

HISTORY TRAIL 1

Woods and River

OVERVIEW

This is a circular walk through woodland and beside Clyne River.

Distance: 2.25 miles

Start Point: Clyne Valley Road off Gower Road, Killay SA2 7DT (park on road)

Note: Uneven terrain and can be muddy. Steep inclines and declines. Not suitable for buggies or wheelchairs. Consider other users and observe the Countryside Code.

Using this guide

- All timings are approximate.
- **Track** indicates an unmade surface.
- **Path** indicates a metalled surface (tarmac).
- **Bold text** is directions.
- *Italics text* is information.

- 1. Walk towards the end of the road through the gate and into beech wood (passing bungalow on left, do not bear right past Clyne Valley Cottages).**



- 2. Continue forward on main track.** *This was once a carriageway leading to Sketty Park House where once stood the homes of the Morris family, local industrialists. The house has since been demolished to make way for Sketty Park estate.*



- 3. After approximately 8 minutes you should arrive at this sign.**





- 4. About 10 metres beyond the sign, look for this piece of rail poking out from the bank in the ditch.**

The rail connected the Commercial Colliery with the path opposite the signpost, leading to a branch of the Mumbles Railway. The colliery was in what are now the woods behind the Commercial Pub in Killay.

- 5. Return to the signpost and with the signpost behind you, take the track opposite, signposted 'Old Brickworks' passing this structure to your right. This was a weighbridge.**



- 6. Proceed along this straight level embankment.**

Notice bricks in the track. These unwanted, misshapen bricks were made in the Brickworks area you are approaching.

- 7. Stay on this track and continue for 5 minutes past the signpost on the left towards the tunnel ignoring any other tracks.**

This first sign indicates the Brickworks area. For 100 years bricks were made here by various companies. The area was bulldozed after work here ceased in 1960s. There are no visible signs of the buildings and kilns that were once here.



- 8. Pass through the tunnel.**

This tunnel, beneath what was the main railway line from Swansea to Pontarddulais and beyond, had a tramway through it to the quarry where clay was sought for the brick making industry.

- 9.** *As you emerge from the tunnel, the track ahead would take you into the clay quarry.*

For this walk, turn immediately left and walk towards the river, crossing a small stream.



- 10.** **Follow the riverside track.** *Listen for birdsong. Look for the blue flash of a kingfisher and know that foxes, badgers and other wildlife share this area away from prying human eyes.*

- 11.** **Follow the riverside track for 15 minutes looking out for three bridges across the river. Ignore the first (set back off the track) and cross the river by way of Dipper Bridge and turn right and cross back again by way of Kingfisher Bridge.**



- 12.** **Turn left and continue for 5 minutes until you reach a short rise in the track. Notice the gated mine on the right and follow the very steep track up beside it.**

- 13.** **At the top of this track turn right and follow the track, keeping left beside the fenced fields on your left.**

Further along on the left you will see views across to Sketty, Killay and Kilvey Hill.





- 14.** At one point the track passes between two deep depressions. This is evidence of mining here – either a drift mine or Bell Pit.



- 15.** Cross a small stream and continue to follow the track. Bear left up the slope, ignoring any tracks down.



- 16.** Head upwards whenever possible, keep on the track nearest to the fence. When you come to a short steep incline on clay ground, take the right at a fork in the track.



- 17.** This short detour takes you to the top edge of the clay quarry. The quarry is very deep and a sheer drop. Take care!

Retrace your steps to the fork in the track and bear right with the field on your left.



- 18.** The track passes this pillbox. This is one of a pair, the other being on the other side of the bridge you are approaching. Pill boxes were part of a defence system against possible Nazi invasion in WWII.

- 19.** *As you approach the bridge, there are steps right which lead down to the Old Railway Path.*

To the right would take you to Blackpill, the left takes you to the Railway Inn at Killay.



- 20.** **Cross the bridge and turn left.**

At the far end of the bridge you will be facing the brickworks area.



- 21.** **Follow the track until it emerges onto a road beside Clyne Valley Cottages to return to the start of the walk.**