



Bedd Taliesin (The Grave of Taliesin)

From Taliesin Village or Tre'r ddol





A pleasant and fairly steep walk through the beautiful woods of the Cletwr valley, across farmland and arriving at a fascinating historic site. The Dyfi valley is steeped in myth, legend and history. Bedd Taliesin is the remains of a Bronze Age round kerb cairn containing a 2m long cist. It is also reputed to be the grave of the famous sixth century bard Taliesin. You can find out more about the enthralling story of Taliesin by researching the Mabinogion and about Bedd Taliesin from Gwilym Morus-Baird's live lecture 'Where did Ceridwen chase Gwion Bach' (the part that relates to Bedd Taliesin is at 19.15).



The start and finish of this walk is on a bus route (X28 or T2 between Aberystwyth and Machynlleth) or for drivers it is possible to park in Taliesin or Tre'r ddol. A number of possible routes have been shown to accommodate a number of preferences (in particular people who prefer not to walk through fields with cattle or farm dogs).



WALK DETAILS

Length: Approximately 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles / 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ km

Ascent: This walk involves quite a lot of uphill walking to get to Taliesin's grave (220m in all but with level stretches between climbs) and so of course quite a lot of downhill in the second half.

Time: Between 2 and 3 hours for plenty of time to enjoy (although could be done fast in 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours)

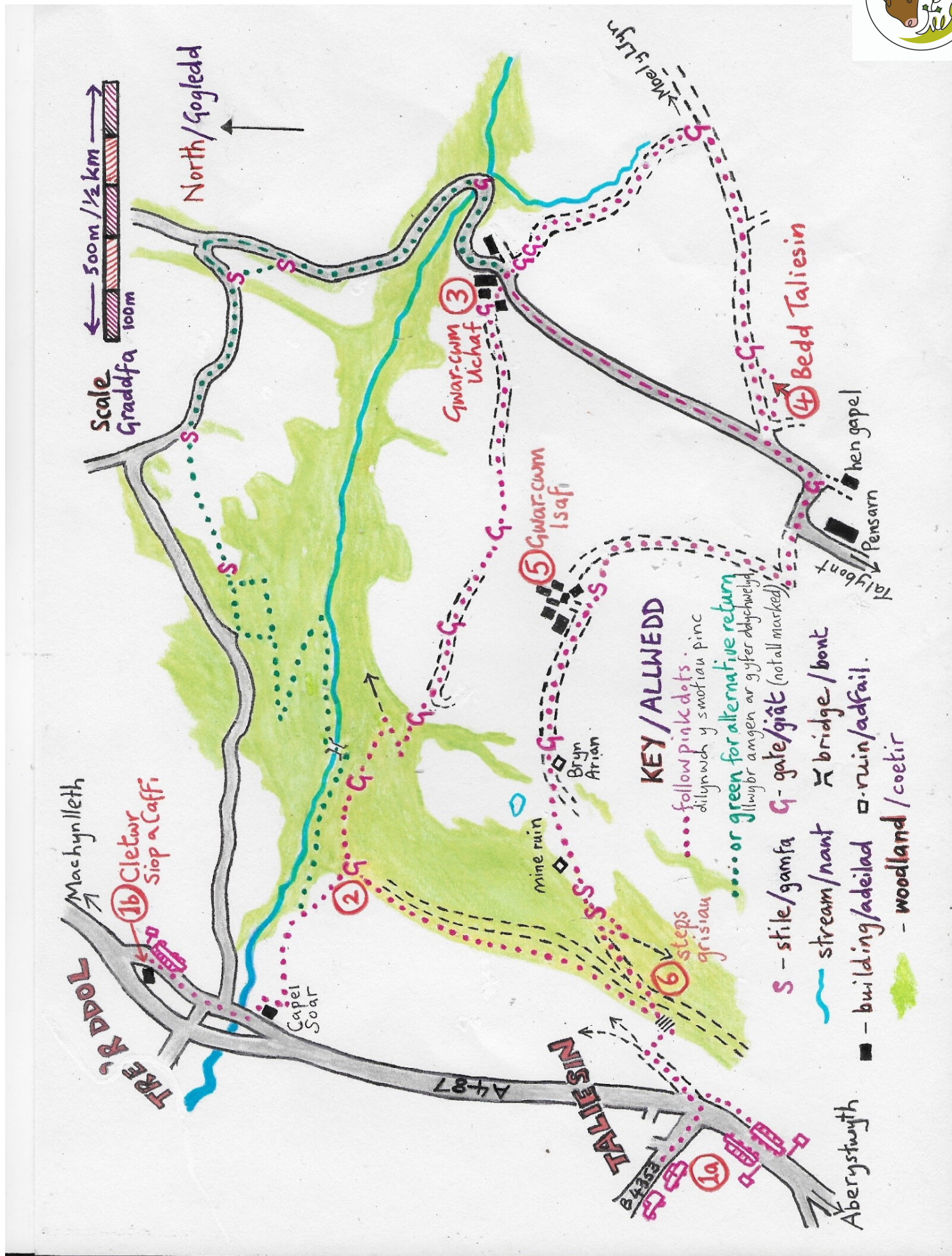
Terrain: Rough underfoot in places - boots or tough walking shoes advised.

Views: Fantastic views of the Dyfi estuary from the hill.

Grade: moderately strenuous.

Signage: good in places and bad in places. You will need to use the sketch map and instructions OR an O.S. Map (O.S. Outdoor Leisure 23 Cadair Idris and Llyn Tegid). It works best to print the map on page two of this document and use your phone for the instructions so you are not flipping backwards and forwards.

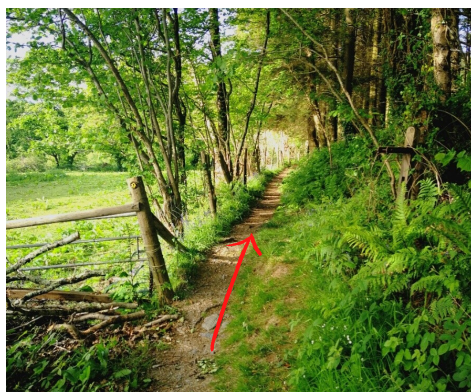
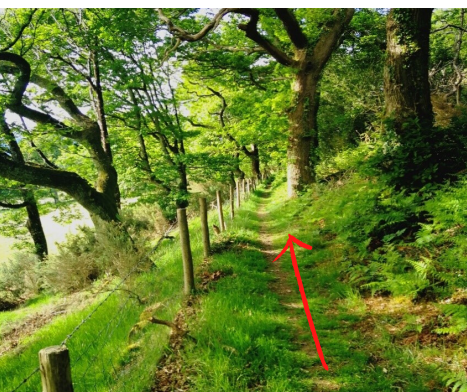
Cattle / Farm dogs: The walk described follows rights of way. There are usually Welsh Black cattle in the fields that these rights of way cross and they can be nosy and come up to walkers. Sometimes there is a bull in with cows. This is allowed in a field crossed by a right of way (for beef bulls) as long as the bull is docile. However, the walk is not advised for people who are nervous of cattle and it would be best not to take a dog. At Gwar-cwm Isaf (which can be avoided by taking an alternative return route) at present (spring 2020) there are a couple of dogs that can bark aggressively at people walking along the right of way but back off when the walker responds assertively.



SECTION 1A - TALIESIN TO CLETWR VALLEY

If arriving by bus, start from the bus stop toward the Aberystwyth end of the village. (grid ref - SN657912). If arriving by car, park on the side of the B4353 which goes from Taliesin to Ynyslas (grid ref - SN657914).

Leave the main road opposite the B4353 junction and Temperence House (which has a 'Telegraph Office' sign on it's wall). There is a public footpath sign. This vehicle track goes up the hill past the back of houses for 125m after which you turn right and go straight up the hill on the footpath between a hedge and a fence.



After 50m, climb the steps and at the top take the left option straight on and following the path that runs fairly level along the bottom of the woods above the fields.

This path meets the forestry track after just over half a km. You go left here and continue in roughly the same direction you have been walking to meet the path that climbs up from Tre'r ddol at POINT 2.

POINT 2. GATE

(Grid ref - SN 667920)

Turn right here, going slightly uphill.

The gate is across the path from Tre'ddol so you don't need to go through it.

The blue arrow shows the direction from Tre'r ddol.



ALTERNATIVE START OPTION - SECTION 1B - TRE'R DDOL TO MEET TALIESIN ROUTE AT POINT 2

If arriving by bus, alight at Cletwr café and community shop in Tre'r ddol (grid ref - SN 660923) If driving park in the village (not in the shop car park as this is needed for customers).



Walk South from the shop along the old village main road, cross the river Cletwr and less than 100m after this turn left up beside Capel Soar (no longer used). The path is well signed around here.

It does a zigzag to take you behind the old chapel and then the path climbs up between two hedges with the backs of houses on the left. 200m from the road there is a fork in the path and you need the right fork.

The left fork takes you down into the beautiful Cletwr valley nature and you may choose to return from Bedd Taliesin from this direction.

Continue up the hill for another 200m to reach the gate POINT 2. You go through this gate and carry straight on up.

The blue arrow shows the direction you would approach from Taliesin start.

SECTION 2 GATE ABOVE CLETWR VALLEY TO GWAR-CWM UCHAF

From POINT 2 follow the path that climbs up the hill high above and along the Cletwr valley (if coming from Taliesin you turn right at POINT 2 and if coming from Tre'r ddol you carry straight on at POINT 2)



There is a steep slope on your left down to the river Cletwr with many wind blown trees. The ferns and mossy boulders give this stretch of the walk a Middle Earth feel.

After about 100m go through a gate. The path climbs quite steeply from here but the reward is the stunning view out over the Dyfi estuary when you turn round and stop for a breather.

Look out for bat boxes and listen out for wood warblers and noisy woodpecker nests in spring.

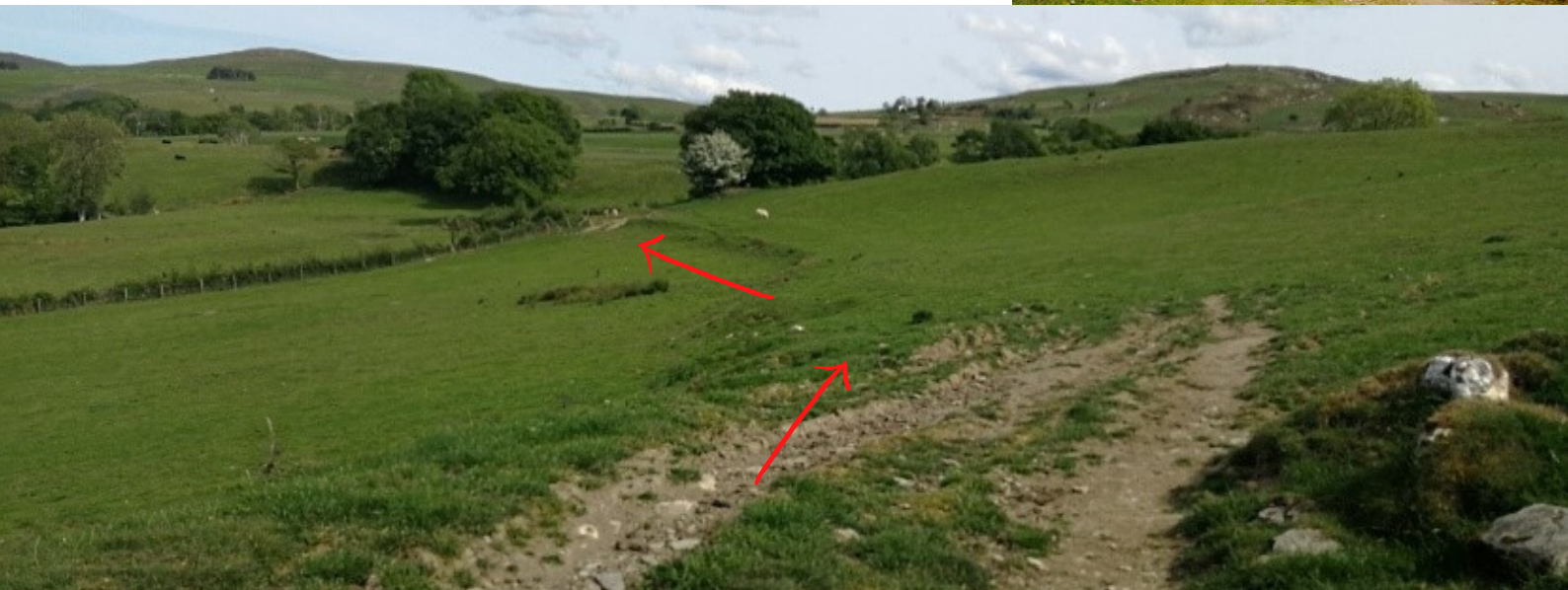
After about ½ km the path turns abruptly to the right away from the steep valley edge. (There is a small blue bridgeway plaque on a small dead tree ahead and above eye level).

You do a zigzag up to a gate where the path leaves the woods and comes into fields.

It is about 1 km across fields in a South-Easterly direction and much less steep.

Mostly the footpath follows a rough farm vehicle track but for a short stretch in the middle of this section this disappears and you need to use old hedge line clues to help you find the direction of the right of way.

Follow the line of the old field boundary to the gate





From this gate you can see a double line of trees that used to be hedge on either side of a right of way. This is your direction (you will need to skirt around the mud a bit here).

The track gets clearer as you near Gwar-cwm Uchaf (in the distance in the first photo).



SECTION 3 - GWAR-CWM UCHAF TO BEDD TALIESIN

Go past the holiday cottage on your right onto the small tarmac road. Turn left down this road for a very short distance and take footpath on the right.

Go through a second gateway and follow the track which climbs gently and after about 100m you will be walking beside a stream / gully (depending on the time of year) on your left. After about ½ km you go through a gateway and meet a less rough track. Turn right here and follow the track, roughly level, for ¾ km to Bedd Taliesin.



There are a couple of tracks off to the left of this track (leading to a house with a half-circle window). But Bedd Taliesin is beyond these, when you leave the fenced in track and the field opens out on the left hand side.

This is a lovely level stretch of the walk with fantastic views of the Dyfi estuary.

You will see a big flat stone to the left of the telegraph pole. It is 15m off the track just before you meet the tarmac road.



BEDD TALIESIN

GRID REFERENCE:

SN 671912.

(READ THE STORIES)

From Bedd Taliesin there are three return options:

1. Return via Gwar-cwm Isaf (where you might get barked at by dogs) – Section 4,5 and 6.
2. Return via the Cletwr Nature Reserve – Green route
3. Return the same way except walking down the minor road back to Gwar-cwm Uchaf for a change.

SECTION 4 - BEDD TALIESIN TO GWAR-CWM ISAF



From Bedd Taliesin carry on along the track in a Westerly direction for 60m, turn left at the tarmac road, follow the road round a right bend at Pensarn (the gate may be closed across the road) and then when the road bends again to the left you go straight on along the track which is signed to Gwar-cwm Isaf.

Follow the track for ½ km taking in a right turn soon after leaving the tarmac road. When you get close to the farm, the track changes from being open on the left to having a fence on both sides. Don't carry on into the farm yard but look out on the left for the stile that is on the right of way around the South side of the farm. (At present, Spring 2020, there are sometimes a couple of dogs here that try to see you off.)



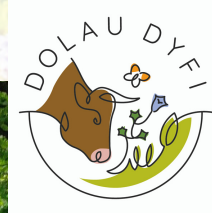
SECTION 5 - GWARCWM-ISAF THROUGH MINE WORKINGS AND BACK TO STEPS ABOVE TALIESIN



After crossing the stile just before Gwar-cwm Isaf and skirting the farm, carry on through a couple of fields in a Westerly direction along the track to reach Bryn Arian, an old mine building ruin.



Soon after passing the ruin the track peters out. You need to go South West from here, descending down the centre of the field to the top of the woods. Keep the dried up pond 50m to your right. On reaching the woods follow a small, steepish path down and round to the left through the denser trees. This will take you to another mine building ruin.



There is often a hare in this area.

Look out for the small footpath sign on a post to the left of the ruin. The path is quite small and rough here. It follows the fence downhill between two slag heaps. Another place with magnificent views.



As the path descends you cross two stiles. After the second stile the path makes a short zigzag before widening to a straight, rough, downhill track. After 100m you cross a wide, straight, level forestry track, continuing in the same direction back to the steps you climbed at the beginning of the walk.

SECTION 6 - RETURN TO START

To return to Taliesin from the steps just retrace the path you took at the very beginning of the walk.

To return to Tre'r ddol from the steps turn right and follow the path that runs fairly level along the bottom of the wood above the fields. This path meets the forestry track after just over ½ km. You go left here and continue roughly in the same direction you have been walking to meet the path that climbs up from Tre'r ddol to POINT 2. From here retrace the path you took at the very beginning of the walk.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE - THROUGH CLETWR NATURE RESERVE - GREEN ROUTE (ON MAP)

- From Bedd Taliesin walk on to the tarmac road that leads back to Gwar-cwm Uchaf.
- Carry on along the small tarmac road which leads down to the bridge crossing the river Cletwr (there is a gate here).
- From here it is approximately 2 ½ km back to Tre'r ddol by the small and very quiet road.
- After ½ km take a left turn – or take a footpath shortcut which cuts off this junction – see map.
- To return through the Cletwr nature reserve is a very beautiful alternative to walking along the road the whole way. Look out for a layby on the left side of the road as you descend to Tre'r ddol.



- From here take the path that leads straight downhill for less than 100m. Then turn right and follow a path that descends to the river Cletwr making a zigzag on the way.
- When you get down to the level of the river, go through a gate and turn right to follow the path beside the river downstream to a bridge.
- Cross the bridge, go up the steps and turn right.
- Follow the path along the left bank of the river and ascending slightly.
- After ½ km you meet the path ascending from Tre'r ddol to POINT 2 described in Section 1b of this walk when starting from Tre'r ddol. Descend from here to Tre'r ddol.