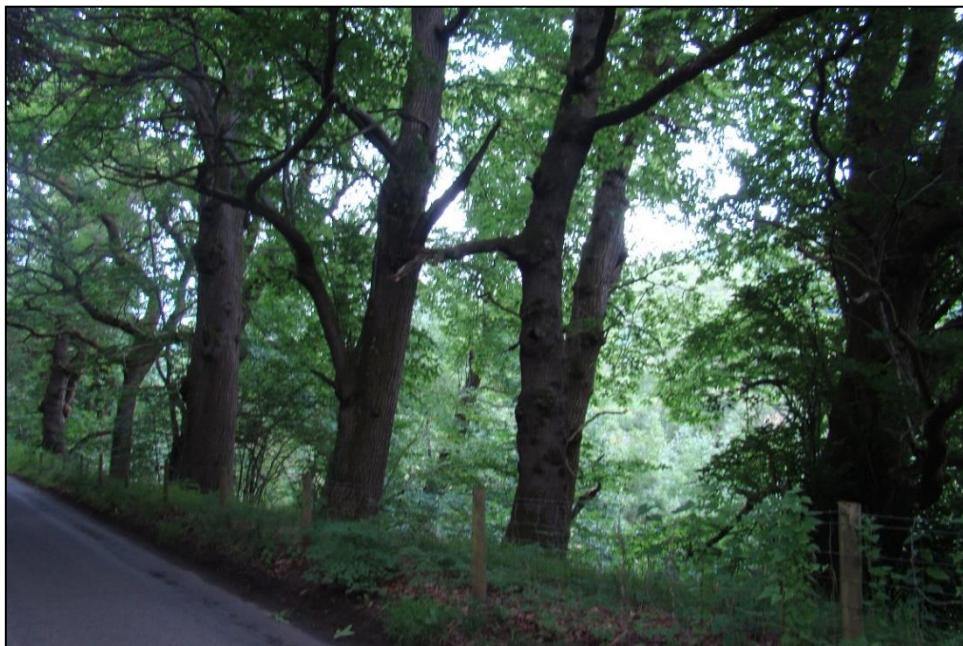
The route back to Llanthony followed the modern road through the valley (waypoint 5). Along which many examples of large un-pollarded oaks, beech, copper beech, larch and other non-native tree species can be observed. Many of which are likely to date from Landor's period of intensive tree planting. A grove of particularly tall, thick and twisted oak and beech runs for over one kilometre lining a steep bank down to the river Honddu, from the lane to Maes-y-berrin farm to Bugle Bridge.



*Figure 25: Straight and wide section of the main road south of Henllan (Source: author).*

The road to Llanthony is unusually straight and, in places, broad compared to more winding character of most lanes in the area and of the same road above Llanthony to the head of the valley. The road is accompanied by a deep ditch for the particularly straight and wide section south of Henllan. Constructing or improving these sections of road would have been a significant project and may well be another legacy of Landor's time and, in fact, form part of his landscaped routeway to Llanthony: an impressive approach combining contrived features and additions with the perceived 'natural' grandeur of the valley.





*Figures 26, 27 and 28: Examples of large trees in the grove alongside the main valley road (Source: author).*

A prominent stand of old larches lines the road beyond Bugle Bridge as it follows the curve of the river to Llanthony. These are known locally as ‘Landor’s larches’.





*Figure 29: 'Landor's larches' (Source: author).*

The main road is joined at a right-angle bend by the field path tracing the route of the old eastern valley trackway from Cwmyoy and the Old Roadway down from the Hatterall ridge and Longtown. Whilst the road then curves round to another sharp bend at the priory gatehouse, once the main entrance to the priory, a drive now branches off forming the modern way in to the priory complex. This drive may have been the work of Landor or one of his predecessors.

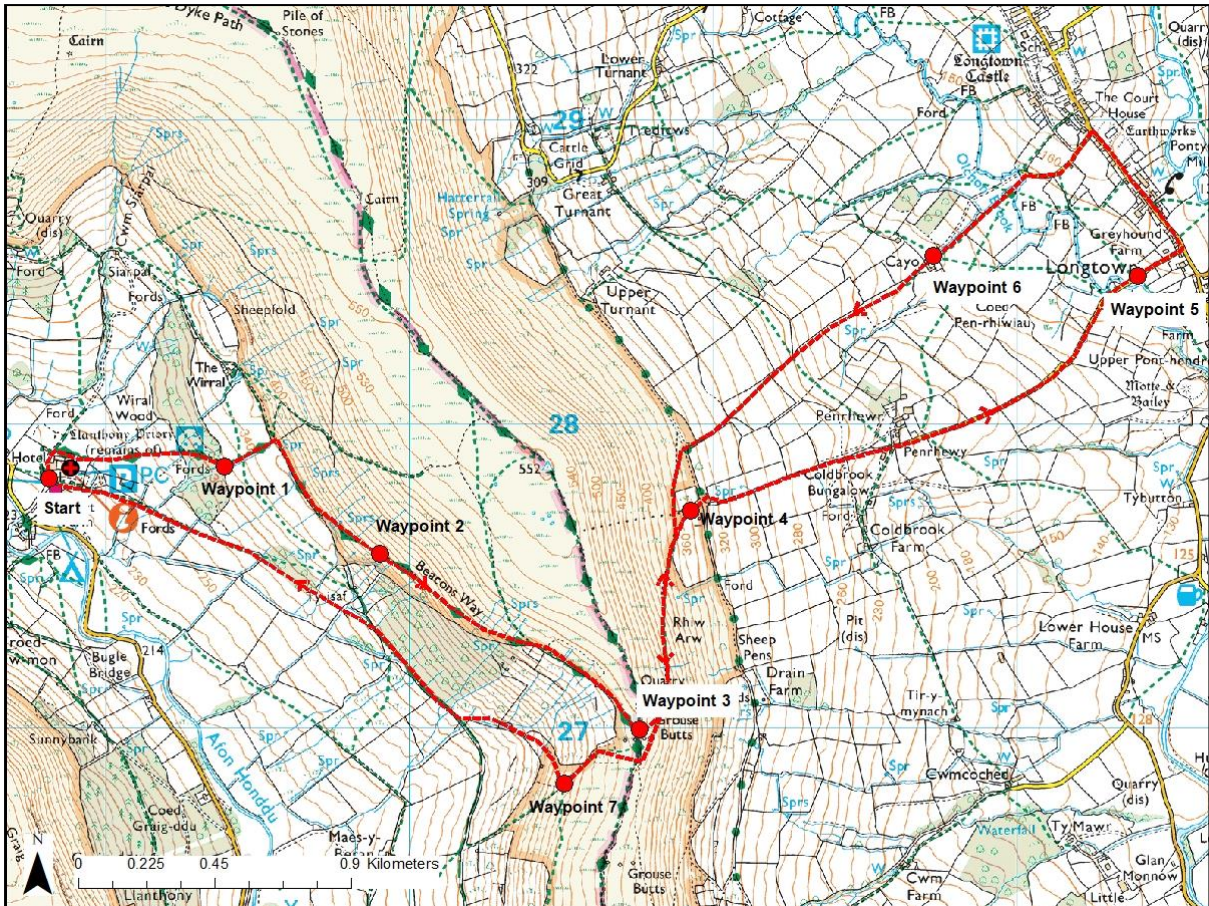


*Figure 30: Junction of main road (to the right) and the older eastern valley and Old Roadway routes (to the left) (Source: author).*





*Figure 31: Modern driveway to Llanthony Priory (Source: author).*



<b>Walk</b>	<b>Monastic route from Llanthony to Longtown landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2016
<b>Distance</b>	14 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Cloudy but clear day, with rain settling in and some mist during the return journey
<b>Summary</b>	A walk along the probable (and alternative) route between Llanthony and the local base of the priory's main benefactors, the de Lacy family at Longtown (see route on map above)

The route initially follows the modern Beer Path walking route up to the ridge of Hatterall Hill, which drops down to the priory through Wiral Wood and passes through the outer enclosure rather than via the main entry point at the old gatehouse (Figures 1 and 2; and waypoint 1 on the map). However, this seems more likely to be a *rhiw* track used by local farmers to access the upland common grazing, perhaps post-dating the monastic period, which has subsequently become the main walking and pony-trekking route down to Llanthony from the Offa's Dyke long-distance footpath along the Hatterall ridge.





*Figure 1: Holloway route of the modern Beer Path through Wiral Wood, with deeper parallel section to the left (Source: author).*



*Figure 2: Section of the Parish Road forming part of the modern Beer Path (Source: author).*



*Figures 3 and 4: The rhiw section of the Beer Path climbing up to the Hatterall ridge from Llanthony: no sign of a constructed stone causeway as observed in other routeways out of the priory, including the parallel Old Roadway (Source: author).*

The modern Beer Path has more in common in its morphology with the many diagonal *rhiw* paths ranged along the valley and connecting farmsteads with the upland common land (Figures 3 and 4; and waypoint 2). The path is rocky in parts but this seems to be irregular slabs of bedrock due to erosion rather than a constructed surface. Overall, it is different in character to the other posited sections of the Llanthony to Longtown monastic route.





*Figure 5: Cross-roads of braided rhiw paths visited on the return leg of the walk and which may have been part of the monastic route to Longtown (Source: author).*

From the top section of the Beer Path *rhiw* a prominent pattern of braided cross-road tracks can be seen further south and above Mais-y-berrin farm (Figure 5). This provides a zig-zag link between the Rhiw Arw track to the ridge from Longtown and the broad Old Roadway holloway to the priory, posited as the more likely main monastic routeway up to the ridge (see notes and photographs from the Cwmyoy south walk), and will be explored on the return leg of this walk.



*Figure 6: Col at which the route from Llanthony to Longtown crosses the main ridgeway path along Hatterall Hill (running bottom left to top right), with the Rhiw Arw track to Longtown bottom right (Source: author).*



*Figure 7: Upper section of the Rhiw Arw track from Longtown to the Hatterall ridge (Source: author).*

Dropping down from the cross-roads at the summit col of the Hatterall ridge on Rhiw Arw (waypoint 3), the track here is different in form to the Beer Path on the other side of the ridge (Figure 6). It is wider, consistently approximately 3m in width and in better condition with cut and bank construction terrace-way and a level surface along most of its length (Figure 7).



*Figure 8: View looking east from Rhiw Arw towards Longtown (linear settlement on low ridge, centre right) with the line of the probably monastic route indicated by the linear hedge-line running left to right from the foot of Rhiw Arw (Source: author).*



At the foot of Rhiw Arw (waypoint 4), a curved holloway links the *rhiw* with a deep holloway lane (not a Public Right of Way and now overgrown and disused) which runs straight downhill as a field boundary to Penrhewy farm (walked alongside through the adjoining field), from where the route becomes a metalled farm track to the main road through Longtown (Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12).



*Figure 9: Blocked entrance to the holloway track at the foot of Rhiw Arw (Source: author).*



*Figure 10: Section of the holloway track (Source: author).*



*Figure 11: Section of holloway track (Source: author).*



*Figure 12: Point at which disused holloway joins the metalled farm track from Penrhewy farm to Longtown (Source: author).*



The lane towards Longtown becomes deeply sunken through long centuries of heavy traffic: not simply a dead-end route to a single farmstead, as now (Figures 13,14 and 15).



*Figures 13, 14 and 15: Sections of the holloway lane to Longtown (Source: author).*

This holloway fords the Olchon Brook (waypoint 5) and climbs to the end of the spur between the Olchon and Monnow valleys on which the settlement of Longtown sits at the most favourable point in the Olchon valley for such a route, then joins the long-established road up to the site of the de Lacy's medieval castle (Figure 16). The gradient is steeper further north on both sides of the valley, suggesting why the gentler slope of this more meandering route was chosen rather than a more 'as the crow flies' line from the Hatterall ridge to Longtown.



*Figure 16: The old Greyhound public house, just north of the junction of the Penrhewy lane and the main road through Longtown to the Norman castle, the timber-framed part of which has sixteenth century fabric (Source: author).*



*Figure 17: Rhiw Arw looking west from Longtown (diagonal line climbing hillside from right to left) (Source: author).*



The return leg of the route follows the farm lane to Cayo farm (waypoint 6). The first section down to the Olchon Brook is another deep holloway metalled road, which may have originated as a track to a mill on the stream here. From Cayo Farm the route follows a field path up to the Mountain Wall demarcating the enclosed pastures with the open common grazing of the western slopes of Hatterall Hill. The route displays no real sign of holloway or engineered structure or surface and takes a very steep line up the hillside, finally leading to the open common via an enclosed stock lane. A more well-defined track, with a noticeable camber, does curve off southwards from Cayo to Penrhewy and this may indicate an alternative possible route from Longtown to Rhiw Arw (Figure 18).



*Figure 18: Track from Cayo to Penrhewy (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: Clodock church (centre) from Rhiw Arw, one of the church holdings of the priory (Source: author).*

Emerging from Rhiw Arw to the top of the ridge again, the natural col offers a fine view northwards towards the priory. Rather than turning sharply northwards to follow the Beer Path down to the priory, the route followed was down a braided holloway parallel with the high section of Mountain Wall here, with earthwork evidence of a possible reveted sunken way or raised causeway in parts.

This trackway forms the upper section of the *rhiw* up from Mais-y-berrin in the valley below but is crossed by another prominent track (seen in Figure 5) which heads north-westwards downhill, still parallel with the mountain wall, to the Parish Road near the top of the Old Roadway (waypoint 7). Although there was no obvious holloway curve uphill at this intersection, it could be a dog-leg turn to 'correct' the line of the track which follows a steady gradient all the way up from Llanthony to ensure alignment with the Rhiw Arw path onwards down the other side of the ridge to Longtown at this steepest section of the hillside. It may also be that this steep section had multiple and variable braided routes climbing to the ridge (Figure 20).



*Figure 20: Braided holloway section of rhiw from Main y berrin to ridge (Source: author).*

The downward track was then followed, though thick with high bracken a double line of ditches with a raised bank in the middle it displayed evidence of paved blocks and also walled stone retaining banking (Figures 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24). The ditches, which have the character of a holloway could be evidence of dug out materials for building a raised roadway as well as having a drainage function. Several lines of low banks may be contemporary with or predate the trackways in this area. A return visit in winter would be rewarding to better understand the morphology of this section of the potential route up to the ridge.





*Figures 21, 22, 23 and 24: Sections of the walled causeway and ditch linking the Old Roadway with the top of the ridge (Source: author).*







*Figure 25: Line of the holloway and causeway-type feature along the woodland edge (Source: author).*

Below this section, a combination of the deep bracken, woodland regrowth and post-medieval enclosure walls around the now ruined Footway farmstead make it difficult to trace the full line of the routeway to the Parish Road, though it may be that the curved line of the mountain wall respects the line of the older trackway here. A disused holloway follows the line of the edge of the woodland before joining the Parish Road and may be a continuation of the causewayed track described above (Figure 25). The feature then crosses the Parish Road and runs parallel with it the top of the Old Roadway up from Llanthony for approximately two hundred metres (Figures 26, 27 and 28). The Parish Road, traversing the side of the valley, would seem to post-date this overgrown trackway; a new surface may have been required rather than following the line of the deep, marshy section of the older uphill route here.





*Figures 26 and 27: Holloway alongside the Parish Road (Source: author).*





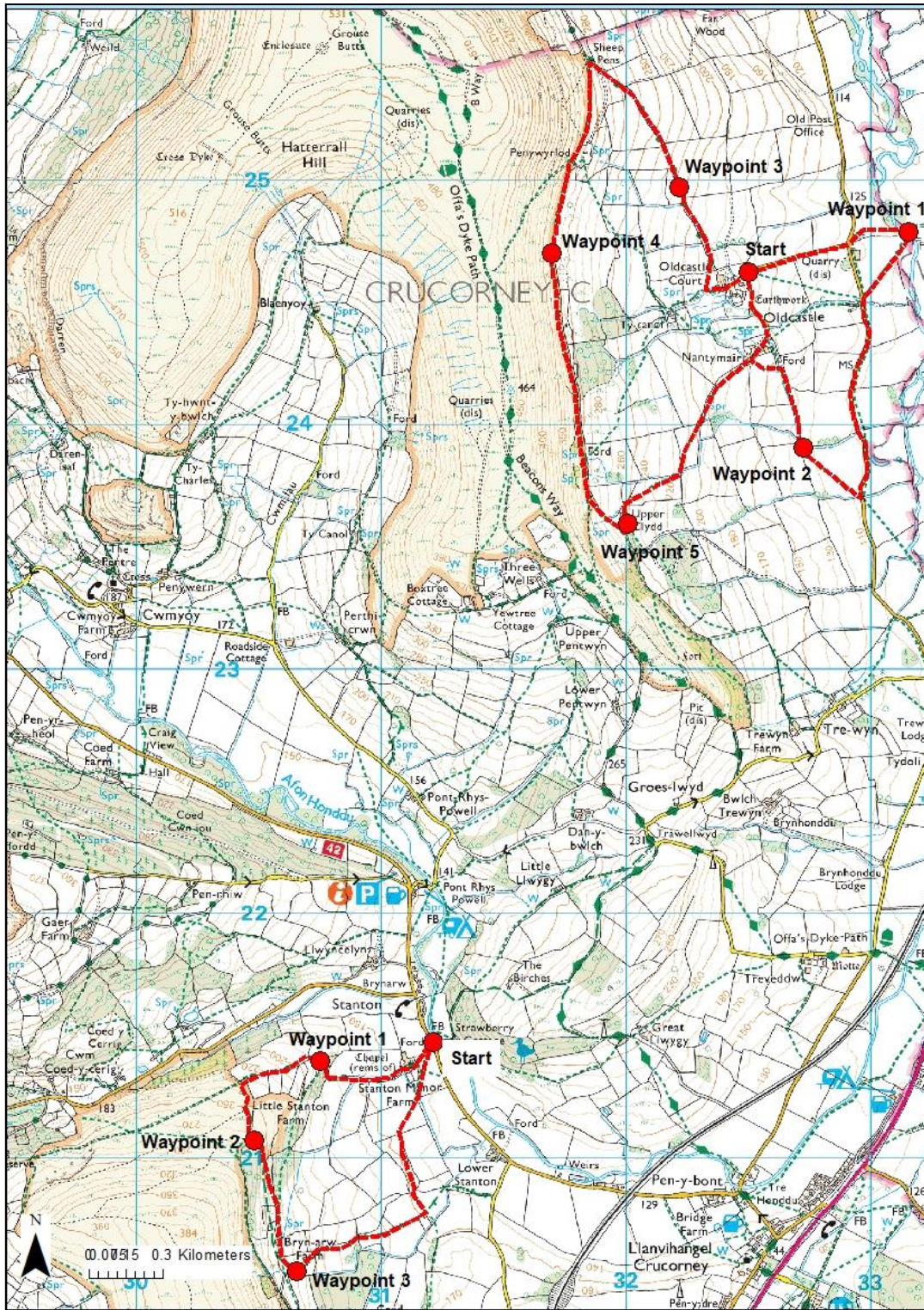
*Figure 28: Line of the top of the Old Roadway just below its intersection with the Parish Road (Source: author).*



*Figure 29: Ty Isaf, a ruined farmstead on the Parish Road (Source: author).*

The route down the Old Roadway back to the priory is described in the Cwmyoy South landscape walk.





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Oldcastle and Stanton landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
<b>Distance</b>	5 kilometres (Stanton section) and 13 kilometres (Oldcastle section)
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Mostly overcast high cloud with sunny spells; good visibility
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the lands of Stanton manor, followed by a longer walk around the lands of Oldcastle manor (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: The upper fields and upland pasture of Stanton manor (Source: author).*



*Figure 2: Lane from Stanton Manor Farm through low-lying fields of the manor (Source: author).*

When were these fields enclosed and the lanes created? Morphology and character suggests late enclosure from a wood pasture landscape: hedges here are mainly hawthorn and linear field shapes.





*Figure 3: Upper lane from Stanton Manor Farm: a winding holloway providing access to higher pastures and upland grazing, also the route of the long-standing east-west route into Wales from Herefordshire skirting the edge of the Black Mountains (waypoint 1) (Source: author).*



*Figure 4: Straight line enclosure hedge, looking east to Stanton Manor Farm with the woodlands of Redcastle in the background across the manorial border of the River Honddu (Source: author).*



*Figure 5: Banked holloway to upland grazing now silted with mud, but probably cobbled underneath. Also part of the east-west route into Wales (Source: author).*

Such arterial tracks across estates both in everyday use and also forming part of longer distance routes would surely have been cobbled and kept in good order where stone was abundant.





*Figure 6: Older hedge-banked enclosure; smaller fields here, intake from the rough common pasture (Source: author).*

An area of old quarry pits in the north-west corner of the field at end of lane to upland grazing, probably the main stone source for the manor.



*Figure 7: Boundary with upland rough grazing common (Source: author).*



*Figure 8: Low-lying meadows around Stanton Manor Farm looking east from Bryn Awr hill, with Redcastle high ground in the background (Source: author).*



*Figure 9: Large block of enclosed pasture taken from the upland grazing common of Bryn Awr in the late nineteenth century (Source: author).*

Bryn Awr upland rough grazing now colonised by silver birch, bracken (indicating less intensive grazing by sheep and horses – as seen on many of the uplands of Black Mountains) and criss-crossed by often sunken tracks (waypoint 2).





*Figure 10: Line of large oaks (pollarded in past) on the edge or part of bank of broadleaf woodland below the upland grazing on the lower slopes of Bryn Awr (Source: author).*



*Figure 11: Sunken walled trackway through woods, providing access to work the timber and wood resources of the lower hill slope (Source: author).*





*Figure 12: Small square ruined stone building, at confluence of track through woods and track to Bryn Awr Farm: possible saw mill for the estate (Source: author).*



*Figure 13: Bryn Awr barn and farmhouse (just outside boundary of Stanton manor): 'longhouse' design built into slope with house and animal byre combined (Source: author).*

Utilised as a barn when adjacent nineteenth century farmhouse built.





*Figure 14: A cattle track and line of molehills inadvertently mark the line of the manorial boundary diagonally across a field (was this an old field*

Funnel-shaped fields at the manorial boundary here provide access to the upland common grazing.

Good viewpoint of the whole manor from this south-western corner (waypoint 3). Emphasises the small nature of the manor, almost a feeling of intimacy. The main farmstead, Stanton Manor Farm, always in sight whichever extremity you are in (and within the hearing of the chapel bell?).



*Figure 15: The southern manorial boundary flanked by the moraine deposit mound that diverts the River Honddu westwards (Source: author).*



*Figure 16: Little Stanton Farm, looking north-west: a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century farmstead (Source: author).*



*Figure 17: Enclosed sheep pasture now predominates in the manor: feels long-standing, few signs of arable past e.g. ridge and furrow (Source: author).*

The 150 metre contour is the meeting point for a more regular field-scape down slope with smaller irregular fields predominating up slope.





*Figure 18: The regular enclosed fields of the lower-lying land of the manor bounded by ditches to direct flow of water down from high ground to the River Honddu and keep fields well-drained. An example of late eighteenth century agricultural improvement (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: The manor's woodland resources, looking north-west from Stanton Manor Farm (Source: author).*

## Oldcastle

The manorial boundary to the east follows the old bed of the River Monnow, which in some places has now changed course. Old sections of the river bed are clearly visible as vegetation and tree lines and partly dry ox-bow lakes. This may reflect natural processes rather than any engineered straightening of the river. The fact that the 1612 survey does not simply state that the boundary follows the course of the river here indicates that the changes in the river's course (since the boundary was first set) must have already taken place by this time. However, the issue is further complicated by the fact that the line of the river on the modern Ordnance Survey map seems to differ significantly from that on the First Edition map.



*Figures 20 and 21: Sections of the old course of the River Monnow forming the eastern boundary of Oldcastle manor (Source: author).*



The river would have been a key resource for the manor, therefore surprising that there does not appear to be a visible old trackway down to it (including the Public Right of Way down to the substantial footbridge which now carries the Monnow Way long distance path) (waypoint 1). This would also be a logical site for a manorial mill. A ruined building lies next to the bridge but no mill is recorded here, and this section of river is, in any case, outside of the Oldcastle parish boundary (which follows the manorial boundary) on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map.



*Figure 22: The manor of Oldcastle looking north from the River Monnow (Source: author).*



*Figures 23 and 24: Tunnel under unmetalled field trackway at the possible site of the manorial mill (Source: author).*

A field track and Public Right of Way runs from the Oldcastle hamlet to Alt-yr-Ynis mansion house and Trewyn Mill further downstream on the Monnow. The track crosses a stream at the site of earthworks in a field called Old Felin (old 'mill') with an impressively well-constructed tunnel carrying the stream underneath (waypoint 2).

This fast-flowing stream may have been more suitable for the siting of the manorial mill than the section of River Monnow bounding the manor which historically had particularly wide meanders (and therefore slow-moving flow).

A field below the possible mill site identified as potentially holding the earthworks of fishponds or mill pools was examined again. Clear banking was observed, though this could be another palaeo-channel of the Monnow.

This track becomes a holloway as it nears the farmstead of Nantymair, passing an old quarry site. Closer to the farm, a trackway branching off to it has a very similar tunnel beneath it. These tunnels presumably date from the eighteenth or nineteenth century, but why so well built?



*Figure 25: Similar tunnel beneath track to Nantymair farmstead (Source: author).*





*Figure 26: The Norman motte and bailey at Oldcastle being cleared of vegetation (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: St John the Baptist church at Oldcastle, now a private home (Source: author).*

The long diagonal track from Oldcastle hamlet north-eastwards provides access to both the rough grazing land of Hatterall Hill and also to the Mountain Rhiw trackway that traverses the boundary between the fields of the lower slopes and the open common (waypoint 3). This track has a banked causeway with side ditches to carry the flow of water down the hill, with a holloway character as the gradient steepens. Further evidence of engineering and maintenance of good quality tracks is the remains of a cobbled or paved surface. Seems to indicate that these tracks were more than simply local farm routeways, but perhaps part of a wider communication network across the priory's estates.





*Figures 28, 29, 30 and 31: Causewayed track with evidence of cobbled or paved surface (Source: author).*





*Figure 32: Holloway section of the same track (Source: author).*

At the point where this track reaches the open upland grazing common an area of intake fields above the line of the 'Mountain Wall' boundary with the enclosed fields has reverted to scrub.

*Figure 33: Track to Oldcastle (left) joining the Mountain Rhiw track which traverses the valley side (Source: author).*





*Figure 34: Diagonal 'rhiw' path providing Penyworld farm with access to the upland grazing of Hatterall Hill (Source: author).*





*Figure 35: A stretch of unenclosed 'wood pasture' above Oldcastle, looking southwards (Source: author).*

This may have been the typical scene in areas not subject to early enclosure, with a less clear delineation between the field or woodland belt that now characterises the lower slopes. In fact, this particular area is made up of small irregular fields on the first edition Ordnance Survey map which have since been rationalised into larger units, so in fact may have been subject to earlier or medieval assarting.



*Figures 36 and 37: The 'Mountain Rhiw' track between Penyworlod and Upper Clydd farmsteads: further evidence of a well-engineered trackway for both local and more long-distance traffic (Source: author).*

The Mountain Rhiw (waypoint 4) was the key routeway from Oldcastle to Llanthony and the other local estates. Farmsteads and buildings along its line are now generally ruinous (e.g. Pen-yr-heol and Kydd-usaf along this section), reflecting the relative decline of these higher-level routes for through traffic and stock movement and the gradual process of abandonment of the higher-level farmsteads during the later nineteenth and twentieth century.





*Figure 38: The ruins of Pen y heol farmstead (Source: author).*



*Figure 39: Abandoned sandstone blocks at a quarry site, exploiting the naturally occurring 'darren' cliffs above Oldcastle to provide the stone for building materials for the manor (Source: author).*





*Figure 40: Upper Clydd, an example of the numerous downslope farmsteads in the area located at the 'spring-line' break in slope just below the 'Mountain Wall' boundary of the open rough grazing (waypoint 5) (Source: author).*



*Figure 41: The line of the 'rhiw' track and 'Mountain Wall' up from Upper Clydd farm to the Trewyn hill-fort and the ridge-top track on Hatterall Hill (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Angidy Valley landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
<b>Distance</b>	10 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Misty and damp, with limited wider visibility
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the eighteenth and nineteenth century industrial landscape and old trackways of the Angidy valley and its surrounding woodland.



Figure 1: Site of the Lower Wire Works, Angidy Valley (Source: author).



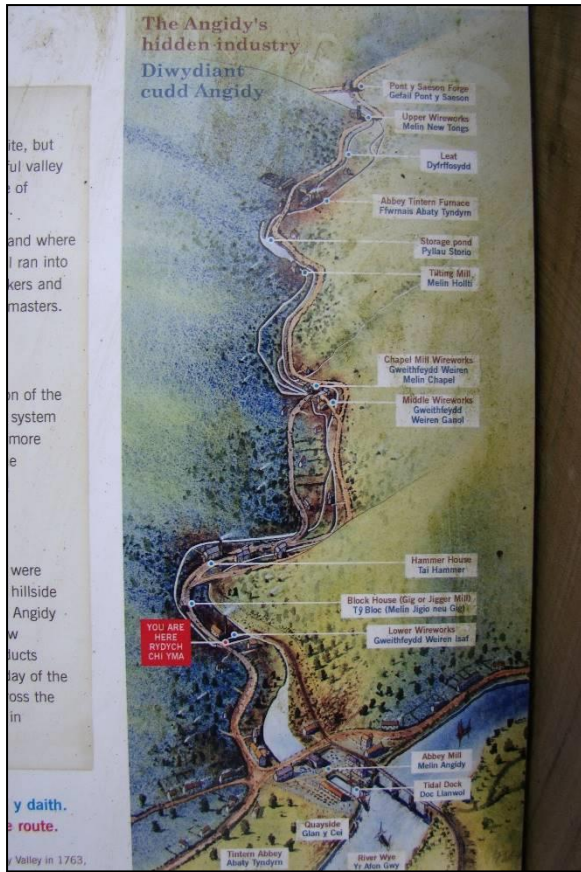


Figure 2: Information board map showing industrial sites in the Angidy Valley (Source: author).

The site of the Lower Wire Works near the mouth of the Angidy Valley is now a tourist car park with extensive information boards, a starting point for various heritage trails up the valley which combine both now rural woodlands and industrial archaeology.

The route starts by proceeding uphill along the main road through Chapel Hill village, the settlement that grew up alongside the industrial activity that developed in the valley from the late-sixteenth century onwards.



Figure 3: The road through Chapel Hill looking westwards, with the ex-Cherry Hill Inn ahead (Source: author).

The route soon branches off onto the metalled lane up to Fair Oak, with a section of more meandering disused holloway, now bypassed by the straight modern road. A pathway downhill through the woods leads to the site of the Old Furnace (Abbey



Tintern) alongside the main valley road (waypoint 1). Walking this peaceful woodland path all is tranquil and rural, the only sounds birdsong and the water of the stream down below. No hint now of the noisy, dirty and busy scene of the industrial activity of the post-medieval era and into the early-twentieth century. Although historically wooded, the sylvan scene of the modern era also masks the fact that one aspect of the industrial past was the large-scale denudation of much of this woodland as it was coppiced for charcoal to fire the forges and furnaces. Nineteenth century accounts and images testify to this period in the landscape's history.



*Figure 4: The peaceful woods of the Angidy Valley (Source: author).*

The ruins of Old Furnace have been cleared and presented as a heritage site following archaeological excavation and survey in the 1980s. Tracks around the valley would have been used to transport charcoal and iron ore to the furnace and cast iron to the wire works further down the valley.



*Figure 5: The ruins of Old Furnace (Source: author).*



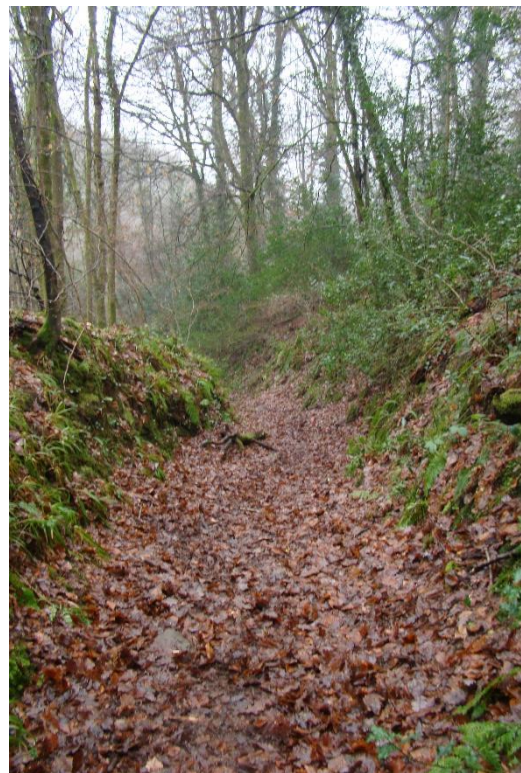


*Figure 6: Footings for the supports of the launder conveying water from the leat to the furnace water wheel (Source: author).*

Leaving the furnace via the filled-in leat that carried water to the site from the Angidy Brook a deep hollow track runs up through Buckle Wood to Gethin's Grove (waypoint 2), probably used to transport charcoal from the woods to the furnace. Shallow pits which may be the remains of charcoal working can be observed throughout the woodlands.



*Figure 7: Fill-in leat at Old Furnace (Source: author).*



*Figure 8: Deep holloway up through Buckle Wood (Source: author).*



Many of the paths and old tracks which run down from the surrounding woodland to the bottom of the valley are probably post-medieval and relate to the industrial activity that developed alongside the Angidy Brook; prior to this the difficult terrain of the heavily wooded, narrow and marshy valley floor would have been avoided by communication routes.



*Figure 9: Path through Buckle Wood (Source: author).*

As the steep valley slope is crested in Gethin's Grove the line of the old coach road from Chepstow to Monmouth as it passes through the wooded upper Angidy Valley between Fair Oak and Trelleck.



*Figure 10: The start of the section of the old Chepstow to Monmouth road through Gethin's Grove at Fair Oak (Source: author).*





*Figure 11: Fair Oak farm (Source: author).*

This long-disused through-route is now a muddy backwater trackway. It was already described as the 'old' way from Chepstow to Monmouth on the 1763 Porthcasseg estate map (it may date to the Roman period) and was superseded by the new turnpike network. The muddy and rutted state of this track on a winter's day perhaps give an indication of what travel conditions were like in the era before road improvements. The narrowness (2-3 m) of the track given its prior status as a main routeway is also notable.



*Figures 12 and 13: The old coachway through Gethin's Grove (Source: author).*





*Figure 14: Revetment wall of the track (Source: author).*

Through much of its route through the woods the track has a sturdy revetment wall still very much intact. There are also sections with evidence of a stone surface, though whether this is the result of erosion to bedrock or a constructed surface is hard to gauge. It could be argued that if the effort was made to construct stone walls along the side of the road then surfacing would also be carried out.



*Figure 15: Further section of revetment wall (Source: author).*

Leaving the woods, the track joins the modern Angidy Valley road at Pont-y-saison (Bridge of the English) (waypoint 3), by legend the site of a famous early medieval battle between Anglo-Saxons advancing westwards and King Tudrig of Gwent. Although this is unlikely to be based in fact the bridge is the meeting point of several



ways of long-standing (although the current bridge itself only dates from the nineteenth century).



*Figure 16: Pont-y-saison (Source: author).*



*Figure 17: Mill and farm at Pont-y-saison (Source: author).*





*Figure 18: Embankment and surface of a possible tramway above Pont-y-saison (Source: author).*

From the bridge the modern road is followed for a short distance passing the upper pond and dam above the now cleared site of the Upper Forge, the highest industrial site of the Angidy Valley. The road from here climbs up towards Trellech Grange alongside the stream but the old way follows a parallel line halfway up the hillside avoiding the valley bottom and it's this route that is now walked.



*Figure 19: Pond and dam of the Upper Forge (Source: author).*

The route follows a wide (4-5m) grassy terrace-way (waypoint 4). This section is marked as 'ancient' stone surface on early Ordnance Survey maps but this is now



largely grassed over, though there are scatterings of stone observable and one eroded section exposed signs of stone embanking or foundations.



*Figure 20: Terrace-way above the modern road to Trellech Grange (Source: author).*



*Figure 21: Exposed stonework on the track (Source: author).*

As the track nears its convergence with the modern road at the Fountains Inn its line is occupied by a muddy pig enclosure, occupied by inquisitive Gloucester Old Spot's. A line of regular stone blocks within the enclosure may be further evidence of the old road surface.





*Figure 22: Section of stone blocks on the line of the old road (Source: author).*

From the inn (sadly closed today) the route returned towards Tintern via the metalled road in the valley bottom. The stream here provided the south-eastern boundary of the agricultural lands of Trellech Grange and it is interesting to note lengthy sections of an old wall alongside the stream – could this be part of the original boundary of the grange, demarcating its arable land from the more open chase of Trelleck Park?

The line of the wall is slighted and crossed by the road as it crosses the stream indicating that it is an older feature and then then becomes (or replaced by) the supporting bank of the road above the stream.



*Figure 23: Wall along the boundary of Trellech Grange (Source: author).*

As the road enters the main Angidly Valley it passes the Upper Forge site and its lower pond and dam.





*Figure 24: Upper Forge pond and dam looking north-east down the Angidy Valley (Source: author).*

Below the dam a level pathway parallel with the road but on the other side of the Angidy Brook is followed. This has the character of a tramway (and may be connected to the embankment observed earlier), though such a feature has not been found in the descriptions/ mapping of the industrial activity of the valley. Soon the upper parts of the Chapel Hill settlement are reached (waypoint 5) and a pathway through its diverse collection of houses and buildings (large eighteenth century houses, nineteenth century workers cottages and chapels, redundant or reused industrial buildings, twentieth century infill) is taken back to the car park.



*Figure 25: Prominent eighteenth-century house in Chapel Hill (Source: author).*



Finally, a short walk is taken to the lower section of the valley's industrial complex, the stank pond and quayside area (the tidal dock of 1693 was sadly filled in in 1996).



*Figure 26: The filled in tidal dock at the mouth of the Andigy Brook (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: Site of the Stank pond, now a hotel car park (Source: author).*



*Figure 28: Stankhouse farm under renovation (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Porthcasseg landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
<b>Distance</b>	15 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Overcast but clear winter day
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the landscape and features of the Porthcasseg manor, including the granges of Rudding and Secular Firmary (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: The landscape around Porthcasseg farmstead, looking east (Source: author).*

The walk proceeds from the site of the main abbey gatehouse and then follows the route of one of the documented tracks into the abbey, the Long Way, which is initially bounded on its eastern side by the precinct wall before climbing to Reddings Farm (the monastic grange of Ruding) (waypoint 1).



*Figure 2: The Long Way traversing the abbey precinct wall to the left (Source: author).*





*Figure 3: Abbey precinct wall, with the top stones of two archway entrances (to what?) just visible above the level of the banked path (Source: author).*

After an initial sunken track section, the path becomes a terrace-way, banked above the steep ground running down to the old abbey river-side meadows to the left. The surface here is highly disturbed and eroded: stony but with no sign of a cobbled surface, which if it existed has been long eroded away. Within a few minutes, the bustle of the main road and abbey complex has been replaced by a melancholic loneliness.



*Figure 4: Abbey meadows next to the river Wye, with Passage Woods in the background, looking east from the Long Way (Source: author).*

Skirting Reddings Farm the Public Right of Way crosses a field named Abby Leaze on the 1763 Duke of Beaufort estate map. The modern farmhouse and outbuildings contain no extant historic structures, the old house and barns visible on old aerial photographs having been demolished sometime in the post-war period. A large grassed over mound of stone behind one of the modern barn units is perhaps all that remains of the older structures. However, the memory of the monastic grange survives in the farm name (Reddings from Ruding, from the Old English word *hryding*, meaning ridding or clearing of woodland) and the recorded historic extent of the farm's lands. Ruding was an early holding of the abbey, established through the clearance of woodland on a shelf of land above the Wye.



*Figure 5: Field called 'Abby Leaze' in 1763, looking north-east (Source: author).*





*Figure 6: Earthworks at Castle Hill (Source: author).*

Above Reddings Farm lies Castle Hill and here a diversion is taken (along the Wye Valley Walk long-distance path) to the site of what is thought to be an Iron Age camp in the Black Cliff Wood (waypoint 2). The path up to the earthworks is a holloway that may have been the main way from Rudings Grange to Porthcasseg. The earthworks are composed of very large stony ramparts with many large blocks of limestone around. The enormous size of the earthworks and the somewhat hollowed out summit of the hill suggest that this may have been used as a quarry site (perhaps for the abbey itself?). An example of a prehistoric site having re-use in the medieval period.



*Figure 7: Likely route of the Long Way from Rudings into Black Cliffe Wood, looking north (Source: author).*





*Figure 8: Disused track through Linen Well Woods with the forestry track above (Source: author).*

From here a Public Right of Way is followed running above and parallel with the pathway marked on the 1763 estate map which marks the probably route of the Long Way from Ruding into the woodlands of Black Cliff and Linen Well. The public footpath skirts the edge of the woods but shows no signs of antiquity and the 1763 route is not visible as a physical trackway on its likely course along the level shelf of ground above between Castle Hill and the steep valley side down to the Wye. The route enters Linen Well Woods at a field gate after which a forestry track is followed. Immediately to the east of the modern track, the line of an indistinct and overgrown disused routeway can be followed, which eventually becomes more evident on the ground with

large stone blocks lining its sides (the Public Right of Way on the OS map actually follows this line rather than the forest track parallel with it but it appears not to be well-used on the ground). The route becomes a terrace-way above a large post-medieval quarry and then returns to the forestry track just above its junction with the modern A466 valley road.



*Figure 9: More distinct section of the trackway through Linen Well Wood, looking south (Source: author).*



At this point, as the shelf of land running southwards from Ruding Grange into the woods narrows directly under the imposing Black Cliff it appears that the modern road (built as a turnpike in 1820) follows the older routeway and there is no sign of any disused track alongside it. This route provides a more circuitous but much more level way to and from the abbey and points south than the higher Stony Way route: hence the Long Way moniker.



*Figure 10: Section of the route under Black Cliff now occupied by the A466 turnpike road (Source: author).*



*Figure 11: Terrace-way through Lower Wyncliff Wood, looking south (Source: author).*

After a short section of road-walking a bend is rounded and a forest track behind Livox Cottages followed. The road is then crossed and, after a steep drop to the edge of the fields of Livox farmstead (now gone), an old path through Lower Wyncliff Wood is taken (waypoint 3). As with other previous sections of the route followed, here there is a cut and bank terrace-way (running below and roughly parallel with the modern road which has been blasted through the side of the steep cliffs above). It would seem reasonable to suppose that this is the continuation of the Long Way route (again marked on the 1763 estate map).

The track through the mixed woods of beech, lime, holly and yew runs slightly downhill here to a junction with a track down to Trow Weir on the Wye, climbing gently then up to the Wyncliff Wood car park on the main road in the shadow of the mighty Wyn Cliff high above. It may be that this route, which again has evidence of a stone surface, was followed to access river transport from Rogerstone and other inland parts of the abbey's holdings.



*Figure 12: View of Worrow Gasseg on the Wye, a possible harbour for the quarries of Livox, looking north-east from the path through Lower Wyncliff Wood (Source: author).*





Figure 13: Stone-lined track through Lower Wyncliff Wood, looking south (Source: author).



Figure 14: Information board at the Lower Wyncliff car park (no mention of the wood being part of Tintern abbey lands) (Source: author).

The car park is the starting point for the '365 steps' walk up the side of Wynd Cliff to the Eagle's Nest viewing platform. The path constructed by landowner Valentine Morris during the late eighteenth century. The Long Way route strikes off south-westwards above the car park and follows a sunken lane with a stony surface to a metalled lane which links with Piccadilly Lane (i.e. the route of the Stony Way). From here the likely route of the medieval way would have been either via the field path joining Piccadilly Lane to the south-west, opposite Wyndcliffe Court or following the straight lane downhill to join the A466 north of the village of St. Arvans (at this



junction there is a noticeable sharp turn in the main road with the lane continuing the line followed by the A466 further south).



*Figure 15: Sunken track above Wynd Cliff car park looking south (Source: author).*

The walk proceeds via the track from the southern entrance to Porthcasseg Farm (waypoint 4), looking back from this high point a vista opens out towards the Severn Estuary across the parkland landscape of Piercefield towards Chepstow. The range of Porthcasseg Farm now comes in to view, with its prominent three-story eighteenth century farmhouse. The farmstead is now a mixture of working farm, barns converted to business premises and nineteenth century and modern houses (waypoint 5).



*Figure 16: Porthcasseg farmhouse (Source: author).*



Crossing to the high ground of the small manor/ parish of Penterry, which was not part of the abbey's estates, and looking across to the area around Porthcasseg and dropping down towards Redding Grange the memory of a wood pasture landscape is conjured through the remnant features of the scene.



*Figure 17: Porthcasseg lands, with the upper part of the Stoney Way running across the centre ground (Source: author).*

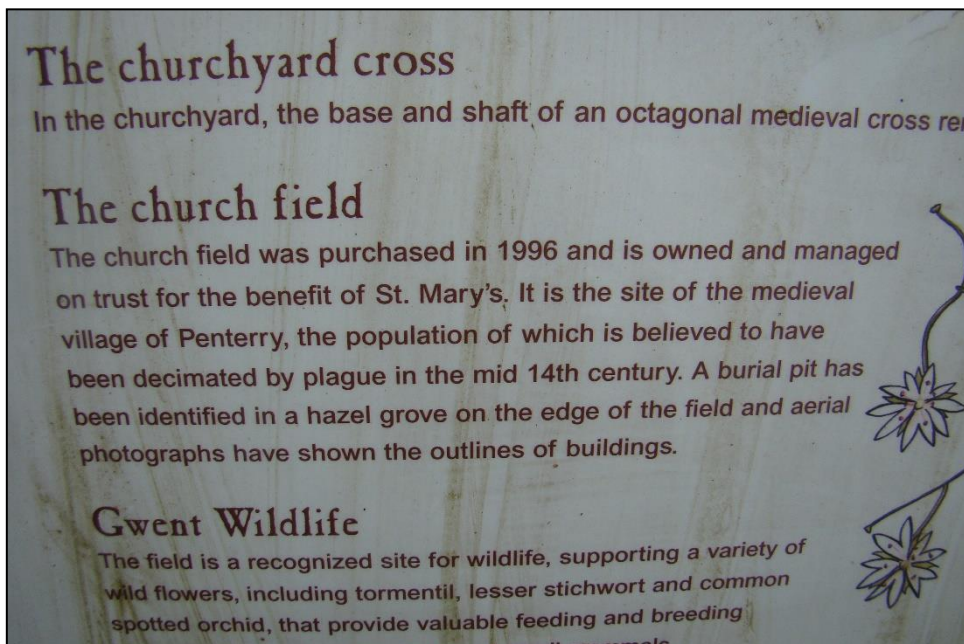


*Figure 18: Looking north-east from Penterry towards the pastures of Ruding Green, the Wye Valley with Harthill and Modesgate granges across the valley in the distance (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: Modesgate Grange (in the distance above the woodlands) in its high plateau setting (Source: author).*

Having climbed the slope of Gaer Hill from St. Arvan's Piccadilly Lane follows a ridge of high ground towards Fair Oak, part of the old carriage route from Chepstow to Monmouth. The route takes a field path from a meeting of several Rights of Way on the lane to St. Mary's Church (waypoint 6), with the significant earthworks in the fields adjacent to the church indicating the site of a deserted medieval settlement.



*Figure 20: Information board at Penterry Church (Source: author).*





*Figure 21: Tweet from the walk (Source: author).*

A field path is then followed to Penterry Farm, its large range of farm buildings now converted into domestic residences. Penterry House (waypoint 7), downslope of the main farmstead is a substantial gentry house with prominent multiple chimney stacks, probably seventeenth century in date. It is situated above the steeply wooded Angidy Valley and in particular the section of woodland known as Fermery Grove which has been postulated as the likely location of the abbey's Secular Firmary Grange.



*Figure 22: Penterry House (Source: author).*





After a scramble down the steep valley side the modern access road to Penterry House is reached, below which the remnants of a thick old wall (marked on the 1763 Porthcasseg estate map) marking the southern boundary of Fermery Grove can be traced for a considerable distance. As the line of the wall is traced a sunken trackway and other earthwork and building remains are observed (see Appendix 7 for further detail). This trackway is the old route, via Secular Firmary, from the abbey to the old Chepstow to Monmouth road at Fair Oak and this is the route now followed.

After the line of the track is obscured by the large bank of the sharp turn of the modern Penterry access road it is picked up again further uphill and leads to the squatter's cottages (which post-date the 1763 estate map) north of Fair Oak and

*Figure 23: Fermery Grove wall (Source: author).*

Banton. The banks of this section of deeper holloway, which runs along the top edge of Glyn Wood and into the back garden of a house, are supported by well-constructed dry-stone revetments.



*Figure 24: Sunken track up through Fermery Grove towards Fair Oak, looking north-east (Source: author).*





*Figure 25: Revetment wall of tracks to Fair Oak (Source: author).*

Here the route dog-legs to follow a bridleway downhill through Glyn Woods back towards Tintern. This path is sunken, steep and narrow and passes through woodland dominated by beech and holly. A section of forestry road is then followed to the junction with the Penterry access road. Here a clear disused holloway can be seen running up to and alongside the modern Penterry road (a further section of the old monastic route from Fair Oak to the abbey).





*Figure 26: Glyn Woods looking west across the Angidy Valley (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: Disused holloway, to the left of the modern forestry track, forming part of the monastic route from Fair Oak to the abbey (Source: author).*

The Fair Oak to Tintern monastic way is followed from here via a Public Right of Way past Highfield House and through the nineteenth century small-holding cottages of Butchers Hill (waypoint 8): an open area of small piecemeal settlement amidst the surrounding woodland, home to the industrial workers of the Angidy Valley. Now a peaceful hideaway of desirable country retreats.





*Figure 29: New religion at Tintern – an eastern deity on the gatepost of Highfield House (Source: author).*



*Figure 30: Butcher's Hill small-holdings (Source: author).*

The final section of the Fair Oak to the abbey route follows a narrow, banked track past St. Mary's Church, Chapel Hill and to the abbey ruins via the location of the gatehouse.





*Figure 31: Junction of the Fair Oaks (right) and Penterry (left) trackways at Chapel Hill (Source: author).*



*Figure 32: St. Mary's Church, Chapel Hill with the abbey ruins beyond, looking south-east (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Stony Way to Rogerstone landscape walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> January 2017
<b>Distance</b>	13 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Overcast but clear winter day
<b>Summary</b>	A walk along the Stony Way monastic route from Tintern Abbey to Rogerstone grange and other Tintern lands and back again (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: The Stony Way, looking uphill and south-west (Source: author).*

The path followed, the Stony Way which formed the main medieval route into the abbey on the western side of the Wye, is part of both the Wye Valley Way and the Cistercian Way, long-distance recreational routes that covertly or subliminally embrace historical memory.



*Figure 2: Probable site of the abbey gatehouse, with fabric of the gatehouse chapel included St. Anne's House to the right of the picture (Source: author).*



From the curving track up past St. Anne's House the Stony Way commences as a nondescript lane behind the currently derelict Abbey Hotel. A side-path soon branches off which is the start of the medieval Long Way via the Ruding Grange (a longer but more level route to St. Arvan's, walked in the Porthcasseg landscape walk).



*Figure 3: Culvert (Source: author).*

The path runs parallel with a canalised stream which is mostly dry in its lower section and drains into a modern culvert taking it under the hotel, main road and the abbey ruins. This stream and the nearby Cold Well spring were used as a water source for the drainage system within the abbey precinct.

The stream is initially divided from the track by an earthen bank and in parts a stone revetment wall is visible on both sides of the watercourse.



*Figure 4: Possible site of Cold Well (covered by modern brick casing) (Source: author).*



*Figure 5: Revetment wall of stream alongside track (Source: author).*

The track rising through the lower reaches of the valley is approximately 3 metres wide and has a stone pitched surface and banked sides with mature coppiced hazel along its edges. It is not here a deep holloway, perhaps due to a combination of an engineered surface and the relatively gentle gradient. At periodic intervals a line of larger stone blocks are embedded in a horizontal line across the track, presumably to secure the surface and check erosion.





*Figure 6: Stone blocks across the track (Source: author).*

As the track proceeds uphill the woodland on the steep-sided left-hand side of the valley (Limekiln Wood) is mainly tall mature lime and beech. The small enclosures to the right are now overgrown by new-growth trees and scrub. This heavily wooded character masks the fact that the valley, and wider area, was more open in the past (see nineteenth century photographs) and may have been so during the monastic period.



*Figure 7: Stony Way with stream alongside (Source: author).*

As the gradient steepens the path runs directly next to the channelled stream and the surface remains level and stony with honey-coloured limestone cobbles. Regular diagonal cuts and drains in the path allow drainage into the channel which here flows with more water than lower down. However, as the gradient becomes steeper water also flows down the track.

Some sections of the track retain a cobbled character, others are lain with larger stones, probably the footings of the constructed surface exposed as the original cobble surface has been disturbed and eroded over time.

As the crest of the hill is approached and the track is at its steepest it runs through a cleft in a rocky outcrop, a band of exposed limestone that runs along both sides of what is now a narrow gully (waypoint 1). The surface of the path becomes a stepped pitch of natural rock through the cleft, but perhaps would have been surfaced to ensure easy carriage. Whether this cleft has been naturally formed by the stream or expanded or cut through by the path-makers is hard to ascertain. If engineered, when was this done? Probably not before the monastic period as there was no reason for this trackway to be here before the abbey. This outcrop would certainly provide much material for constructing and surfacing the track.





*Figure 8: Stone steps through the rocky cleft (Source: author).*

Above the cleft a cobbled surface returns as the gradient lessens to then increase again as the hill is crested. Here the track takes on a deeply sunken character and the surface is rutted, and muddy on this winter visit. Stone blocks are still in evidence but much disturbed with no sign of cobbles. As a hedge-banked section is entered coming out of the steep valley and woodland and with pasture either side, signs of the constructed track return, albeit now narrower than the lower sections.



*Figure 9: Sunken, rutted section of track (Source: author).*



*Figure 10: Remnants of cobbled surface and stone layer underneath (Source: author).*



Walking the Stony Way raises a question of why it was given this name? Was it a naturally stony route? Was its level of engineering and surfacing significantly different to other tracks radiating from the abbey that have evidence of stone construction? Did it remain significantly stone covered after the monastic period? Given that there is evidence of other constructed tracks around the abbey perhaps the name was given because it was particularly well-constructed due to its long steep gradient.



*Figure 11: Line of Stony Way looking north-east towards Tintern above the wooded valley section (Source: author).*



*Figure 12: Line of Stony Way looking south-west towards Porthcasseg (Source: author).*



As the track enters the open country of the Porthcasseg plateau views open-up, with the site of Tintern's Harthill grange visible on the other side of the Wye valley to the north-east. In the immediate foreground can be seen Ruding Green, pasture land of the Ruding Green, with possible low earthworks of enclosure boundary banks visible (though could be natural undulations). The track then joins the metalled lane to Penterry Farm and proceeds as a hedge-lined country lane past Porthcasseg Farm. If this was a junction in the monastic period then perhaps a cross or wayside marker stone would have stood here.



*Figure 13: Ruding Green with the Stony Way crossing in the foreground, looking north-east (Source: author).*



*Figure 14: The Stony Way (right) joining the Penterry Farm lane (Source: author).*

The land above the lane on the rising ground to the Iron Age enclosure on Gaer Hill is characterised by large pasture fields. As the lane climbs the shoulder of the hill it is windy in character with a ditch along one side and lined by hawthorn hedges typical of late enclosure. Two large ponds sit either side of a lane running off to Porthcasseg Farm after which a section of disused holloway, presumably the old line of the route, runs alongside the modern road to its junction with Piccadilly Lane (waypoint 2): part of the old coach road and probable Roman road between Chepstow and Monmouth (another likely site for a wayside cross or marker stone).



*Figure 15: Section of holloway alongside the modern road south of Porthcasseg (Source: author).*





*Figure 16: Piccadilly Lane running steeply downhill to St. Arvans (Source: author).*

The route now follows the deeply sunken Piccadilly Lane on a long downhill run to the village of St. Arvans, with views southwards of Chepstow racecourse occupying the parkland of Piecefield Park, the Severn Estuary and bridge. Yew trees occupy the hedge either side of the early twentieth-century Wyndcliffe Court, named for the nearby cliffs above the Wye at the southern extent of Tintern's lands on the west side of the valley.

At the point at which the lane joins the main road through St. Arvans there stood a crossroads with the monastic route to and past Rogerstone Grange carrying straight on (waypoint 3). This section of road is no more, having been built over

by a 1970s housing estate (one of the *cul-de-sacs* of which has the name Grange Park). It would seem likely that this section fell out of use when the modern farm lane to the Rogerstone (Grange Road) was constructed during the nineteenth century.



*Figure 17: The route to Rogerstone continued straight ahead through the area now occupied by a housing estate (Source: author).*

The modern way to Rogerstone passing St. Arvans church is now taken, following a wide green lane running roughly parallel with the line of the old trackway (now disused and not a Public Right of Way), visible as a line of trees forming a field boundary.



*Figure 18: Line of the old way from St. Arvans to Rogerstone (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: Rogerstone Grange in its landscape setting looking west, lying on a geological fault line with pasture land and woodland on the higher ground above the farmstead (middle) and fertile land more suited to arable use on the lower ground (Source: author).*

As the route passes Rogerstone the old main entrance track to the grange branches off to the farmstead from the way from Tintern, here now documented as the Lodeway running westwards towards the abbey's granges and lands further into Monmouthshire (waypoint 4). The route of the Lodeway to the abbey possession of



Howick is now followed (also part of the Tewdric's Way recreational trail). One possible origin of the name Lodeway relates to watercourses or ditches, though there are none in evidence along the route here.



*Figure 20: Old entrance to Rogerstone (beyond gate) branching off from the Lodeway (Source: author).*



*Figures 21 and 22: Lodeway looking west towards Howick (Source: author).*



*Figure 23: Cambered Lodeway with hedge field boundary to left grubbed out (Source: author).*

Having crossed the track from Rogerstone to the abbey woodlands of Bernardswood and Fryth Wood via a kinked crossroads respecting the field (or perhaps open field strip) boundaries the route runs passed the south-eastern edge of the grange marked by the Long Wall (waypoint 5). Here the track is raised above the land around it and cambered with signs of a stone surface. On the right hand-side the trackway is banked up above the fields with a hedge now on top, characteristic of a baulk running along the edge of ploughed land. Rogerstone Grange was largely an arable farm and it is likely that the raised road here ran through a crop-growing landscape. There are no visible signs of ridge and furrow here but later ploughing is likely to have obliterated any such evidence.



*Figure 24: Fryth Wood, looking south-east (Source: author).*





*Figure 25: Banked section of the Lodeway running through arable land (Source: author).*



*Figure 26: The end of the Long Wall, marking the boundary of Rogerstone Grange with the Lodeway running at right angles through the gate (Source: author).*



*Figure 27: The line of the Long Wall grange boundary running west uphill to Pilmoore Wood (Source: author).*

After leaving the grange lands at the Long Wall, the Public Right of Way becomes a field path and there is no sign of a trackway to the farmstead of Howick. Beyond the farm a metalled lane runs towards Itton and this provides the likely line of the southward route to the abbey's holdings on the Caldicot Levels. A small patch of woodland/ old orchard adjacent to Howick is marked as 'Nun's Walk' on the modern OS map.



*Figure 28: Howick farmstead looking south (Source: author).*

After Howick the route of the walk follows the main Chepstow to Devauden road northwards before branching off at Croes Breddon to take the track back to



Rogerstone through Pilmoore Wood (waypoint 6). The elevated position of this track enables a sweeping view of the surrounding landscape, all now sheep and cattle pasture with no sign of the extensive arable land which would have dominated in the past.



*Figure 29: Pasture land looking south, with the abbey's Bernardswood in the distance and the Long Wall boundary of Rogerstone on the extreme left (Source: author).*

Pilmoore Wood is now mostly a conifer plantation but bounded by a line of old oaks and a broken down section of the Long Wall. The thick wall is indicative of an old estate boundary as most field boundaries in the area are hedges, many of which have the appearance of late Parliamentary enclosure hedges. Within the wood lies a large ditch or quarry to the east of the through-path. The path leaves the wood to cross large fields to the grange but with no sign of an old trackway. A number of piles of weathered old stone lie along the line of the path, which may be from walls (possible old enclosures within the grange land?) or buildings now taken down or field clearance.



*Figure 30: Rogerstone Grange, looking north (Source: author).*

The steading now occupying the grange site has the appearance of a large nineteenth century model farm. The site is occupied now by a somewhat charmless horse stud with the main barns converted into domestic dwellings. The old entrance track previously mentioned is banked on low ridgeway above a large field to the west, with small quarries along the bank. The Public Right of Way running diagonally across the field to the east of the track is fenced in along the trackway on the ground. The fields alongside the track have much stone along their edges, perhaps from broken down walls long the lanes perimeter.



*Figure 31: Entrance track to Rogerstone, looking back south towards the farmstead (Source: author).*





*Figure 32: Disused section of Lodeway between St. Arvans and Rogerstone, looking north (Source: author).*

The ascent back up Piccadilly Lane to the Stony Way is long and steep. A winter climb on an unmetalled and muddy track would be particularly challenging (explaining the alternative Long Way, longer but more level).

As the junction with the Stony Way is reached the views northwards down the valley are sweeping and impressive. An inspiring sight with the abbey nearly in view after a long journey, below the Old Gods of Gaer Hill camp. With any original paved or cobbled surface long eroded away, the journey back down the upper sections of the Stony Way is muddy, slippery and hard going. This reinforces the importance of well maintained roads where traffic was heavy and resources and technical knowledge available, for instance a major route into a medieval abbey!





*Figures 32 and 33: Rutted and muddy upper sections of Stony Way (Source: author).*



*Figure 34: A Gothic image of the Stony Way (Source: author).*

On reaching the site of the abbey gatehouse its worth reflecting that the Stony Way would have provided quite an epic approach for visitors. The scale of the monastic buildings, coming into view on the final descent to the gate in their setting alongside



the impressive river Wye and flanked by the steep wooded banks of the valley, adding to the sense of wonder.



*Figure 35: The west side of the abbey church (Source: author).*





<b>Walk</b>	<b>Wye valley granges (east) landscapes walk</b>
<b>Date</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
<b>Distance</b>	13 kilometres
<b>Weather conditions</b>	Winter sunshine, frost-cover, clear views
<b>Summary</b>	A walk around the grange estates on the eastern side of the Wye valley (see route on map above)





*Figure 1: The abbey church in winter morning sunshine looking south-east (Source: author).*

The walk commences at the abbey, following the river-side footpath passing the Watergate and the Passage, the location of the medieval cross-river ferry giving access to the abbey from the Gloucestershire side of the Wye, and then the heritage infrastructure around Abbey Mill to cross the river via the disused railway bridge above the site of the medieval Ashweir.

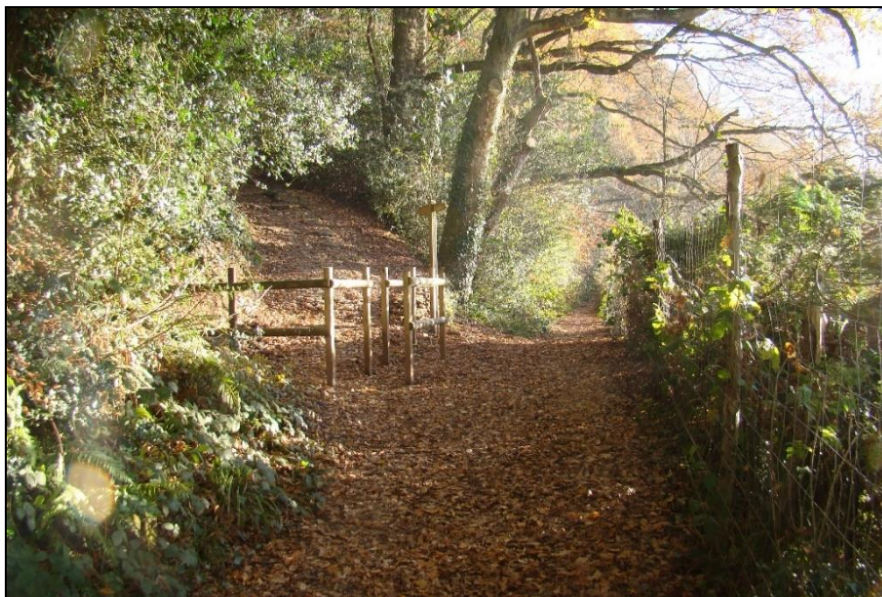


*Figure 2: The Watergate, which provided access to river transport from the Wye, now attached to the Anchor Inn and separated from the river bank by a lane (Source: author).*



*Figure 3: Passage ferry slipway on the eastern (Gloucestershire) bank (Source: author).*

The path then follows the embanked line of the disused railway (a branch line to the goods sidings at Tintern) which cuts through the trackway from the ferry slipway as it begins to climb up the hillside before dividing into the main arteries to the abbey's Gloucestershire estates. Above this path lies a well-preserved and exposed section of paving with large blocks of stone forming the edges of the track and cobbles filling the surface, thought to be a remnant of this important monastic communications route (waypoint 1). As the gradient up the hill increases the paving becomes more indistinct and has been largely eroded away, although further sections can be observed on flatter sections of the path as noted below.



*Figure 4: Point at which the embanked line of the railway (to the right) crosses the medieval track to the ferry slipway (to the left) (Source: author).*





*Figures 5 and 6: Detail of the paved surface of the track from the ferry slipway (Source: author).*

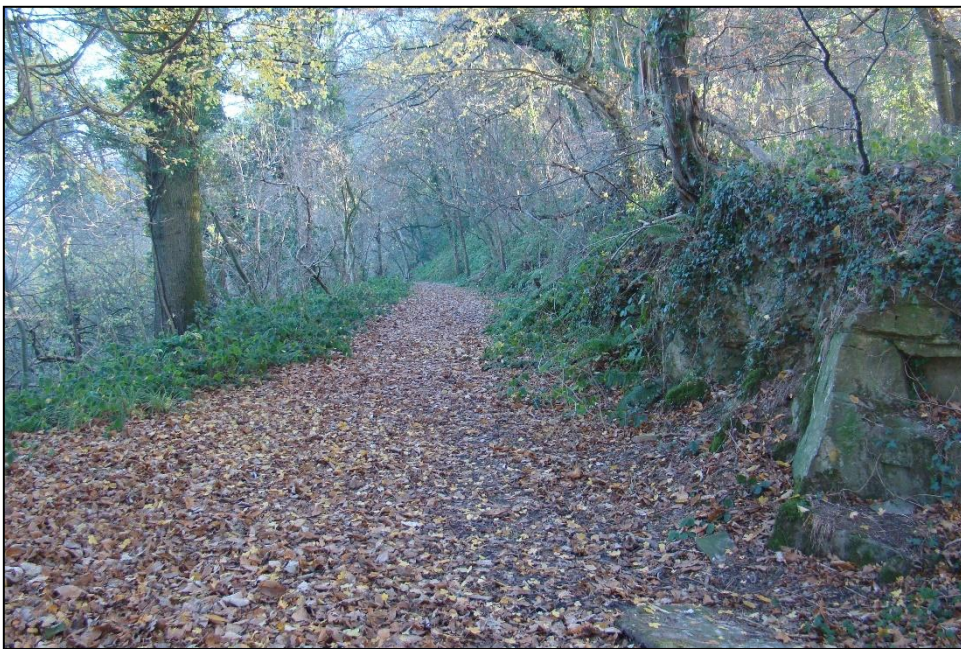
As the track levels out on the crest of the higher ground of the Passage peninsula it divides into the level Monk's Path running to the Brockweir Grange to the left and the ascending Abbey Road and Causeway routes to Modesgate Grange and the further afield Gloucestershire holdings within the Woolaston manor to the right. Although unmetalled both are broad at this stage with further traces of cobbled surface.





*Figure 7: Junction of the Brockweir (left) and Modesgate/ Woolaston (right) routes (Source: author).*

The track to Brockweir follows a level line northwards above the River Wye on a terrace-way, 3-5 metres wide and cobbled – a suitable routeway for heavy traffic. The route, bounded by coppiced hazel, moves through woodland resources of ash, beech, holly and oak. This peninsula within a deep meander of the Wye is part of a long arcing finger of land stretching north from the main part of the Woolaston manor, containing several of the abbey's granges: a land corridor of abbey land from the banks of the Wye to the Severn.



*Figure 8: Looking towards Brockweir on the track from the abbey (Source: author).*





*Figure 9: Riverside meadows at Brockweir, looking south towards Tintern (Source: author).*

The track enters the village of Brockweir at Townend Farm and an area of flat ground where the brook running down the steep valley from the high ground of Hewelsfield (neither valley or stream are named on historic or modern OS maps) meets the Wye (waypoint 2). Here can be seen some old farm buildings, the ruin of a corn mill, an old house called 'Monks Hall' and adjacent 'Granary' and, currently, the now demolished location of workshops and a closed horse sanctuary. The actual site of the central grange complex of Brockweir has not been recorded, but this feels like the most likely location. Certainly, the routeway from the abbey just followed and the main old track up the valley converge here.



*Figure 10: The possible site of the Brockweir grange, with the ruined corn mill to the right (Source: author).*

The track uphill from Brockweir shows further evidence of a cobbled surface, here joining the course of the modern long-distance recreational footpath, the Offa's Dyke National Trail, which also follows other sections of trackways linking the abbey's lands on the eastern side of the Wye.



*Figures 11 and 12: Trackway from Brockweir up through the lands of the grange (Source: author).*

The modern line of the path has sections of overgrown holloway alongside with large stone blocks across it at the point that the track crosses a surviving section of ancient 'dyke' earthwork (interpreted as part of Offa's Dyke though this has been somewhat disputed). From here the track turns sharply right uphill to climb to Madgetts Farm (a section that will be followed later in the walk), location of another of the abbey's granges. The valley sides here would be an ideal location for strip lynchets, indicating medieval ploughing, but none are in evidence.





*Figure 13: Track up from Brockweir to Madgetts (Source: author).*

The wooded lower valley above the stream is littered with large boulder clay conglomerate rocks (as those described as cleared from St. Briavel's Common on the other side of the valley in Roger Deakin's *Wildwood*). These now line the lower footpath and have evidently been used to construct the massive section of the 'dyke' (10-15 metres in width) as it leads down to the stream; the boulders also cleared from the land and used in the stone walls of the fields here (waypoint 3).

It is interesting to ponder what the monks, lay-brothers and local population made of this prominent structure in the landscape, already ancient when the abbey was establishing the grange.





*Figure 14: Boulder-lined pathway approaching the dyke earthwork (seen on the left) (Source: author).*



*Figure 15: Boulders used as revetments along the dyke (Source: author).*





*Figure 16: Pasture-land of Brockweir looking towards Lower Chase Wood and Madgett Hill (Source: author).*



*Figure 17: Boulder stone wall, characteristic of the small fields and lanes of the landscape around Brockweir and Hewelsfield (Source: author).*

The route then climbs the northern side of the valley up through the small field and narrow lanes, all bounded by stone walls constructed of the boulders that would have littered these hillsides when they were first colonised, and particularly when the landscape was transformed by squatter occupation of the common in the early nineteenth century. Following ‘the bewildering lanes that run about St Briavel’s Common’ (Deakin 2007, 127) that link the large number of scattered cottages and small-holdings on the commons.





*Figure 18: Typical small, walled enclosure on Hewelsfield Common (Source: author).*



*Figure 19: A landscape of nineteenth century squatter encroachment, looking north over Hewelsfield and St. Briavel's Common (Source: author).*

Tracking a route up the hill towards the high ground on which Tintern's Harthill Grange was situated via this network of lanes raises a number of questions. What type of medieval landscape did these later developments overlay? Boulder-strewn, unenclosed wood-pasture? Was the hillside terraced with lynchets for arable production? Were any of the lanes followed part of the monastic route to the grange?





*Figure 20: Walled lanes leading up to Hartshill Grange (Source: author).*



*Figure 21: View south-west towards Tintern with the fields of Porthcasseg above the Wye Valley (Source: author).*

From here a good, but misty in the winter sunshine, view back towards Tintern. Although the abbey, deep in the Wye valley, cannot be seen, the fields of its home



manor of Porthcasseg on the high Trellech plateau above the wooded western side of the valley. These plateau-lands were the fertile core of the abbey's local lands.

At the crest of the hill the trackway curves back on itself to the drive-way to the site of Harthill Grange (as indicated on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map) (waypoint 4). With no standing buildings remaining, the site is now woodland – seemingly encroached by the overgrown laurel bushes and coniferous trees of, perhaps, an eighteenth or nineteenth century country house that is no more (the post-medieval history of the site needs to be looked into – was there a house here? What is the wood called?). Broken down iron railings around the grove and gated drive-ways add to the feeling of an abandoned villa; now used as an outdoor pursuits location. The conifers (Douglas Fir?) in the centre of the wood are particularly massive, overlooking a Swiss-style wooden chalet with piles of old stone around it.



*Figures 22 and 23: Woodland and drives ways at the Hartshill Grange site (Source: author).*

Although the wood is private land, Public Rights of Way follow its curving southern boundary, the iron railings atop an older stone bank. The path joins the eastern driveway into the site at a striking 'model farm' barn (a square structure with an enclosed inner courtyard) now converted to residential accommodation, a sign indicating its modern name of 'Harthill Grange' – the name of the abbey farm living on). The barn was the farmyard for the nearby Harthill House and, if not containing a house, the grove was perhaps the parkland of this residence.





*Figure 24: 'Harthill Grange' barn conversion (Source: author).*

The route carries on eastwards along the top of the escarpment above Brockweir from which there are commanding views south-westwards towards the lands of Brockweir and Modesgate granges, Mill Hill and Porthcasseg in the distance: all Tintern lands (waypoint 5). Looking across the landscape it is interesting to consider the contrasting afterlives of the granges in the area: Brockweir enveloped by a prosperous village; Modesgate remaining as an isolated farmstead; and Hartshill morphing into a post-medieval gentry farm with its lands enveloped by cottager encroachment on common land.



*Figure 25: View south-westwards across the lands of Tintern (Source: author).*

Walking along the small lanes of Hewelsfield Common back towards the Brockweir valley a house named 'Penterry' is passed (perhaps in recognition of Penterry above Tintern abbey adjacent to the abbey lands on the west side of the Wye?).



*Figure 26: Site of Harthill Grange (line of tall coniferous trees on skyline) with model farm barn to the right (Source: author).*

The route now crosses to the other side of the Brockweir Brook valley and runs along the valley side southwards along the boundary of the woodlands of Cows Hill and Lower Chase.





*Figure 27: Line of beech marking the boundary between pasture and Cows Hill Wood (Source: author).*



*Figure 28: Lower Chase Wood, the boundary between Modesgate land to the left and Brockweir land to the right (Source: author).*





*Figure 29: Ruin of a large rectangular barn (un-named, probably of eighteenth century origin) on the edge of Cows Hill Wood (Source: author)..*

Across the valley can be seen Mill Hill below which a farmstead with a large pond may indicate the location of the Brockweir Grange mill.



*Figure 30: Mill Hill and possible grange mill site, looking north-west (Source: author).*

Several sections of a wide boundary wall between the pasture and woodland constructed of substantial boulders are visible here (though much broken down in parts) and the Public Right of Way follows a banked track just below this boundary which links with the trackway running steeply uphill from Brockweir to Madgetts (Modesgate). Are the wall and/ or trackway remnants of the boundary between the abbey granges of Brockweir and Madgetts?





*Figures 31 and 32 below: Sections of the substantial wall bounding Lower Chase Wood (Source: author).*





*Figure 33: Banked trackway alongside Lower Chase Wood (Source: author).*

At the junction with the track to Madgetts, a trackway is then followed steeply uphill to the farmstead, the site of the monastic grange (waypoint 6). Again, a well-used lane, in parts with a stony surface perhaps indicating cobbles, climbs the hillside turning into a more deeply sunken trackway and passing a quarry.

The present-day buildings of Madgetts Farm (waypoint 7) are eighteenth century in origin but the site and its associated trackways, probable chapel site (in Chapel Meadow) and earthworks (see below) provide a highly suitable subject for detailed topographical and/or large-scale rapid survey.



*Figures 34 and 35 below: Trackway up to Madgetts Farm (Source: author).*





*Figure 36: Madgetts Farm, looking south-east, from the trackway up from Brockweir (Source: author).*



*Figures 37 and 38: Combination barn and farmhouse at Madgetts (Source: author).*

West of Madgetts stands Beeches Farm campsite through which passes another sunken lane running through a series of large earthwork banks to then cut through the dyke earthwork running along the crest of the Wye valley (posited as possibly associated with this dyke, the site of a deserted medieval settlement or strip-lynchets in the NMR) and then running through the wooded Wye valley to the Passage ferry to the abbey. After exploring these features the route runs south down the wide and straight Miss Grace's Lane giving access to Beeches Farm: A post-medieval name and also character to the lane, though this could be an alternative route southwards from the abbey and its granges in the northern part of Woolaston manor to the abbey's holdings further south.

The Offa's Dyke Long-distance Path passes along the dyke and the campsite is regularly used by walkers following the route. Interestingly, the web site and



information board of the camp site (and also the web site of the adjacent Madgetts Farm) make no mention of their location at the heart of a medieval monastic grange).



*Figures 39 and 40 below: Trackway from Madgetts to the Passage ferry to the abbey with large earthwork bank alongside (Source: author).*



The wide and straight Miss Grace's Lane passes through what was the heart of the agricultural land of the Modesgate Grange: a flat limestone plateau high above the Wye, now a landscape of large rectangular fields. The farmstead of Sheepcot is passed and here, before post-medieval enclosure, open sheep-run would have been the likely land-use.



*Figure 41: Sheepcot farm looking north-west (Source: author).*

A public footpath traversing the southern boundary of the Modesgate land is taken from Miss Grace's Lane, past a series of disused quarry pits, to the wooded side of the Wye valley at the Devil's Pulpit (waypoint 8). Excepting one section of holloway, this field path shows little physical signs of use as a significant routeway in the past but may be the Abbey Road route from the 1815 enclosure map. From here the Offa's Dyke Path along the dyke earthwork is followed northwards to a pathway running downhill to the Passage ferry, from a point at which there is a break in the earthworks – perhaps the recorded Abbey Gate. The Devil's Pulpit is so-named because local legend tells of the Devil using this prominent rock high above Tintern Abbey to tempt with community there away from their religious life (this abbey-related folklore acknowledged by the heritage sign at the site).



*Figure 42: The irregular line of the southern boundary of the Modesgate Grange lands (Source: author).*





Figure 43: The Devil's Pulpit (foreground) with Tintern Abbey in the distance, looking north-west (Source: author).



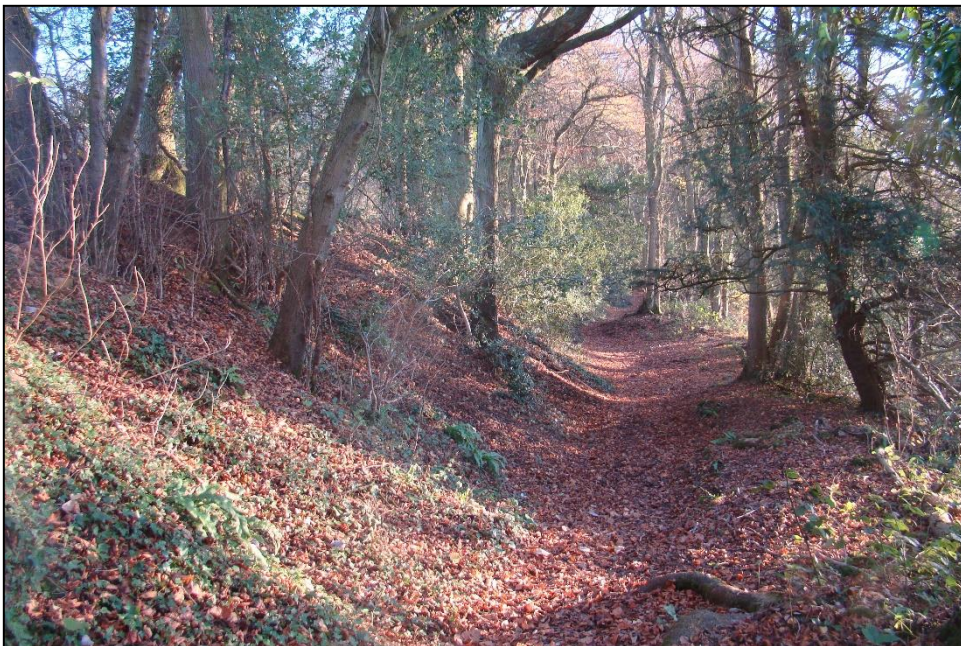
Figure 44: Heritage sign detailing the legend of the Devil's Pulpit (Source: author).





*Figure 45: Break in the Offa's Dyke earthwork, possibly Abbey Gate (Source: author).*

This section of the Offa's Dyke Path is a broad holloway between a high bank upslope and a lower bank downslope, running through mature beechwoods. As the path downhill through Passage Grove to the ferry crossing is taken, initially via a wide bend then seemingly following a wide modern forestry track, but with several sections of more winding disused holloway beside indicating a previously less straight course. A marker stone stands at the point where this pathway crosses another track.



*Figure 46: Offa's Dyke Path (Source: author).*





*Figure 47: Track through Passage Grove with disused holloway to left and modern forestry track to right (Source: author).*



*Figure 48: Marker stone on pathway through Passage Grove (Source: author).*

In its final descent to join the other trackways from Brockweir and Modesgate to the Passage ferry the pathway follows a series of steps seemingly cut into the limestone of the hill-side, or perhaps either using a natural rock formation or the residual remains of a constructed path. Then following a winding sunken way to meet the path first taken from the cobbled way from the ferry site described at the start of the walk.





*Figure 49: Stone 'steps' of path descending through Passage Grove (Source: author).*



*Figure 50: Track to Modesgate (left) and Devil's Pulpit (right) (Source: author).*





*Figure 51: Track to the Passage ferry site with the location of the Watergate on the opposite bank indicated by the white gable wall of the Anchor Inn (Source: author).*