

# The Hoffman Hike

The Hoffman Hike derives its name from the Hoffman Kiln, one of only three remaining 20th century lime burning kilns in Britain. The kiln, chimney and the distinctive **Llanymynech Hill** provide the backdrop to some wonderful landscape views, industrial heritage and wildlife habitats.

**Walk 1:** A 4.8 km (3 mile) walk following the Offa's Dyke Path and the Montgomery Canal, taking in the remains of the area's once thriving limestone industry • Allow **1½ to 2 hours**

**START from:** The car park next to Llanymynech Post Office • *GRID REF* 266210 • This walk includes paths with fairly steep sections in places.

**Walk 2:** A shorter alternative is a 1.6 km (1 mile) circular walk around Llanymynech Heritage Area, taking in the Hoffman Kiln • Allow **¾ hour**

**START from:** The car park next to Llanymynech Post Office • *GRID REF* 266210 • This walk is nearly all on maintained paths and is fairly level.

**MAPS:** OS Explorer **240**

**PARKING** is also available at Llanymynech Heritage Area (**P2**) and Llanymynech Rocks (**P3**).

For public transport enquiries contact **Traveline 0870 608 2 608**  
*Website:* [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

Llanymynech has been important as a settlement since the establishment of a defensive hillfort in the 10th-9th centuries BC. In addition to its significance as a defensive site, Llanymynech has over thousands of years developed as a mining settlement. The industrial remains that can be seen today are from the 19th and 20th century limeworks process. This unique industrial production line still survives in the landscape and is now recognised as a site of national historical significance.



**3** At the main road, turn right and right again into **Gyn Lane** to look at the restored **Gin Wheel**. Retrace your steps and cross the main road. Go up **Underhill Lane** carrying on after the lane becomes a rough track.

## Walk 1

**1** From the car park go through the gate onto the canal towpath and turn right.

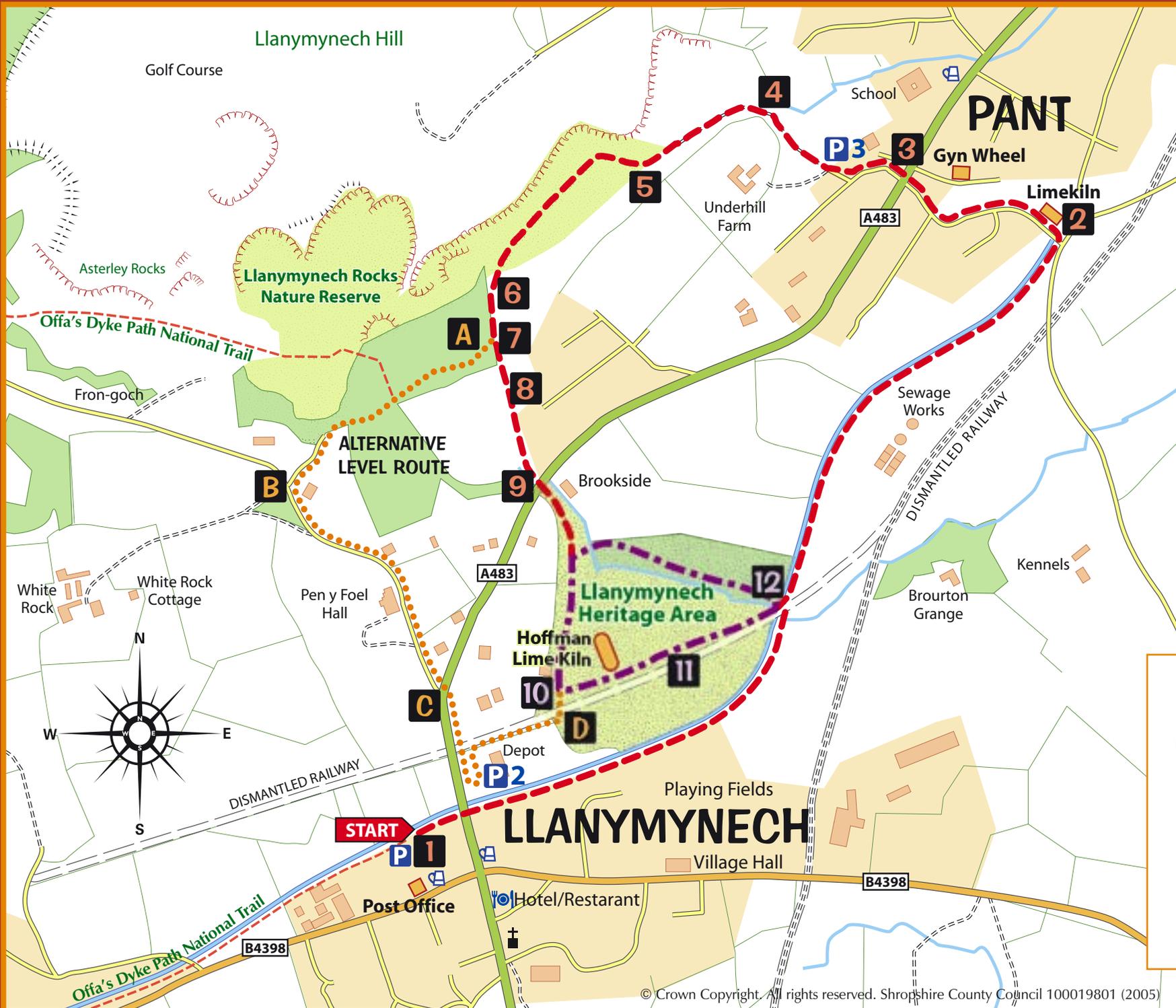
Walking from Llanymynech to Pant along the towpath of the Montgomery Canal and crossing the now dismantled Cambrian Railway line, you find yourself on once-thriving commercial routes that carried the limestone rock to the blast furnaces of industry. Engulfed by vegetation by the end of the 20th century, the water on this section of the canal was lost. Plans for its restoration are underway.

**2** Follow the towpath until you go under a bridge, leave the towpath here, turn right and immediately right again onto the lane. Follow the lane up the hill, passing on your right five lime kilns.

**4** Walk past the car park and through the gate and follow the path as it curves to the left and heads uphill.

**5** Just before the track bends note the three bottle shaped kilns on the left. Stay on the track as it bends to the right – you will see the cliff face ahead.

Limestone has been used as an agricultural fertilizer since medieval times. This small-scale quarrying activity escalated into a booming industry in the 19th century, with demand for lime from the iron foundries of Ironbridge and Staffordshire. Blasted with gunpowder, the rocks came crashing down. One explosion in 1868 was heard at Welshpool, 10 miles away. The quarries finally closed in the 1930s. Now nature has reclaimed the ground, with woodland, sunny glades and a flourishing array of wildflowers and butterflies.



Look up at the cliffs and you come face to face with rocks that were formed when Britain lay near the Equator, some 340 million years ago. A shallow sea covered much of the land then.

Millions upon millions of corals and the fossilized remains of small, shelled creatures piled up and were compressed to make the limestone you see today.

- - - - - **Walk 1**  
long route
- - - - - **Walk 2**  
short route
- . . . . . **Alternative, level route**
- P** Car Park
- Public House
- Café/Restaurant

# Further Information



## Remember the Countryside Code:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs even when going out locally
- Leave gates and property as you find them;
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home;
- Keep dogs under close control;
- Consider other people.

[www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk](http://www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk)

## Walking is good for you!

Walking five times a week for 30 minutes helps you keep healthy.

## Other walks in Shropshire

Information on other walks in Shropshire can be found by visiting:

[www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk)



**Shropshire**  
County Council

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**6** Walking along the foot of the cliff you will approach a ruined building on the left; this is the **old winding house** which would have housed a drum similar to the one seen in Gyn Lane. The winding house controlled the vertical descent of wagons full of limestone rock, down a steep tramline known as an **inclined plane**. Turn left and follow the path down hill on a fairly steep slope which was once a tramline.

**7** A little way down you have a choice. The inclined plane is a fairly steep way down the hill **(A)** or, if you prefer a more level route, you can take the path to the right **(B)**.

### **A** ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

**8** Follow the inclined plane straight down the hill keeping to the right of the houses.

In autumn the trees and hedgerows of Llanymynech seem to be swathed in hoar frost, this is because old man's beard runs riot here; the feathery, spherical seed heads of this wild clematis tumbling through the branches, creeping along the ground.

It was first reported here around 1843. Very probably it arrived via the canal. Romantically beautiful it certainly is, but the plant also causes conservationists a lot of trouble as they struggle to keep glades clear for orchids.



**9** Cross the road, taking care as the road can be busy, and go through the metal gates. Follow the path bearing right at the junction.

**10** Just before the former stable block take the path on the left; this will take you past the two lime kilns to **the Hoffman Kiln and Chimney**.

### **B** ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

Walk along the path until you join the **Offa's Dyke National Trail** at the signpost and carry on straight ahead. The path goes through two kissing gates and leads you onto a lane by a cottage to your left **(B)**.

At the T junction turn left down the hill. Keep following this lane until you join the main road **(C)**.

Taking care, cross the road and turn right. A little way along turn left into the **Heritage Area**. Go through the car park and through the gate on the right.

Turn left **(D)** towards the former stable block **(10)** and then take the path to the right past the two lime kilns, on to **the Hoffman Kiln and Chimney**.

Portland cement spelled the end for the lime industry. A brave, final bid for survival was the construction of the Hoffman Kiln in the Heritage Area. This was really a series of individual kilns arranged around a tunnel, enabling the non-stop production of quick lime. But it was too late; lime mortar was no longer required in large quantities, though it is still sought after today for conservation building work.

**11** After the kilns go through a kissing gate and then across a field, take the steps down to the canal and cross over the bridge.

**12** Turn right along the canal, under the road bridge and back through the gate on the left to the car park.

## Walk 2

From the car park go through the gate onto the canal towpath and turn right.

Go under the low bridge and immediately turn right up the steps leaving the towpath. Turn right again onto the main road cross over the bridge, turning right into the **Heritage Area**. Go through the car park and through the gate on the right.



Turn left towards the former stable block (10) and then take the path to the right past the two lime kilns, on to the **Hoffman Kiln and Chimney**.

After the kilns go through a kissing gate and then across a field. Pass through another kissing gate (12) and take the steps down to the left. Turn right at the bottom and take the left path through the woods.

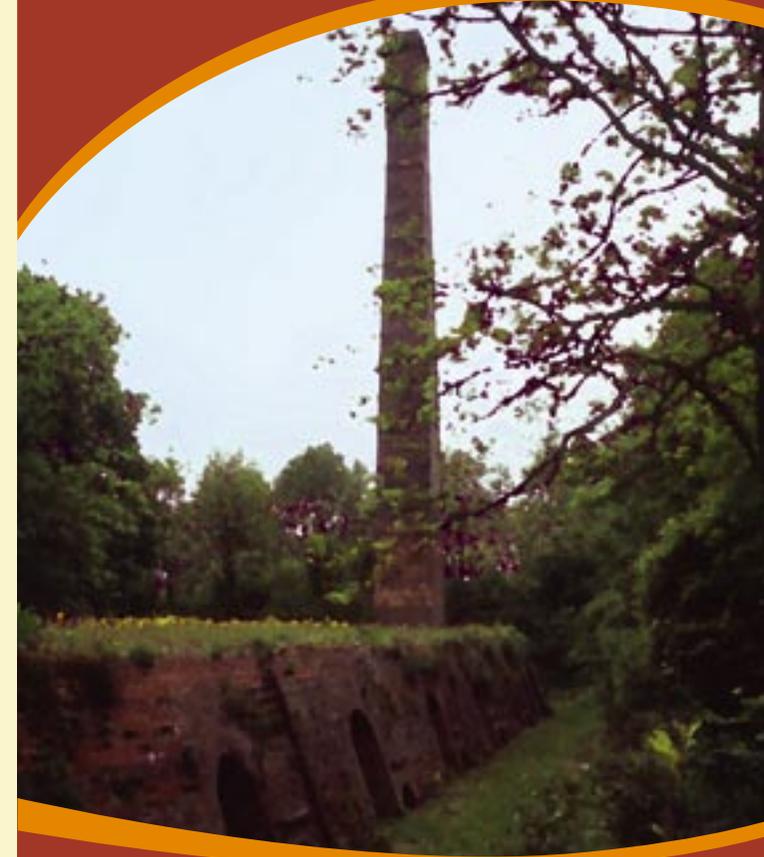
To complete the circular walk turn left where the path joins the main track to the Hoffman Kiln.

Go past the former stable block (10) on your right, turn right and retrace your steps back to the car park.

A walk taking in Llanymynech's industrial heritage

# Hoffman Hike

Whatever your interests – beautiful countryside, wildlife, exercise, something to do with the kids – these walks are for you!



Enjoy our walks and improve your health!