

(5) On reaching the car park, continue ahead to the car park's entrance from Mill Lane. Opposite you, is Clyne Castle – now private apartments, formerly a Halls of Residence for university students, and originally home to Admiral Heneage Vivian, creator of the gardens which now form the basis of Clyne Gardens.

(6) Should you wish to visit Clyne Gardens, turn left, downhill for 100yds, before entering by a small gate. There are public toilets and refreshments here. Otherwise, to continue the substantive walk, turn right, up Mill Lane.

(7) As you head uphill, (past modern apartments, a nursery and Underhill), a junction is reached after 160 yards. Ignore the tarmac path (l) which leads to St Catwg's Walk, instead continue ahead, up a stony path. Initially steep-sided, this sunken lane can be wet and muddy in parts, before it arrives at the access road of Clyne Activity Centre, formerly Clyne Farm.

(8) As you reach this access road, by Penlan Cottage, there's a good chance for a breather, as far-reaching views are revealed in all directions. To your right, Hendrefoilan ridge, Cefn Coed, Townhill, Kilvey Hill and in the distance even Pen-y-fan on a good day. As you turn clockwise, the views over Swansea Bay stretch eastwards to Port Talbot and Nash Point, then southwards across the Channel to Devon and Exmoor. Closer-to-hand, there's Mumbles, with its pier, lighthouse and islets.

(9) Now, continue along the access road heading towards the farm buildings. As you approach the car parking area, continue ahead towards and through the gate which leads onto the Common. The red farmhouse is on your right. Do not deviate into any of the farm buildings or yards.

(10) **Dogs must be on short leads as livestock graze freely on Clyne Common.** Your route across the common, passes through banks of flowering gorse. It is always straight ahead, on a bridleway that is mostly sound underfoot. If in doubt, bear right at any path junction.

(11) After 15 minutes of gentle climbing, just as the path begins to level out and descend, a **Warning Sign** appears – **beware of flying golf balls from the left.** Here, about-face and look right, to spot the trig point (concrete obelisk), on the skyline, adjacent to the No 3 tee. Head up the bank through the gorse to reach the trig point for yet more views.

(12) Here, at 426 feet above sea-level, you can see south across the golf course to Bishopston, the Channel and Devon; west to the airport, and along the Gower peninsula to Cefn Bryn and Rhossili Down, and finally north, across the Llŵchwr estuary to Llanelli.

(13) Re-trace your steps down the bank to the bridleway. Turn left along the bridleway and past the **Warning Sign** - maintaining a sharp look-out for golfers on the tee above and behind you. The bridleway runs straight across the fairway.



(14) On the far side of the fairway, the bridleway, flanked on both sides by gorse, can often be wet and muddy. Continue to descend, ignoring any paths joining your route from the left. If in doubt, bear right at any path junction.

(15) As you drop down, a tarmac road comes into view (r). This is Hen Parc Lane. Still continue ahead on the bridleway, but keep a sharp look out for a wooden waymarker post, which indicates that the route turns sharp right. Once spotted, follow the path in this new direction, as it leads down, and after 50 yards meets Hen Parc Lane at a right-angled bend.

(16) On reaching the road, turn left and walk along the grass verge for 220 yards, until you see a Public Footpath signpost on the right indicating Hen Parc Lane ¾ mile.

(17) This is roughly THE HALFWAY POINT of your walk. Should you require refreshments, the Wildflower Cafe lies ahead. Simply, continue along Hen Parc Lane for another 80 yards, and then, to resume your walk, just retrace your steps to this point. However, if you have brought your own refreshments, then turn right at the signpost and follow the path across some damp ground towards a kissing gate.

(18) Pass through the kissing gate to emerge onto a golf course. **Look right to check for golfers,** then bear slightly left to cross a drainage channel, before heading straight across the fairway, towards the remnants of a hedgerow. Keep this hedgerow on your left as you drop down into a damp area, with two oak trees of large girth on your right. (The ground is less damp next to these trees).

(19) At this point, your way lies straight across another fairway. **Look left for golfers,** before aiming for the gap in the row of tall Leylandi evergreen trees ahead. Here you reach yet another fairway, on the far side of which you should sight a kissing gate at the edge of a wood. **Look both ways for golfers,** before crossing this last fairway to reach the kissing gate.



(20) Leave the golf course by this kissing gate and pass alongside the wood, following the footpath through another kissing gate towards Hen Parc Lane. On reaching a railway sleeper bridge, **watch out for vehicles, as you drop down steps to the lane below - Hen Parc Lane is narrow and traffic not always slow.**

(21) Turn right to follow the lane for 150 yards past Hen Parc Lodge. On reaching the cattle grid, continue for 50 yds, where there is yet another **Warning Sign – flying golf balls.** You are back on Clyne Common. Here, leave the road after 10 yards, and head diagonally left towards the grassy bank (the 4th green on the golf course).

(22) Keeping the grassy bank, (4th green) on your right, proceed on the very edge of the fairway to skirt a drainage ditch. Then bear left, to leave the fairway and pick up a path, which lies below the level of the fairway, but runs parallel to it. This lower path continues to skirt the fairway, as it heads towards the 4th tee, before it veers away from the golf course, and down towards Hen Parc Woods. **Do not go up onto the 4th tee.**

(23) Continue on this path over the common, with Killay, Hendrefoilan ridge, and the Sketty Park tower blocks clearly in view.

As it heads down towards Hen Parc Woods, the path picks up, and runs parallel to, a feeder stream off the common. Entry into Hen Parc Woods is via a kissing gate.

(24) Once in the woods, the path weaves its way down through the trees towards Clyne river, until an old metal deer fence is encountered. Continue down, keeping this fence on your right, until a gap appears in the fence. Head right, through this gap and continue now with the fence on your left, still descending towards the Clyne river, which can now be heard clearly, ahead. You might also catch a glimpse of a bridge, but first, there is the small feeder stream to cross.

(25) The bridge over the Clyne, is one of three bridges installed by volunteers from the Clyne Valley Community Project in 2021. Cross the bridge, bearing right towards the Riverside Path, some 10 yds away, and then turn left. (Alternatively, turn right and follow the Riverside Path downstream towards a tunnel under the "bike path", (a 10 / 15 minute walk), but this path is often quite wet and muddy underfoot. Heading upstream on the Riverside Path makes for a more pleasant experience).



(26) Proceed upstream for approx 50 yards along the Riverside Path to encounter two more bridges. It's at this point, that there has been riverbank erosion, which has forced the path higher up the hillside, and it can be a bit of a scramble. (**Do not be tempted to cross the river on either of these two bridges** – they are not currently in use, but have been installed by CVCP volunteers in conjunction with the Council, in readiness for diverting the path away from the erosion site. The intended diversion though, is still work-in-progress, February 2022).

(27) Instead, continue on the Riverside Path up and around the erosion site to drop back down to the river bank once more. Continue for another 80 yards until you reach a slight hump in the path, adjacent to old coal workings (r), across the entrance to which, is a heavy metal grille preventing entry into the adit, complete with notice **Danger – secured site.** Here turn right and head steeply up the wooded hillside, keeping the secured adit entrance on your right.

(28) At the top of the hill, and at the edge of the woods, a field boundary fence is reached. Turn right along the path, as it now runs parallel to the field boundary fence, but still threading its way through the trees. On your left, glimpses of Hendrefoilan ridge can be had.

(29) After about 140 yards (5 mins), the path veers (r) and passes between two noticeable hollows (abandoned clay or coal workings), after which, it is worth stepping off the path (r) for 12 yards to reach a viewpoint, which looks down through the trees to the Clyne river below and across the gorge to Clyne Common. Retrace your steps to rejoin the path once more, and turn right.

(30) After about 20 yards, the path dips down to cross a minor stream (this may be dry in summer), and then rises on the far side. Continue on the path for another 10 yards.

(31) At this point, your may notice an unsigned path descending (r) gently through the trees. This path leads to the Riverside Path below and offers you a **SHORTCUT**. *If you choose to take this shortcut*, once you reach the Riverside Path, turn left for a 5 /10 minute walk to the tunnel under the bikepath. Pass through the tunnel and follow the track as it rises gently to reach a junction of paths (see para 37 below), at which point you rejoin the substantive walk.



(32) However, it is worth continuing ahead on the high-level woodland path, which soon (100yards) begins to rise as it nears a dilapidated wooden fence, which starts to funnel you left, back towards the barbed wire field fence. *This dilapidated wooden fence guards the perimeter of the clay pit / quarry.* **Do not, under any circumstances attempt to cross / climb this wooden fence.**

(33) Continue between the two fences for a short while, as you skirt around the former clay pit. Soon, the field fence (l) begins to diverge. Keep with the dilapidated wooden fence (r) as you continue to skirt the edge of the clay pit and after 100 yards approx , a choice of paths presents itself.

(34) Ignore the path that scrambles up a bank alongside the wooden clay pit perimeter fence (r); instead bear left, on a curving path which leads down after 50 yards to reach a stone bridge over the bike path. *Originally this bridge over the former LNWR Central Wales line, linked the Clyne brickworks to the clay pit. Note the two 2WW pillboxes on either side of the bridge.*

(35) Cross the bridge, then turn right. You are now running parallel to the bike path (r), whilst on your left, in the trees and dense undergrowth, is the site of Clyne brickworks – sadly nothing remains of the structures – they were bulldozed in the 1960s and the site levelled.

(36) After 100 yards, you reach a signposted junction of paths, here, bear left in the direction of Olchfa Lane. After 50 yards, this path passes by the former brickworks pond (l), and then bears right towards another signposted junction of paths.



(37) This signposted junction of paths indicates the Riverside Path (r), which leads to the tunnel under the bikepath, (and the Clyne river), and is where the shortcut mentioned in para 31 rejoins the walk.

(38) Our route now lies (l) to Olchfa Lane, along a former railway embankment. *This embankment once carried a spur line linking Rhyd-y-defaid Colliery (also known as the Commercial Colliery, because of its location to the rear of the pub of the same name in Killay), to the former LNWR Central Wales line.*

(39) Continue along this embankment for 220 yards across the valley to reach the next signposted junction, situated in mature beechwoods lining a bridleway. Here, turn right along this wide bridleway in the direction of Olchfa Lane / Rhyd-y-defaid.

(40) As the bridleway descends, within 30 yards, it soon leaves the woods behind and an open field appears on your left. **NOTE:** *at this point, an alternative to the substantive route presents.* On your right, note the two metal hurdles. These indicate the start of a path which passes between them, over a sleeper bridge and on to the former refuse tip. (If you wish to take this route, see **appendix 1** for walking directions)

(41) Staying with the substantive route, continue ahead along the bridleway, which now runs straight and level, alongside the open field (l). After 170 yards approx, a tarmac shared-use path,(l), coming down from Gower Road merges– **beware fast-moving bikes.**

(42) Continue ahead and cross the Nant-yr-Olchfa bridge to reach a junction of paths. The route to your left and up the slope, leads to a set of ornate gates and Rhyd-y-defaid Drive. *(The gates once gave access to the grounds of Sketty Park House).*

(43) However, to reach your start point, Ynys Newydd, bear right on the shared-use path. *Note the mature woodland on your left as you drop down towards the ruins of New Mill farm. Here the shared-use path dips down and then climbs gently, before levelling out. The mature woodland has now given way to more open scrubland, which affords surprisingly good views of the valley sides.*

(44) From this point, and for the rest of your walk, you are traversing the length of the former Clyne tip. Beneath your feet lies over 40 years worth of Swansea's domestic refuse.

(45) By continuing along this-shared use path and ignoring any side paths, you should reach Ynys Newydd and walk's end in approximately 20 minutes.



Hen Parc and Clyne Common – Circular Walk – 5.5 miles (allow 2.5 hours minimum)

FREE CAR PARK : Ynys Newydd, Derwen Fawr Road.(GR 616 915). **NB This car park is locked at 5pm.** Limited alternative car parking – top of Mill Lane, opposite Clyne Castle.

Infrequent bus service (Nos 37 or 43) available to Derwen Fawr Road.

Start : From the car park, near the recycling facility at Ynys Newydd, off Derwen Fawr Road, head southwards along the stone-chipping path, which takes you past the children's play area (l) and into the woods, before dropping down to meet a hard-surfaced path, which runs alongside the Clyne river. In front of you, there is a bridge crossing the river. Cross the bridge, noting the fine masonry walls, which channel the river at this point. Then, bear right up the slope to reach the "shared-use" path, aka the Bike Path. Standing well clear of the tarmac, take the opportunity to look around you.



(1) *At this point, you are stood on an embankment, which was constructed in the mid 1860s for the Pontarddulais to Swansea Victoria section of the Central Wales Railway. Beside you (r), is the former mill leat which funnelled water from the Clyne River under the railway into the adjoining mill pond (fishing lake).*

Behind and below you, is the River Clyne, channelled between masonry walls, to enable the embankment to be constructed for that railway, whilst on the river's far-bank, is the course of the Clyne Valley branch of the Oystermouth Railway. Originally conceived in 1804, to develop John Morris' coal interests in the valley, it served to link Morris' Ynys colliery to his various metal works in Morryston via the Swansea Canal.

(2) Now, **WITH DUE CARE AND ATTENTION FOR SPEEDING BIKES**, cross the tarmac "bike path" diagonally right, looking for a path (l) which crosses two water courses and circles back in the direction of the mill pond for the former mill at Blackpill. As you approach the mill pond (fishing lake), you will notice a waymarker post for the "The Mumbles Way", and a red and white metal orienteering sign, opposite a flight of steps. Here, turn right and follow the steps uphill through the woodland.

(3) As these steps rise sharply uphill, you may wish to take a breath, whilst you look back into Clyne gorge and down to the fishing lake below. *There are many species of woodland birds that can be heard in this area, including nuthatch, woodpecker and the aptly named Sgrech y coed – in English, the jay – with its piercing screech, from which it gets its name.*

(4) At the top of the hill, you reach a stone-chipping path, marked by another Mumbles Way post, turn left, to follow this path, to reach the car park at the top of Mill Lane. *En route, after about 160 yards, you will encounter a crossing point used by mountain bikes. Please keep a wary eye open for downhill riders from the right.*