

# Walking Itineraries

## 6 Pen-y-Crug near Brecon



### Information

#### Where is it?

Start - Maen-du Well LD3 9PN. Explorer map OL12 or Landranger Map 160. Grid ref. SO 039 296. Pen-y-Crug is 1.5 miles/2.5 km northwest of Brecon. Heading north out of Brecon on the B4520 (Pendre Hill), take the last left hand turn before you exit Brecon into Maes y Ffynnon. Immediately take a right hand turn and follow the road up to a roundabout.

#### Distance

2.5km (1.5 miles) return

#### Time

Allow 1-2 hours.

#### Terrain

Mostly grassy paths and several stiles throughout the walk. There is a steady climb covering 140m of incline from Maen-du Well to the top of Pen-y-Crug.

**Grade** Moderate.

**Standing on the summit of a prominent hill above the Usk Valley, Pen-y-Crug is one of the most impressive hillforts in the Brecon Beacons National Park.**

It can be found at a height of 331m on the Crug, a hill just outside Brecon. During the Iron Age, about 2000 years ago, Pen-y-Crug would have been a very busy place, where people lived, worked, farmed and traded.

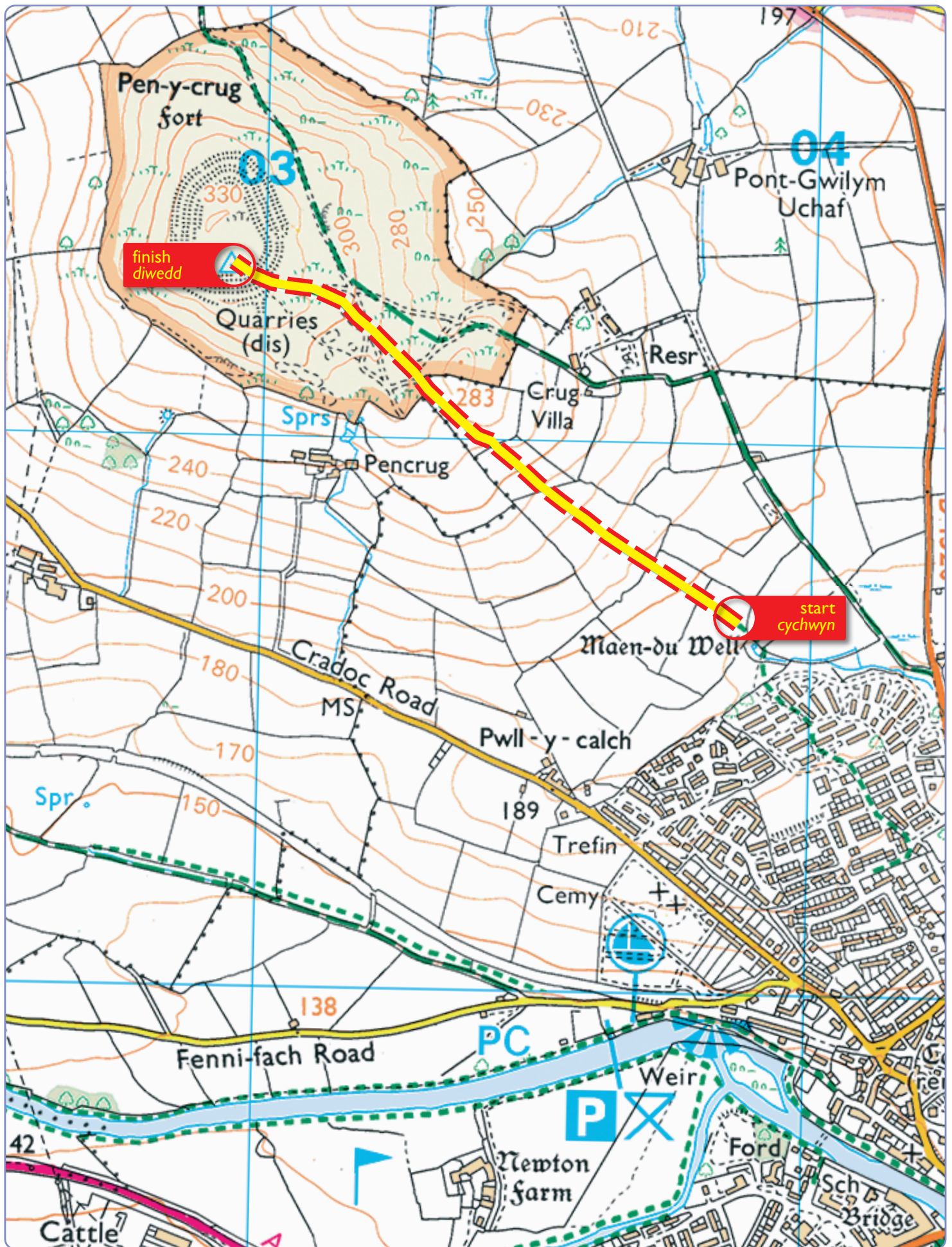
In the 18th and 19th centuries, areas of the Crug was occupied by a brick and tile works, and worked as a tile quarry; old quarry workings and clay pits, trackways and kilns indicate the Crug was a locally important industrial site. Today the site is situated on common land and is owned and managed by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.

The walk to the hillfort is well worth the trip, coupling impressive archaeological remains with breathtaking and expansive views of the Central Beacons.

### Please note

**Trails can become slippery due to adverse weather conditions. Please take extra care when walking. Suitable footwear, sturdy shoes or boots with a good grip, are best worn at all times.**

# The Route



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**1 Maen-du Well** SO 039296 Start the walk from the drop off near the roundabout, where Maen-du Well is clearly marked with a brown sign post next to the red 'no entry' signs. Head over to Maen-du Well which dates from the mid-1700s. You will see a small stone building with a water course coming from it. Inside the building you will be able to see the well-pool - the spring is here.

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**2** Looking towards the peak of Pen-y-Crug, cross the stile to the left of Maen-du Well. This leads into the next field on your route. Follow the National Park way markers more or less straight ahead and continue uphill until you reach the summit of the Crug marked by a stone pillar (trig point). This section of the walk crosses stiles and fields initially, then more open bracken covered hillside.

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**3** When you are close to the top you will cross the fort's ramparts, which today are rounded earthwork banks and ditches. These were once made of stone and earth with a wooden defensive palisade or fence, built on top. They allowed those who occupied the hillfort to defend themselves and made it very difficult for anyone to attack the settlement. Entry to the interior of the hillfort was gained through a single well-guarded entrance on the southeast side. Above ground, little survives of the round houses, stock pens and granaries that once occupied the hillfort.

**4 Pen-y-Crug** SO 029303. It is clear to see why Iron Age peoples chose to build a defensible settlement here. In clear weather you can see over the whole of Brecon and far beyond from the trig point at the top of Pen-y-Crug. Looking south-west, you should be able to make out the Iron-age hill fort of Twyn-y-Gaer on the Mynydd Illtud Common. Looking south-east you should be able to make out Slwch Tump (with the mobile mast), the third of the hill forts all visible to each other. You can also see the Black Mountains in the east and Pen y Fan and the Central Beacons to the south. Notable landmarks in Brecon are St Mary's Church tower and the Cathedral.

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**5** To return to the start point, retrace your steps and head down back towards the well.

## Variation

**To lengthen** 4km/2.5 miles. Start your journey at Brecon Cathedral (SO 045290) then head up the hill away from the town centre. The road is signed as Pendre and changes to the B4520 (please note that Pendre Close is the wrong road). Head up the hill until you get to the last left hand turn – Maes y Ffynnon. Take the obvious and immediate right hand turn, and follow the road until you reach a mini-roundabout. Follow the route card from the Maen-du Well section.

**Return** via bridle path back to the B4520 (green dashed line on the map.)

## Activities suitable on this route

**Journey sticks. Photography.** This route is ideal for bird spotting. A set of binoculars will also make it easier to view some of the landmarks such as Twyn y Gaer and Slwch Tump.

# Pen-y-Crug near Brecon



- 1 Craig-y-nos
- 2 Talybont
- 3 Taf Fechan
- 4 Pontneddfechan
- 5 Llangorse
- 6 Pen-y-crug
- 7 Twyn-y-gaer
- 8 Llanfoist
- 9 Sugar Loaf Mountain
- 10 Cribarth



## Information

**Parking** There is often free parking in Maes y Ffynnon for cars or a mini bus and a roundabout for easy turning.

**Refreshments and toilets** Pilgrims Tea Rooms, next to the cathedral. Ring 01874 610610 to check opening times.

[www.breconcathedral.org.uk/visiting/visiting.php/Pilgrims-Tea-Rooms-and-Restaurant-3](http://www.breconcathedral.org.uk/visiting/visiting.php/Pilgrims-Tea-Rooms-and-Restaurant-3)

The nearest toilets are at Brecon Cathedral- opening times may vary according to the season.

[www.breconcathedral.org.uk/visiting/visiting.php](http://www.breconcathedral.org.uk/visiting/visiting.php)

**Public Transport** There are no train services. For buses to Brecon check [www.traveline.cymru](http://www.traveline.cymru) The 40A leaves from Brecon Interchange and town centre every half an hour Monday-Saturday to Maes y Ffynnon at the start of the walk.

[www.traveline.cymru/timetables/?routeNum=40A&item\\_clean=85,86&direction\\_id=0](http://www.traveline.cymru/timetables/?routeNum=40A&item_clean=85,86&direction_id=0)

### Nearest Towns

Brecon has most facilities including cafes and pubs. Places to visit include Brecon Cathedral, the Regimental Museum of the Royal Welsh and the Monmouth and Brecon Canal.

### Websites

[www.visitbrecon.com](http://www.visitbrecon.com)

Brecon Tourist Information Centre

[www.breconbeacons.org/brecon-tourist-information](http://www.breconbeacons.org/brecon-tourist-information)

Tel: 01874 622485

[www.breconbeacons.org](http://www.breconbeacons.org)

Facebook Page FYI Brecon

**Dogs** Suitable for dogs but should be on leads due to livestock and ground nesting birds.

## Sample Itinerary

- 10.30** Take a little time to have a look around Maen-du well at the start of the walk. Bring a set of binoculars to spot local birds and landmarks.
- 12.30** Complete walk  
Picnic lunch or eat at Tea Rooms
- 1.30** Visit Brecon Cathedral and Heritage Centre.