

Weatherman Walking

Caerphilly

Leaving the castle via the main entrance, follow the footpath down to the main road and cross at the pedestrian crossing. Turn right and head towards the tourist information centre and short stay car park. Take the steps on your right and follow the path up to the Tommy Cooper Statue.

2 Tommy Cooper Statue (ST 156 869)

Thomas Frederick Cooper was born in Llwyn Onn Street, Caerphilly, in 1921. But moved to the Exeter coast aged three, to improve his health.

While serving in the Second World War he performed comedy magic shows and during a show in the Middle East, he mislaid his usual pith helmet and borrowed a fez from a passing waiter, to roars of laughter. The fez quickly became his trademark and he soon became a popular household name and TV personality.



This Tommy Cooper statue in Caerphilly town centre, was unveiled by Sir Anthony Hopkins in 2008.

Leaving the statue head up Cardiff Road, crossing at the zebra crossing, and continue uphill.

Leaving the town, carry on uphill, passing St Martins Church on your right. Cardiff Road then changes to Mountain Road and here the real climb begins!

Keep going up until you see a stone wall on your right with a footpath leading off it. The pavement ends here so turn off and follow the footpath.



Leaving the main road, it's a much more gentle and atmospheric walk up Caerphilly Mountain.

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Follow the gravel woodland path with the Caerphilly Golf Club on your right. When you reach 'Par 4' follow the path round to the left and up the wooden steps.



Watch out for golf balls as you pass through Par 4

When you reach the T-junction, go left until you reach another T-junction, then go right and uphill, then right again around the side of the top of the hill.

You will then reach some stone seats which offer lovely views over the south Wales valleys – but take a look behind them and you'll see a large ditch. These are actually practice trenches built by the Home Guard during WW2!



This seat is a great place to rest and enjoy the views; but take a look behind, and you'll see a large ditch. This was used as a practice trench by the local Home Guard during WW2

Continue along the path and veer round to the left, heading slightly uphill to the mountain trig point for more amazing views.

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Caerphilly Mountain Trig Point (ST 152 855)

Caerphilly Mountain lies between Cardiff and Caerphilly at the southern edge of the south Wales coal field; and at 271 metres high is technically only a hill!

From the trig point there are great 360 views across the Bristol Channel and Flat Holm in the south, the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway, and in the distance the Brecon Beacons to the north.



You've made it! The Trig Point marks the highest point on the mountain, and from here you get fantastic views in all directions.

Pass the trig point and head downhill along the gravel path towards the main road, until you reach a T Junction. Turn right and you are now on the 'Rhymney Valley Ridgeway Walk'.

Stick to the 'Ridgeway Walk' and drop down to the main road - it's a fast and busy road so take care when crossing. The path continues on the other side of the road, heading off uphill.

Stick to the main path, but keep an eagle eye out for a path coming from your right that directly crosses the main path, and leads off downhill to your left. This is the old Roman Road from Caerphilly to Newport and it's here you need to take the small and narrow path on your left heading downhill.

NB - This path gets very overgrown in the summer and can be easy to miss. (If the path opens up at the top you have gone too far).



There's not much to see today, but this path was used by the Romans when marching from Caerphilly to Cardiff.

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Follow the narrow track down to the small hamlet of Waun-Waelod, where you will emerge next to a country lane and a white house called Ty Nant.

Cross the road and take the footpath behind the letter box for Ty Nant.

Follow the path through a lovely wood and through the small gate at the end – it can get quite boggy here.

Continue through a field until you reach the gate, then turn right down the lane, then take the first left up another lane. (If you reach the red bungalow you have gone too far.)

Before the farm gate, turn right across a narrow wooden footbridge. Cross the stile and head for the top left corner of the field.

Cross another stile and footbridge and you will arrive in the car park behind the Black Cock Inn.

Walk down towards the main road and turn left. You will now have to walk along the main road for a while so take care. After passing 'Mountain View Ranch' on your right, follow the lane on your right heading downhill and look out for 'Fforest Fawr' on the right.



Leaving Waun-Waelod takes you through some lovely woods and fields



Look out for this tucked away footbridge just before the farm gates.

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4 Fforest Fawr (ST 141 838)

Fforest Fawr is a large woodland area with woodland trails and cycle tracks weaving through it.

There's even a sculpture trail you can follow, designed to take you on a magical journey through the forest.



The gateway to Forest Fawr

Our walk follows the red trail named Sir Henry's Way. This trail takes you through the forest and ends at Castell Coch.

Walk through the wizard and dragon archway and follow the sculpture trail which will eventually bring you back on to the main track.

Back on the main track look out for a large wooden bear on your right guarding the entrance to a viewing platform looking down over 'The Three Bears Cave'.



Derek and Andy pose by the sculpture park entrance

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5 Three Bears Cave (ST 132 830)

Named after the fairy tale 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' because of the three entrances of various sizes. It was originally a former mine entrance but now it's used as a film and TV location for many dramas such as Dr Who and Sherlock.



During filming we saw the local emergency services practicing their rescue techniques.

Continue on the main track following the red arrow markers. You will eventually see a large track leading off downhill on your left, with a red and yellow marker. Take this exit and follow the path downhill until you arrive at the foot of the fairy tale Castell Coch.



Follow the Red arrows to arrive at the Red Castle – Castell Coch.

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Castell Coch (ST 130 826)

Castell Coch looks like something from a story book. Set deep in a forest, high up on a hill, with conical roofs, you'd expect to see a princess waving at you from the turrets.

But it was actually built as rural retreat for the 3rd Marquess of Bute, to complement his lavish main residence at Cardiff Castle.

Built on earlier castle foundations, Castell Coch (Red Castle) is a 19th century gothic revival castle designed by William Burges, who was given free rein for his designs; and he certainly didn't hold back. Filled with dazzling ceilings and lavish furnishings, it's well worth taking a tour of the castle's interior to get a good sense of what life here would have been like.

The Castle is now managed by CADW so there is an entry charge.



The enchanting Castell Coch has everything a fairy tale castle would want; and you won't be disappointed either!

Leaving Castell Coch, walk down the hill to the road, turn right and continue downhill to the village of Tongwynlais. From here you need to catch the number 26 bus heading to Markham Institute. This bus runs every 30 minutes during the day and will take you back into Caerphilly centre.