



Elephant Hawk moth
Photo Courtesy of Paul Chesterfield

Once in the woods go over a wooden stile, and follow the footpath until you see a track on your right hand side. Ignore this and stay on the lower path next to the river to a point where the path moves away from the river. Cross over another wooden stile then cross a small bridge over a stream and out of the wood. Continue straight ahead towards the stone foundations of an old farm building then with the stone wall on your right hand side continue until you see a field gate with a wooden stile along side it. Go over the stile. Keeping the tree line and river on your left hand side continue on the path. Go over a wooden stile and cross the stream at which point you will see a waymark post. Follow the track for a short distance until you see another waymark post on your left side. Follow the direction of the disc on the post so that you are heading towards an electricity pylon in the top left hand corner of the field.

7

The Ogwr Ridgeway Walk (8) links three other regional routes – the Coed Morgannwg Way, the Sky to Sea Walk and the Ffordd y Bryniau. Using this network of long distance paths you can walk to

four country parks. Go west on the Ridgeway for Margam Country Park and Afan Forest Park, east for Bryngarw Country Park and north from Llangenid to Dare Valley Country Park.

Turn right along the Ridgeway and follow the waymarked path across the fields. When you go over the stile near City Farm follow the access track to the right to the junction with Bettws Road. At this point turn left and walk for a short distance then cross over the road opposite the junction to Tudor Drive. Continue to follow the signs along a rough track, which is a registered Byway Open to All Traffic.



Rosehips
Photo courtesy of Colin Davidson

8

At the first stile on the right leave the Ridgeway Walk and follow the waymarked natural surface footpath to Bryngarw Country Park.

Bryngarw Country Park (9) is divided into four areas – woodland, grassland, formal gardens and water features surrounding Bryngarw House. The gardens around the house are Edwardian and were laid out between 1910 and 1918. They include some fine Japanese Maples, Magnolias and Rhododendrons.

Within the park you may see Dipper on the river, also Kingfisher are likely here,



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- Bridgend County Borough Council's Tourism unit.



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Designed by design@bridgend Tel: 01656 642046



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and Wood Warblers in the woodland. Bryngarw is also a good place to look for fungi particularly in the autumn. Look out for waxcaps and spongecaps in the wet grassland areas. Well maintained paths and trail guides will ensure that you get the most out of your visit. Call in at the Visitor Centre or telephone the Rangers on 01656 725155 for more information.

Keeping Bryngarw House on your left hand side take the access road. You will note a pond on your right hand side. Continue along the tarmac road to a point where you come to the main gate. Leave the park via the main gate and turn left at the road. At the next road junction, turn right and pick up the surfaced public footpath on the right just after the



Blackberries
Photo courtesy of Colin Davidson

church. Follow this tarmac footpath past the school and across the common. When you get to the road cross the road and follow the pavement along the street opposite known as Queen Street.

Continue along the public bridgeway, which follows a rough track and descends through the trees.

Coytrahen Colliery (10) was a drift mine once employing 250 men. It closed in the 1920s.

Cross the bridge over the Llynfi River and continue on the track to the main road in Tondy (Maesteg Road). Turn left and return to the station.

Advice & Information

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The going is easy although it may be wet in places. Remember to wear suitable clothes and good shoes/boots and take food and drink with you and be prepared to get fit! Always follow the Countryside Code and take care when crossing main roads. When you are walking on minor roads keep to the right and make use of verges whenever you can.



Tondy Ironworks
circa 1910 and 2004



It should be easy to follow the route using the map and instructions inside this leaflet. When walking the route try and look out for the walk logo that will be situated on

stiles, gates and posts along the route. Directional waymarks with yellow arrows will assist you as to which direction to walk in once you are on a public footpath. We also recommend you refer to the OS Explorer Map 151 Cardiff and Bridgend and the OS Explorer Map 166 Rhondda & Merthyr Tydfil.

For further information about this walk, to pass on your comments and suggestions or to report any practical problems on any of the paths please contact the Rights of Way Section, Environmental and Planning Services Directorate, Morien House Bennett Street, Bridgend Industrial Estate, Bridgend, CF31 3SH (Telephone 01656 642537 or 01656 642516) or by e-mail at rightsofway@bridgend.gov.uk

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Countryside Code

RESPECT PROTECT ENJOY.

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



Follow the Countryside Code wherever you go. You will get the best out of the countryside and help to maintain it now and for the future.

Public Transport

For further information on bus times and service numbers telephone Bridgend County Borough Council's Public Transport Section on 01656 642559 or the National Bus Enquiry number on 0870 6082608. Information regarding train times can be made via National Rail Enquiries on 08457 484950.

Car Parking

There is parking provision at the following:

- Tondy Train Station
- Parc Tondy
- Parc Slip Nature Park
- Bryngarw Country Park

(Note there is a charge to park at Bryngarw)

Accommodation

To make a reservation or to obtain information on accommodation contact one of the Heritage Coast Tourist Information Centres. These are at McArthur Glen Designer Outlet off Junction 36 the M4 (telephone 01656 654906) and at John Street, Porthcawl (telephone 01656 786639).

For further general information about the Bridgend area you can contact us via e-mail at tourism@bridgend.gov.uk Alternatively, you can visit our website – which is at www.visitbridgend.com

Old Industries & New Parks

Introduction

This leaflet describes walks up to 9km (5½ miles) long from the railway station in Tondy. The area is rich in industrial remains and countryside attractions. On the way you'll pass the site of Tondy Ironworks, the Engine house of which is now the Offices of Groundwork Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot; the Wildlife Trust of South & West Wales Parc Slip Nature Park; and, Bryngarw Country Park. You'll find all the facilities you need in Tondy, Coytrahen and Bryngarw Country Park.

The longer walk, which should take you about 2½ to 3 hours, incorporates part of the Ogwr Ridgeway Walk, a long distance path giving access to some of the most beautiful scenery in South Wales.

1

For convenience purposes the directions below are written with the route starting and finishing at Tondy train station. You could however start from Parc Slip Nature Park or Bryngarw Country Park or any point along the route. If you are travelling in the opposite direction simply reverse all the directions.

Directions

From Tondy Station leave the platform via the Footbridge, turning left at the top of the steps. At the main road (known as Maesteg Road) cross the road and turn left and proceed along the pavement.



Painted Lady butterfly Photo Courtesy of Paul Chesterfield

Before starting the walk you may like to visit Parc Tondy the entrance to which will be on your right hand side and is situated behind the new Parc Derllwyn housing development and adjacent to the Celtic Trail.

Parc Tondy (1) is the most complete Victorian ironworks in Britain and is in the process of being developed by Groundwork Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot. There is also a small natural woodland and landscaped parkland, Iron Trail and mountain bike course.

Sir Robert Price, a Herefordshire MP founded the ironworks in Tondy in 1838. Unfortunately, he had little experience of business and his venture ended in bankruptcy, allowing John Brogden & Sons to take over in 1854 and create a successful company based on iron working, coal mining and railways. A slump in the iron industry in the 1870s sent the company into receivership in 1878.

2

In 1888 Colonel North became a local hero when he rescued the business and local jobs. His company concentrated on coal and survived until nationalisation in 1947, after which Tondy became the West Wales HQ of the National Coal Board.

For more information on Parc Tondy contact Groundwork Bridgend & Neath Port Talbot on Bridgend – (01656 727800) or e.mail: tonduironworks@groundworkbnpt.com

To begin the Old Industries New Parks Circular Walk go through the metal staggered barrier to the right of the church and follow the Celtic Trail cycle route. This is part of Route 4 of the National Cycle Network. This section of cycle route runs along what was the line of a railway used to move coal around Tondy Ironworks and was built by Sir Robert Price in the 1830s. This part of the walk has a tarmac and wooden boardwalk surface. Continue to follow the cycle track to Parc Slip Nature Park.

3

Should you wish to take a short detour whilst on this section of route **Park Terrace (2)** is a well preserved example of 19th century employer built housing for workers.

Parc Slip Nature Park (3) is the headquarters of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales. It is situated on the site of an old colliery and opencast coal workings. It has been restored to provide a variety of wildlife habitats, including grassland, wildflower meadows, wetlands and woodland. You will see Lapwings in the spring and summer, Green Woodpeckers in the woods and Golden Plover which sometimes stop off in the Autumn/Winter. You will also find the Painted Lady butterfly and the Elephant Hawk moth within the park and the Common Frog in the pond areas. You will also see flora such as Rosehips, Bramble and Southern Marsh Orchids within the park. The Celtic Trail runs through the Park and a network of other paths, some

of which are accessible by wheelchair, are open to the public. For more information contact the Trust on 01656 724100.

To continue on the circular walk turn right when you reach the point opposite the Trust's headquarters where the Cycle route meets Fountain Road. Follow this road until you come to a crossroad. Go straight ahead following the signs for Cwm Risca. At a bend in the road take the sign posted public footpath on the right. Bear left to cross a wooden stile, follow the waymarks and keep the field boundary on your right. Cross another 2 stiles and continue along the edge of a small wood keeping the fence line on your right. Pick up the farm track, (which is also a public footpath) to Tondy House Farm.



Common Frog Photo Courtesy of Hania Arentsen

4

Tondy House Farm (4) and the surrounding woodland is currently being managed by EcoDysgu. Visitors will find themselves breathing in the freedom of 42 acres of ancient woodland, pasture and workshop space. Birds that you will find in the woodland include Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers, Nuthatch, Treecreeper, and migrants such as Blackcap, Chiffchaff and Willow Warblers in summer. Groups of children, young people



and adults participate in the creation of EcoDysgu via schools, youth services and community groups. They have all helped to create trails, sculptures, willow huts, even a Celtic roundhouse and compost toilets! For more information or to take part in this project contact EcoDysgu on Bridgend 01656 728137.

5

To continue on the walk bear right through farm buildings and then take the waymarked path on the left over the wooden stile. Head downhill towards the huge oak tree in the field. Just beyond the oak tree you will emerge onto a track.

The track you are on is the disused line of the **Duffryn, Llynfi and Porthcawl Railway (5)**, completed in 1828 to serve industries in and around the Llynfi Valley. It was originally a horse drawn tramway but was later rebuilt to accommodate locomotives.

A 100m detour (by kind permission) to the left along this tramway will take you past a loading platform to a quarry where pennant sandstone was quarried for the ironworks and local housing. You can also see a trolley bus which was used by the M.o.D during the Second World War for top secret munitions testing.

To continue the walk return to the public footpath and follow the walk

down the steps, over the small wooden bridge and straight down the hill through the trees to the main road (the A4063 Maesteg Road).

Just before you reach the road is the line of **Sir Robert Price's Tramroad (6)**. This was built to bring coal from his collieries at Feliln Fach and Bettws to the ironworks at Tondy. Price also constructed a water-course alongside to carry water from the River Llynfi to the works.

When you come to the point where the footpath meets the main road cross the road (but take care as it can be busy). You now have a **CHOICE**: to get back to the station, turn right and follow the pavement to Tondy; to continue the walk, turn left, and take the next footpath on the right which is signposted and has a metal kissing gate at the start. Go through the kissing gate down the steps and follow the path to the road.

The **Llynfi River (7)** is part of the Ogmore river system and was once heavily polluted with coal dust. The water is now clean and the river supports a wide variety of wildlife including grey wagtail, herons and dippers.

When you get to the road turn right. Using the road go over the river and then under the railway bridge. Climb over the stone stile on the left and follow the public footpath into the woods.

