

## Bwlfa Trail

Approximately 2 miles (3.5 km)

A circular walk around the valley floor with a shorter link suitable for pushchairs and wheelchair users.

The accessible route is approximately a mile/2 km.

## Cae Mawr Trail

Approximately 2.5 miles (4km)

Takes you off the beaten track on countryside paths through wooded areas and along the valley sides.

## Penrhiwllech Trail

Approx 4 miles (6km)

Follows a horseshoe shaped route out of the valley, climbing onto the upland plateau and over rough terrain.

## How to find us



The Dare Valley Country Park is four minutes from "Tanglewood" Cottage  
It's seven minutes from "266" Cottage driving  
You can also cycle or even walk from both Cottages

Plenty of beautiful short walks around the waterfalls also, you don't have to hike for miles. And can enjoy a lunch, or coffee in the Centre, where you park on arrival., it can also be very leisurely. Easy paths for prams or wheelchairs all around the lakeside, plus picnic spots. Horseriding there and Lasershooting Children's Playground, and plenty of space for little ones to run around.



# Walks at...

# ...Dare Valley Country Park



## Bwlfa Trail

To the lake passing ancient oaks & young woods. After the barrier take the **riverside path**. After the bridge, those with wheelchairs or pushchairs can follow the tarmac path to pick up the red route on the other side of the lake.

The path runs upstream next to the River Dare. There is lots of wildlife here, with dippers on the stream and orchids in the wet meadows in summer. Where the red route turns back down the valley, a path continues upstream to the **viewing platform** and Tarren y Bwlfa. The pinch-point near Bwlfa House is not passable for wheelchairs or pushchairs. The return route includes views of **Cwmdare village** and the Country Park. It is hard to believe that the landscape of lakes, woods and open space was created in the 1970's after the coal pits shut.

Most days there are little grebe, coots and moorhens on the **lake**. At the end of the lake, pushchair and wheelchair users can follow the signs to the Visitor Centre. The red route goes on past the lower lake, across the cascade before returning to the Visitor Centre.

## Cae Mawr Trail

Pass the campsite and field into the ancient woodland, full of bluebells in spring. The grassland with anthills has been undisturbed for years. As the path climbs, there are **views** of the Brecon Beacons and the Country Park below. Turning downhill the path crosses springs and stiles, old fields with occasional crab apple trees, to cross the River Dare and join the red route. The views of the **glacial cwm** are dramatic. The crags tower above the scree and the alder wood. Follow the Peregrine symbols to the viewing platform for a closer look.

The return along the valley floor passes some former **collieries**, with miles of underground tunnels, including a link to Maerdy in the Rhondda. Lakes, woods and open space now blend into the surrounding landscape. Beyond **Bwlfa House**, is the site of the international quoits pitch. These days you are more likely to see horse riders and cyclists on the trails in the Park, or you could test out the Trim Trail before you return to the Visitor Centre.

## Penrhiwllech Trail

The track climbs steadily out of the valley. Enjoy the views; including the **Brecon Beacons** on a clear day. Closer are the crags of **Tarren y Bwlfa**, one of the most southerly and spectacular glacial cwms in Britain. From the top of the cwm, it's a sheer drop to the scree slopes below and the moraine deposits dumped by the melting ice about 8,000 years ago.

The **peat bog** on the plateau above the cliffs is home to some amazing plants, including the insect-eating sundew. Keep dogs under control, as there are deep holes in places. Follow the yellow arrows to cross the stream and begin the descent towards the farm with the lakes beyond. Some of the old **coalmines** are marked by features in the Country Park. Coal levels and spoil heaps can also be seen from the high ground. Many of the undisturbed coal tips are now clothed in **lichen heath**, a rare wildlife habitat for which Dare Valley is famous. On the valley floor the route joins the red and blue routes.

## Things to look out for in Dare Valley Country Park

**Spring:** Dozens of different bird songs (including cuckoo), nesting peregrines, orange tip and small pearl-bordered fritillary butterflies, bluebells and cuckoo flower.

**Summer:** Young moorhen, little grebe and coot on the lakes; dragonflies, grayling and purple hairstreak butterflies, heath spotted and southern marsh orchid.

**Autumn:** Waxcaps in the meadows, lichen-heath on the twin tips, ring ouzels in rowan trees.

**Winter:** Wintering ducks on the lakes, flocks of redwing and fieldfare, small birds on the Centres bird feeders, winter visiting hen harrier, goshawk, and merlin.

### To walk or cycle to the Dare Country Park from Tanglewood:-

Turn up hill when leaving the Grove. When you reach the bridge over the pathway, turn down. Keep going to the right until you get there. To the left is the walk/ride to Cwmaman.

From "266" :-

Leave Cottage, turn left, take first left up hill, straight across the road at the top of hill. Keep walking up, follow the path to the top, then you'll come onto the main large pathway. Turn right for Country Park, turn left for Cwmaman.

Whole way is FLAT once you're on the main pathway.



Depending on the weather, the Cae Mawr and Penrhiwlech paths, in particular; can get wet and boggy.

Please wear strong footwear and take waterproof clothing. The visitor centre is fairly close by, but we advise people to take food and drink with them.

On the Penrhiwlech trail be aware of the cliffs on the path near the Tarren y Bwlfa.

Please follow the countryside code while enjoying the Country Park.

### Key

Camp Site	Information Point	Cafe	Children's Playground
Caravan Site	Toilet	Picnic Area	Trim Trail
Hotel	Car Park	Bike Hire	Peregrine Viewing Platform
Bwlffa Trail	Bwlffa Trail (Shorter link Route)		Environmental Education Centre
Cae Mawr Trail	Coed Morgannwg Way See Explorer Map Series 166 for more details		Outdoor Education Centre Canolfan Addysg Awyr Agored
Penrhiwlech Trail	Greenway to Aberdare		