

Cross the forestry road to join a track that descends left with fine views to Cwmsymlog with its prominent chimney. Lower down, opposite the chimney, beside the track in the woods, is the ruin of an old miners' cottage, next to which two rowans have intertwined to create an extraordinary archway.

At the end of the track pass through a gate and turn right to pass by the chimney. Bear left, just beyond it, along a track that passes to the left of fenced-off mine workings. Take the track that continues steeply left traversing the hillside to reach a gate at the crest. A short path leads straight on to join another prominent track that contours left, back around the head of the valley. Continue along this to finally leave the valley at a rise offering fine views of the sea behind with Y Garn and Plynlimon ahead.

With the waters of Llyn Pendam below, drop down to the left to enter conifers and emerge onto a road below the dam. Turn right along this keeping a wary eye out for mountain bikers. From here, above the house at the end of the next lake, Llyn Blaenmelindwr, the summit of Disgwylfa can be made out, showing briefly above Mynydd March on the near skyline.

The road crosses the dam at the end of this second lake to reach a junction. Turn right here to descend to where a forestry road enters to the right with a plethora of signs. Head down through the barrier to reach another junction. With many options to choose from, take the second turn on the left to climb steadily south east through spruce trees. A waymark at this turn bears the "Borth to Devil's Bridge" roundel and indicates the correct path to follow, the Forestry Commission Wales red route.

The gradient steepens to bring you on to the very crest of a fine ridge that leads due south across the head of the Melindwr valley. Bear right to a stone viewpoint on the summit and continue with stunning views out over Cardigan Bay. Follow the path to the left to drop down to a footbridge, then climb up to carefully cross a mountain bike trail, through wooden barriers, onto the ridge once more. A final descent zigzags down to the Bwlch Nant yr Arian Forest Visitor Centre.

Cover image: Chapel at Cwmsymlog (© DJG Owen)

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For further information on holidays in Ceredigion contact: Aberystwyth Tourist Information Centre, Terrace Road, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion, Wales SY23 2AG
☎ 01970 612125 ✉ AberystwythTIC@Ceredigion.gov.uk



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Welsh Assembly Government



Borth to Ystwyth Trail Path TAL-Y-BONT to NANT YR ARIAN Section 2 of 6

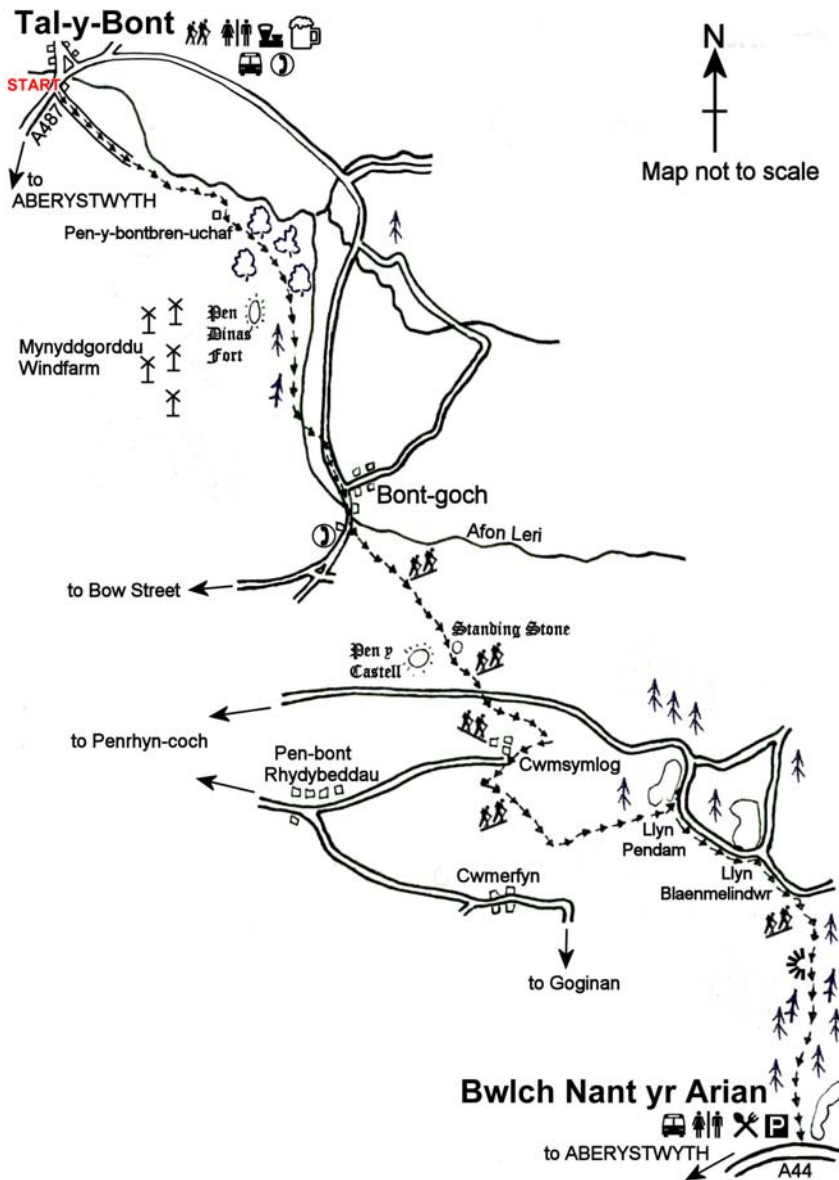


Distance & time: 14.5km (9 miles); 4-4½ hours.
Terrain: Wooded valleys emerging onto upland pasture with steep sections. Forestry and some quiet country lanes.
Suitable for: This is a long strenuous walk for experienced walkers.
Grade: This walk will involve steep ascents and descents; distances shown should not be taken as an indication of effort. **This is a grade A walk** graded according to the following criteria:

- A Strenuous: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 6 hours with a light rucksack
- B Moderate: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 4 hours with a light rucksack
- C Easy: Ability to walk on rough terrain for up to 2 hours with a light rucksack

Start: Tal-y-bont SN 655 892
Finish: Bwlch Nant yr Arian Forest Visitor Centre
Refreshments: Tal-y-bont and Bwlch Nant yr Arian Forest Visitor Centre
Public Toilets: Tal-y-bont and Bwlch Nant yr Arian (Summer 10-5; Winter 11-dusk)
Public transport: ☎ Tourist Information Centre 01970 612125 or ☎ Traveline Cymru on 0870 608 2608.
Maps: OS Landranger 135 Aberystwyth & Machynlleth; OS Explorer Map 213 Aberystwyth & Cwm Rheidol

CEREDIGION



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From the green in front of the two public houses at Tal-y-bont, proceed south alongside the main road towards Aberystwyth to cross the Afon Leri. The old mill on the left here is now a salon, a cartwheel frames the window overlooking the river. Turn left at the salon to continue the journey inland along a tarmac road, following the river, with evidence of old turbine houses, weirs and leats, below on the left.

Pass through a gate to enter a common and continue, the river below, hills ahead in the distance and the steep slopes of Braich Garw to the right. Behind you, the sea comes back into view and, on a clear day, the Llŷn Peninsular can be made out on the horizon beyond Ynyslas.

Cross a tributary stream with care before reaching the farmyard of Penpompren Uchaf. Behind the buildings a track rises left to enter the predominantly oak and ash woodland, still following the course of the Leri.

The valley shortly opens out where rivers meet. Follow the track as it contours right and the valley sides steepen once more. Numerous small streams cross the track, tumbling down the east facing slope where ash trees have been replaced mostly by birch.

Look out for a kissing gate on the left, go through it to gain another, there are pools and small waterfalls in the river below. The path traverses the steep slope through conifers before descending to the riverside through another kissing gate.

Cross the river by the ruins of an old mine, the dry stone abutments give evidence of a much larger bridge at this location in days gone by. The route climbs the steep bank opposite, skirts around the yard to emerge onto a tree-lined lane next to an enormous stone gatepost. Continue along the lane up to the road.

Turn right to pass through the village of Bontgoch, crossing the Leri once again. The old chapel on your right, before the waterworks, is now a house, yet gravestones still occupy the garden. Opposite, hidden in the hedge, is a stile. Enter the field to follow an indistinct path through reeds, headed south east, which passes by the far corner of the water works. Make for a stile in the corner, beyond a prominent lone oak tree.

Cross the stile to reach another. After a third stile beside a gate, turn left to begin a rising traverse, making for a redundant gateway beside the fence on the crest above. Follow this fence to the corner and traverse the field ahead to join a bridleway that crosses the ridge to enter the next valley, with commanding views of the prominent hill fort, Pen y Castell, on the right. The settlement of Penrhyncoch can be seen below and, in the distance, Pendinas, another hill fort above Aberystwyth, with the sea beyond.

Bear right in a dip to contour right, down past a quarry once frequented by aspiring rock climbers (the building ahead used to be an outdoor centre) and ponds. The bridleway emerges onto a tarmac driveway and climbs steeply left through conifers. At the top of the first steep rise, opposite a turnaround and gateway, leave the drive to turn right along a track that zigzags steeply up through the plantation to a road. Cross this road to a track that enters to the immediate left of the house, Bryn-goleu, beside a dry stone wall, only to leave this almost immediately to descend right on a dark route through trees.