

## St. Cynllo's, Nantmel to St. Mark's, Ysfa

(3.75 miles, 30% tarmac, fairly flat, a few boggy bits )

From the church lychgate turn left down a steep hill. Halfway down the hill on the bend there are steps either side of the lane marking the course of the pipeline carrying water from the Elan Valley to Birmingham. An impressive aqueduct can be seen behind the school.

At the bottom of the hill you will see the school on the left and the red brick building on the right was originally the Post Office. The old pub led the church to be described as the closest to heaven due to it being sited above the 'Seven Stars'. The Seven Stars is no longer a pub but does offer self catering accommodation. Cross the car park opposite passing the war memorial on the left. Climb down the shallow bank to the main road. Cross the main road and turn right. Turn left along the lane after 60 metres. Follow the lane for about a mile (keep right, down the hill where the lane forks) until you reach a triangle of grass in the middle of the road.

Turn left to Cefn Llyn farm. Pass in front of the farmhouse and follow the farm track through a gate into a field. The right of way hugs the hedge on the left and crosses the field by the telegraph pole to the gate in the far corner. However, you may prefer to follow the farm track past the static caravan which goes to the same gate.

From the gate follow the left hedge line, through another gateway down towards Llyn Gwyn lake. The track skirts the edge of the lake and ends at a gate in an area of rocks and boulders. There is a legend that says this is the dwelling place of Gwyn ap Nudd, the king of the fairies. It was also said that during an argument with a fellow saint St Patrick turned some local Welsh people into fishes here. In truth Mediaeval monks from Abbey-cwm-hir stocked the lake with carp the descendants of which still live in the lake today, though there is another legend that says they will croak in abhorrence of King Henry VIII when caught. There are earthworks at the head of the lake that may be associated with Mediaeval times. The lake which is 55ft deep is also stocked with Rainbow and Brown trout.

Go through the gate and cross the middle of the field to a gate on the other side. Cross the farm track and go through another gate opposite into the next field. Cross this field passing a tree with boulders under it on your left. Cross the stream with the hedge roughly to your left. Take care as this is quite a boggy and rock strewn area. Climb the bank on the other side of the stream. In front of you in the trees you will see a wooden house. To the left of the house is a way-marked stile. Climb the stile and follow the path past a small pond and the wooden house on your right. Keep following the path through some woodland and over another stile.

The path opens into a clearing with static caravans and other wooden dwellings. This community is known as the Piod (Magpies). The right of way is blocked by temporary structures here so it is best to veer to the right onto the un-gated farm track leading out of the settlement. There is only one exit. If you go through a gate you've gone the wrong way!

Follow the farm track round to the left at the first junction and then keep right at the next junction. Eventually you will come out on a tarmac lane.

Turn right along the lane and then climb the first (currently red) gate on the left into the field. Aim for the edge of the forestry to the right on the horizon. Here you will find a gateway into the next field. Head across this field aiming slightly to the right of the cottage in the distance. You will come to another gateway. Follow the track through the gate and then follow the track, keeping the hedge roughly to your left.

Eventually you will reach a more substantial farm track. Turn right, through a gate and follow the farm track through two more gates with farm sheds on your right, (and the side of the churchyard) to the main road. Turn right at the main road and the church entrance is immediately on your right.

