

Hosteli Unigeddau'r Elenydd : Elenydd Wilderness Hostels

Walks from Dolgoch Hostel **No. 11 - Rhiwnant - 21 miles (34km)**

Summary

Goes over the highest point in the Elenydd, Drygarn Fawr at 2115 (645m), and into the Claerwen valley, a major tributary of the Elan valley. Descent of Devil's Staircase into Irfon valley on way out and return over Drum Nantygorlan.

NB. not personally reconnoitred from Drygarn Fawr to crossing of Nant y Rhestr (GR842596). Route follows bridleways (BWs) as marked on map and understood to be reasonably walkable. (Recommended by someone who has cycled them!)

Safety

This challenging walk is only for people who know they can cope with navigating across featureless moors in bad visibility, the distance, the terrain and prolonged exposure to bad weather. You are strongly recommended to read the safety and navigational advice in the Guest Information file 'Walking' in the hostel. For this walk this can be summarised as:

River Crossings - low bridges over Irfon below Devil's Staircase can be inundated if in flood. Headstreams on section not walked by me should be crossable further up if necessary (see note at end of summary).

Underfoot - Follows trodden paths but can be very wet.

Exposure - High (1400-2000ft, 420-610m) and open for about 10miles with only limited respite in Rhiwnant and approach to it.

Navigation - trodden paths but faint in parts and can be challenging in poor visibility or with snow cover. OS map and compass are essential.

Traffic - About 3miles on very quiet road but be alert and walk on the right.

Forestry - Steer clear of harvesting and other operations; follow directions; do not climb on wood stacks.

Directions

NB. ref.nos. are shown on map overleaf.

- 1 Right (R) at end of hostel access road.
- 2 Follow road, going uphill where road joins from R; then down Devil's Staircase.
- 3 L immediately after 3rd low river crossing onto unsealed road going up into forest.
- 4 Fork R and follow road as it doubles back on itself.
- 5 At forest edge go through gate and immediately L up grassy sward. Continue on trodden path heading for E end of low hill ahead (Drygarn Fach) on bearing of 15°.
- 6 Follow trodden path over E end of Drygarn Fach and turn to follow trodden paths NE-wards (50°) down into valley and up other side to cairn-topped Drygarn Fawr.
- 7 Continue on trodden path (BW on map) to drop into head of valley and go N.
- 8 L at road. Go through farm, past small plantation and L up stony track. After 200m as track bends L pick up faint track (BW) on R heading W-wards and uphill (GR 893616).
- 9 Continue W on BW to cross stream at GR859615. Then SW past Llyn Carw, in depression.
- 10 Continue on BW, over top. Descending, look for gap in forest ahead (see 11). Pick up stream on L. Cross Rhestr (coming from R) and fork R where BWs divide.
- 11 Follow path over top of Nantygorlan past white stone and down to cross bridge over Irfon. (NB. BW on OS map is just to SE over top.) Follow track R from bridge and up through gap in forest.
- 12 Go L at forest road: stay on it, ignoring tracks coming in from L and R.
- 13 R at public road and L onto hostel access road.

Points of Interest

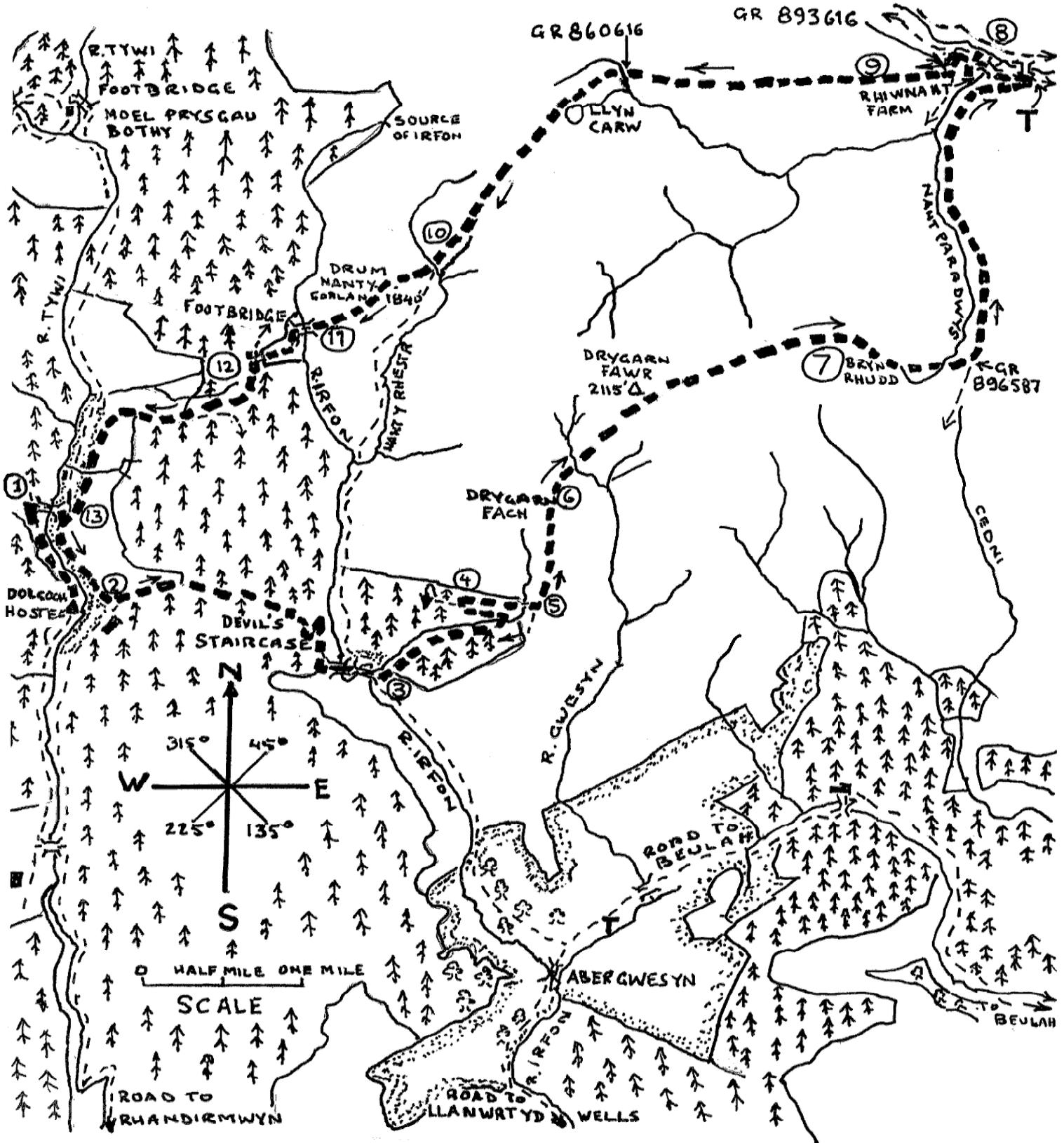
NB. for more information see Guest Information Files at hostel.

- 1 Devil's Staircase - the steep descent into the Irfon valley (longer note in Walk 3).
- 2 Drygarn Fawr - see Walk 7 and Porter's book 'Elenith' (p9) in hostel Walking file.
- 3 Elan Valley Reservoirs - distant and closer views of this complex.
- 4 Recumbent stone on Drum Nantygorlan (longer note in Walk 3).

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|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | WALK | | OTHER PATH, TRACK OR ROAD | | BUILDING |
| | DIRECTION OF WALK | | BRIDGE OVER RIVER | | CONIFEROUS FOREST (INCLUDING FELLED) |
| | DIRECTION REF. POINT (P.T.O) | | TRIG POINT | | DECIDUOUS WOODLAND |
| | PHONE BOX (MAY NOT TAKE COINS) | | NOT ACCESS LAND | | |