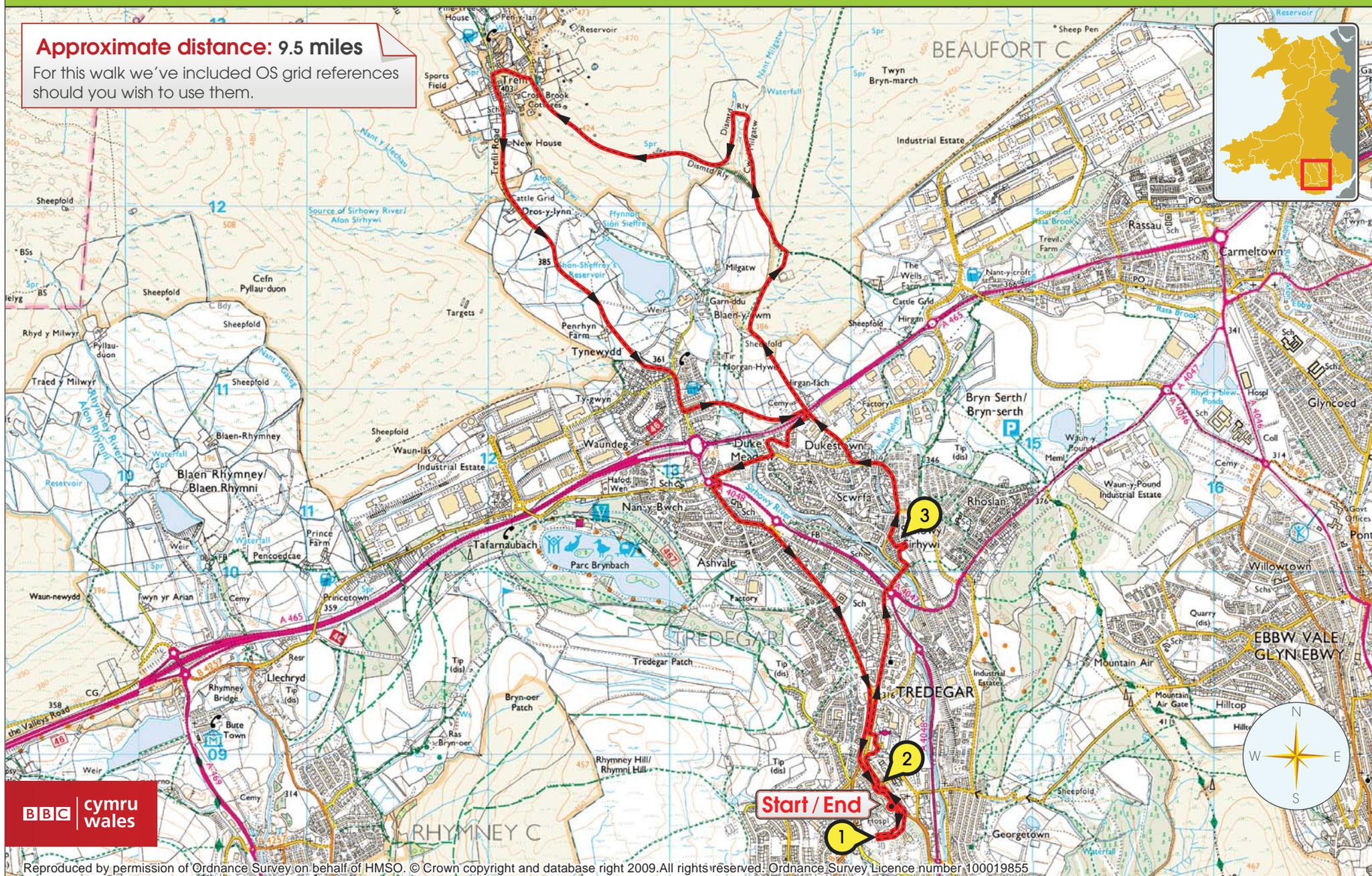
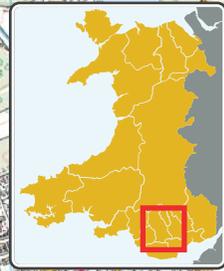


Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Approximate distance: 9.5 miles
 For this walk we've included OS grid references should you wish to use them.



Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2009. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019855

The Weatherman Walking maps are intended as a guide to help you walk the route. We recommend using an OS map of the area in conjunction with this guide. Routes and conditions may have changed since this guide was written. The BBC takes no responsibility for any accident or injury that may occur while following the route. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear and check weather conditions before heading out.

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Start: Car Park next to Bedwellty House, Tredegar, NP22 3NA

Starting ref: SO 14222 08699

Distance: Approximately 9.5 miles

Grade: Moderate

Walk time : 3.5 hours

Our valleys towns have played an important role in our industrial and cultural heritage and none has a more significant story to tell than Tredegar. Along this route you can learn about the town's rich history through a series of stainless steel public artworks. There are 20 iconic trail markers altogether which celebrate the men, women and children who helped to shape the town.

This is a circular route, and although there aren't any difficult ascents the route will require sensible footwear. Please keep dogs on leads when crossing the common towards Trefil, as sheep and horses roam freely across these fields.

Directions

Exit the car park, turning immediately right and enter the gates to Bedwellty House and Park. For this route, you are going to follow the path ahead as it slopes to the right, up a gentle gradient, keeping your eye on the sign posts leading you towards the giant lump of coal.



Biggest lump of coal in the world! (SO 14162 08534)

In 1851 the 'Great Exhibition' was held at Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London. The fair was designed to celebrate Britain as a leading force in technology and industry. One of the 'stunts' was to take an enormous lump of coal, the biggest the world had ever seen, to the event. Expert collier John Jones cut a block which weighed 20 tonnes but a five tonne piece broke away. The 15 tonne lump is still thought to be the largest ever cut. It was decided that it would be too difficult to transport to London so it was brought to Bedwellty. This coal monument is grade II listed. This estate was owned by the Homfray family who also owned Tredegar Ironworks.



Behind the scenes as Derek and Alyson marvel at the biggest lump of coal in the world

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Bedwellty house has been carefully restored over the years and is one of the finest examples of an Ironmasters house left in Britain. It's set in 26 picturesque acres of parkland. It's worth exploring both the house which is now a heritage centre and the gardens, where you will find many more of the public artworks.



Derek finds out about Norah Childs, who worked for the Tredegar Medical Aid Society for all her adult life

Head back the way you came out of the Park. You are going to walk back past the car park with it to your left, heading up Morgan Street towards the town centre and its famous clock.

As you reach the clock you will see the statue of a legendary figure of Tredegar sat on the bench to your left – Aneurin Bevan. (SO 14165 08809)



Derek meets Nye!

2 Aneurin Bevan (SO 14157 08806)

Tredegar-born Aneurin Bevan (1897-1960) was a Labour MP for the Ebbw Vale constituency. He is best remembered as the Minister for Health who in 1948 implemented the National Health Service. He was inspired by a local scheme, the 'Tredegar Workmen's Medical Aid Society', where healthcare was provided for miners and ironworkers who paid into a subscription. By 1933, 95% of the local population were members of the society.

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Cross the road at the roundabout, on your left you will see the figure of the lesser known Mary Elizabeth Davis, who deserves much of the credit for the clock standing there today. If you want to find out more about her or any of the characters on this walk there is information on the back of each of them.



Tredegar's famous town clock

Continue up Castle Street, bear right at the end of the road and make your way towards Gwent Shopping Centre. Just ahead of you there is a small roundabout, cross over safely on the left hand side of the road. Here you will see another statue. This one is of 'Collier Mawr' John Jones and his 'butty'. He was the collier that cut out that large lump of coal you saw earlier, this area was once the yard level of Tredegar ironworks. (SO 14127 09059)



Statue commemorating 'Collier Mawr' and his 'butty'

Take the steps immediately to the left of John Jones, and turn right at the top of them. Just ahead of you to the left is a large wrought-iron fence with 'Tredegar Iron & Coal Company' along the top. Walk through here, and turn right on to Commercial Street.



Tredegar Iron and Coal Company gates

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

As you approach the end of Commercial Street, to your right is a small fenced off grassy area. Here you will see a statue of two 'patchworkers', teenage girls who had an extremely tough job, carrying iron ore in baskets on their heads. (SO 14133 09277)



Derek and Alison meet the Patch girls

Continue to the end of the street, where opposite you will see the bus bays next to a large supermarket. Carefully cross the road here, heading diagonally to your right down Church Street. On the left side of the road you will pass a former GP surgery used by the Tredegar Medical Aid Society and on your right St George's Church. You are going to follow the road all the way down to the bottom. Please use traffic lights and crossing islands whenever possible.



Former GP surgery

At the bottom of Church Street, keep slightly left, and then cross the road at the crossing to your right. Once you've crossed the road, turn right and follow the pavement as it curves to the left past the Mace Garage. Cross the bridge ahead of you over the river. You are going to go straight ahead at the T-Junction, following the industrial site icon on the signpost at the end of the bridge. As you follow this road a short way along curving to the left, on the right just across a grass bank you will be able to see the remains of Sirhowy Ironworks.



Sirhowy Ironwork furnace remains

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

3 Sirhowy Ironworks (SO 14294 10127)

This is an ancient monument and one of the few furnace remains from the late 18th century. The Ironworks here were established in 1778. By 1844, each of the furnaces could produce 90 to 100 tonnes of pig iron per week. It was transported to the plant at Ebbw Vale for processing. There is an information board giving more detail on the history of Sirhowy Ironworks at the site.

Continuing back along the road you just turned off, head through the small alleyway and straight ahead until you reach Dukestown Road. Turn right and follow it along. You will pass the 'Armoury Stores' shop. Stay on Dukestown road until you reach the turning for Crown Avenue on your right. You will see a red phone box and a shop called 'CK Studios'.



Crown avenue

Turn right onto Crown Avenue, and stay on it crossing a footbridge over the Heads of the Valleys road. Once you've reached the end of the bridge, ignore the walking/cycling sign pointing to the left. You are going to bear right, up the long sloping gravel path which has hedges either side of it. Stay on the path and it will eventually open up onto Mynydd Llangynidr common where you will find sheep and horses grazing.



Derek meets the locals

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Keep to the path. You will reach a hill eventually where the path forks into two. Stay left and continue following the path. You will see a point where the path drops off quite dramatically to the left, over a ridge. You are going to turn right here down a little slope onto a less trodden path, just before it is a rock embedded into the ground. Please check the photo as this turning can be easily missed. Don't worry too much if you do miss it as we are going to eventually re-join the path we are currently on but you will miss a lovely section of the route!



The turning to get onto that earlier former tram road

Follow the less trodden path along, with the river to your left and limestone rocks to your right. This was an early tram road used to transport limestone to the iron works. If you look very carefully at the ground you may be able to make out some bumps which were once the sleepers.

Follow the path as it bends left in a horseshoe shape, over a grassy bridge, taking you back along the opposite direction on the other side of the river. At the end it will curve to the right, keep going and eventually you will spot in the distance the small village of Trefil – Wales' highest village!



Derek and Alison on Mynydd Llangynidr common

Weatherman Walking

Tredegar

Follow the path down to the main road in Trefil, and then turn left onto the 'Trefil Road'. We are going to follow this road all the way down for a while – please be careful and stick to the pavements whenever possible as you are walking along the road. Follow almost all the way down to the roundabout at the bottom. Shortly before the roundabout you will see a large road sign with Abergavenny, Tredegar and Merthyr Tydfil on it. Just below the sign you will see an alley going to the left, leading to Nant y Bwch / Blaen y cwm Viaduct which is also known as the Nine Arches Bridge. This was once an old passenger railway line. Cross over the viaduct, taking in the lovely views. Keep going and you will see the bridge over the heads of the valleys road you crossed earlier. Turn right to cross the bridge. Immediately to your right after the bridge is a marked footpath through a kissing gate. Go through this gate and follow the path ahead.

Keep going straight along the footpath and through the metal kissing gate at the other side of the field and straight on. Coming out onto the street, you are going to walk ahead to the junction, go left, follow the road until you reach a T-junction and turn right onto St. Luke's Road. Follow St. Luke's Road, across a bridge over the river, and towards the roundabout at the end of the road. You will see another statue, this one is 'Philip Gordon Weekes' a Welsh Mining Engineer.

Take a sharp left next to Philip Weekes, down the path, turn right and cross over the A4048 using the traffic lights. Take the next left off the roundabout on to Merthyr Road. The turning is signposted 'Ashvale'. Follow Merthyr Road onto Ashvale. Keep to the right along this road towards the bus stop, heading onto Sycamore Avenue.

Follow this long road all the way, eventually arriving at the supermarket. Follow the path ahead with the supermarket to your right. You will pass a golden post-box commemorating the Olympics (thanks to local Paralympic athlete Mark Colbourne). Follow the High Street back down in the direction you started this route from. Eventually you will reach the purple coloured night club, look left and you will see the town clock. Head towards the clock and back to your car!



Kissing gate



Statue of Phillip Weeks – a Welsh mining engineer