

Llysfyaen Walks – Llysfyaen Central

Name: Llysfyaen Central

Route: Ffordd y Llan, Mynydd Marian nature reserve, Bron y Llan Rd., path to Dolwen Rd., path to Gadlas Rd., Glyndwr Rd., Dolwen Rd. Two stiles and kissing gate on second detour.

Start and finish: St. Cynfran's Church, Pentregwyddel Rd.

OS Grid Ref.: SH 893 774

Parking: room for a few cars; do not obstruct the bus route. Further parking in the Mynydd Marian carpark just off Bron y Llan Road (uphill, opposite).

By bus: 14 or 15, rarely 13

Distance: 3.1km (1.9miles)

Total ascent 102m (334 ft.)

Time: 56 minutes

Terrain: village roads, public footpaths in open country, woodland and field paths and tracks.

Grade: Easy; few slopes, but none very steep. Several stiles, kissing gates. Rarely muddy, some paths stony.

Summary: A walk in quiet open country with fine views over the sea and distant views of the Clwydian Hills and Carneddau Mountains.

Description



From the front gate of the church walk uphill to the crossroads and turn right along Ffordd y Llan.

St. Cynfran's Church is believed to have developed from a 777 AD site, but with the current building in part dating to the 13th century.

St. Cynfran's Well, 100m north of the church, but on private ground, was still supplying holy water to the church font into the twentieth century, but is now largely derelict.

Just past the churchyard, but before the first house on the right there is a small garage-type building.



This is where the old horse-drawn hearse used to be kept.

On the opposite side of the road, behind a high wall, is the old primary school (built 1870-71, closed 1992 when the new school opened), now converted to a house. Go past this and past the entrance to the Semaphore Lodge. Just before the next houses on the left there is an unsurfaced track heading up the hillside. Take the grassy footpath going half-left slanting up



into the nature reserve (no information board here) of **Mynydd Marian** (*gravelly mountain*). This is a 14.2 hectare (35 acre) SSSI designated for its limestone grassland (and flowers including hoary rock rose, spring cinquefoil as well as orchids of various species, cowslips, harebells, and wild thyme) and population of the dwarf race of the silver studded blue butterfly which had been introduced into the Dulas Valley to the east and subsequently migrated here.

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Turn right, uphill, at the next path crossroads aiming for the mobile phone mast which you keep to your left.

Climb through a stony section (gorse, hawthorn and sycamore on the left, Mount Pleasant gardens on the right; can be slippery when wet) to reach the top of the ridge with the land dropping away in front to the top of crags. There are fine views ahead to the southern part of Llysfaen, the Dolwen Valley and the Carneddau mountains.

A major path soon comes sharply in from the left; to cut short the route turn sharp left (the main route detour does a circuit of the main top of the Marian before returning here).

At the main path junction turn right with a drystone wall and bench on the right and, shortly, crags below on the left. *Much of the south side of Mynydd Marian has been quarried for limestone for many years. Old maps show several lime kilns, and the remains of drill holes can still be seen in the top of the cliffs.* As the cliff face below swings in to meet the path there is a panoramic painting on the left indicating the hills visible to the south. There is now a fence on the left above the cliffs with the wall continuing on the right.

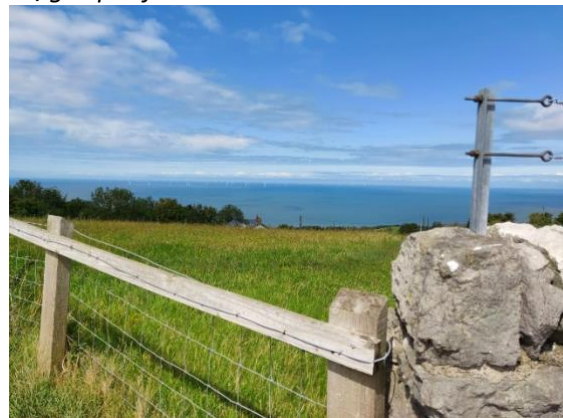
As the fence comes to an end there are views down to the cliff face, where climbers may often be seen.

The cliffs below are the remnants of the old Castle Inn Quarry, though the former old inn has in recent years been converted to housing.



Climber on Castle Inn Quarry

Walk along the top of the quarry and as the fence ends pass either side of the pronounced hollow (the kids will want to go straight through). There are benches on the left and right from where the view may be admired. *To the south are the hills of Snowdonia, then moving round, Rhos on Sea, the Little and Great Ormes, Anglesey, the Isle of Man, Lake District (rarely the Southern Upland beyond) and – on a clear day – Blackpool Tower are all visible as well as the offshore windfarms and oil/gas platforms.*



The first-developed offshore windfarms at Rhyl Flats and North Hoyle are now dwarfed by the 160 wind turbines of Gwynt y Mor, some 15km offshore. Electricity generated is transferred by four 20km cables to the coast, then by 11km onshore cables to the substation at Bodelwyddan.

The Liverpool Bay Oil and Gas Development Program is centred on the Douglas Platform sitting on top of the Douglas oil and gas field discovered in 1990. Llysfaen residents may have seen the flames and black smoke from the test flaring on the discovery well. This was the first oil found west of the UK, though the giant Morecambe Bay gas field north of here – and occasionally visible from Mynydd Marian – was discovered in 1974. The Douglas platform, located 24km offshore, is the centre of operations and processes oil and gas from Douglas and Lennox, and gas from Hamilton, Hamilton North and Lennox. Oil is transferred via a 20km pipeline to an offshore storage installation before being loaded into tankers for distribution. Gas is part-processed on Douglas, then transferred in a 34km pipeline to the Point of Ayr gas terminal.



Spring cowslips on Mynydd Marian

Bear right around the higher land, circling the trig point behind its steel fencing (208m, 682 ft., one metre higher than the Great Orme). From here the views open up to sea.

Continue the circuit of the higher land to rejoin your outward route by the pronounced hollow. Follow the path back along the top of the crags to the path junction where you climbed up from Ffordd y Llan.

On the top of the hill are two covered reservoirs at varying times supplying the village with water from lakes in the Carneddau Mountains) and the Grade II listed [Telegraph House](#), part of the chain of semaphore signalling stations built in 1841, later

converted to telegraph use, which relayed messages from Anglesey to Liverpool Docks.

Head east, slightly uphill for the subsidiary top by Telegraph House, with a fenced covered reservoir on the left before the house. Past the house and a strategically-placed bench, views open up seawards (principally to the offshore windfarms). The main path descends left, but our route follows a more minor path, diverging right off the main path and keeping on lower ground on the right, descending gently across the hillside. The path heads between two scrubby areas, often partly overgrown with raspberry canes, and drops further down, via an awkward rocky step, to meet Bron y Llan Road.

Head directly across the road to a public footpath signpost and follow the tarmac drive steeply downhill passing Ty'n Twll (site of an old smithy) and taking the enclosed path off to the left. Go over the stile into a field and follow the worn track gently, then steeply, downhill to an old kissing gate with the RL Davies builders' yard to the left and banana pitch (football pitch) ahead.

If you are walking between about 0930-1700 turn left to skirt the builders' yard and go through the car park for the bowling green, exiting through the steel gates. Turn right and follow the drive to Dolwen Road, turning right at Pwll Cadarn and aiming for the little pull-in opposite, just past the houses across the road on the left.

Outside these times the gates may be locked so you will have to skirt the length of the football pitch, turn sharp left through the gate onto Dolwen Road and follow this carefully (there are no pavements) to the little pull-in on the right.

A few metres in from the pull-in there are two signed footpaths. The main route follows the right one, but a detour to the left gives a **shortcut** back to the start at the post office.

Take the right hand of the two signed footpaths through a rock cutting and kissing gate into a little wood (which has delightful wild flowers in the spring). Pass a muddy pond down on the right and a well-travelled

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footpath off through a kissing gate on the right, but instead follow the less well-worn path leftwards, over an awkward stile, with an old quarry on the left. Head uphill around the edge of the field, then down, with the Plas yn Llysfaen woods over the wall on the right, heading for the agricultural building next to a stile. Clamber over this and turn left on the stony track, almost immediately branching off acutely on the path on the right.



Follow this down under magnificent beech trees to join Rhodfa Wen, with the playground off to the left. Cross the grass to Gadlas Road.

Shortcut

Take the left fork along the footpath; with a wall on the right and the backs of houses behind the remains of a wall on the left follow the stony path (originally the access drive to *Plas yn Llysfaen, a mainly 19th century grand house with 17th century northwest wing*) past limestone outcrops on the right to meet a stony vehicle track with a playground straight ahead.



Head left for a few metres to Gadlas Road (shop off to the right) then left down Gadlas Road and in 50m turn right up Glyndwr Road.



In another 50m as the lay-by opens up to the left turn sharp left at the footpath sign and follow between fences to the back of Ysgol Cynfran Llysfaen.



Climb gradually uphill (with a fine holly hedge on the right) round the school, passing the pony field on the right and head more steeply uphill before dipping down through a gate onto Dolwen Road.



Turn right, steeply uphill, taking care (there's no pavement) and passing the gateposts and

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drive to “Drws y Mynydd” – the old rectory) and then, behind the tall wall, the former rectory’s Coach House. The views open up here across fields to the sea, with the old rectory and its high walls just peeping through the trees on the right.

On the right is the Llysfaen Village Hall (*designed by Colwyn Foulkes, built in 1930 as the Church House*) and on the left the former post office at the corner of Bron y Llan Road.



Cross the road with the tree (*I believe it’s a Holm Oak – one of the few evergreen oaks*) on the central island (*planted 1931*) and reach the finishing point at the church.