



Wrexham Parks, Countryside and Rights of Way Service



Walks Around
Tŷ Mawr
Country Park
and the
Pontcysyllte
Aqueduct



The walks all begin at Tŷ Mawr Country Park

(grid reference 283413)

The park is situated in Cefn Mawr five miles south of Wrexham off the B5605.

Follow the brown and white Country Park signs off the A483 at the Ruabon/Llangollen exit.

Buses between Wrexham and Llangollen, Cefn Mawr and Oswestry stop near Tŷ Mawr. The park is signposted from the 2 nearby bus stops.

Ruabon railway station is 3 miles from the park with the above buses from outside the station.

Tŷ Mawr Country Park
Cae Gwilym Lane, Cefn Mawr
Wrexham LL14 3PT
Telephone: 01978 822780

The park is open daily

Visitor Centre open 10.30am – 4.30pm
Summer Season
Winter Season

This leaflet has been produced by the Parks, Countryside and Public Rights of Way Service. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, Wrexham Council Borough Council cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of any errors in this publication.

Introduction

Tŷ Mawr is a 35 acre Country Park. It is also a working farm and home to a variety of animals. The park lies between the Cefn Viaduct and the Pontcycyllte Aqueduct which is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

These two bridges are historic engineering structures and form a dramatic backdrop to the park.

The walks in this leaflet are of varied lengths to suit different interests and abilities. You can take a short stroll around the farm animals, or a riverside ramble to the aqueduct and back. The longer circular walk along the Shropshire Union Canal, crossing the aqueduct and returning along the River Dee is the longest walk. These walks combine stunning views of the Vale of Llangollen, the fun of the farm, fascinating heritage and the beauty and diversity of the natural surroundings.

Whether you are interested in nature, history, farming, or fresh air and exercise, there is a walk to suit you at Tŷ Mawr.

Admission

Admission to Tŷ Mawr is free but donations are always welcome and used towards the upkeep of the park.

Dogs

Dogs are welcome on these walks but please keep your dogs under control. Poop scoop bags are available from the Visitor Centre.

Designed by Kredd and Butter Design 01978 844482



Walks For All Seasons

Winter, Spring, Summer or Autumn
there is always something interesting to see

-  The Viaduct — Aqueduct walk
-  Tŷ Mawr — Circular walk
-  The Tŷ Mawr Trail



Tŷ Mawr, the 'Wildlife' Farm

'Tŷ Mawr' is Welsh for 'Big House' and the park is indeed, a big home for a variety of plants and animals. It is managed as a farm using organic methods, which means that chemical pesticides and fertilizers are not used as these will damage the wildlife. The small animal area can be found at the top of the park near the Visitor Centre.

Larger animals, including different breeds of sheep, can be seen grazing in the meadows. Signs by each field explain about the animals and wildlife you may see.

The farm animals are moved around to different fields to allow the grass to grow and to keep the fields 'clean'. Some fields are allowed to grow to make hay for winter feed and also provide valuable habitats for insects and birds.

The woodlands and hedges provide 'wildlife corridors' for birds, small mammals and insects and the river has a whole 'wild' life of its own.

The walk around Tŷ Mawr allows you to admire the landscape and watch the wildlife and farm animals. In early spring, newborn lambs scamper around the fields and in the summer months an array of insects, such as butterflies and dragonflies, can be seen in the wildflower meadows. By the river, birds such as grey wagtails and dippers can often be spotted.

Why not find a quiet spot and watch for a while?

The River Dee and its Biodiversity

The Dee Valley is not just a beautiful river valley, it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

This means that it is protected under UK and EU law because of the special habitats, plants and animals which live in and around the river.

Atlantic salmon swim up the River Dee to lay their eggs and other fish, such as bullhead, grayling and brown trout, are found here. The scarce freshwater pearl mussel, only found in nine Welsh rivers, thrives here, as well as rare floating water plantain.

The area is full of interesting things to see, as you walk. Beautiful varieties of dragonflies, butterflies and moths can often be seen in the wildflower meadows during the warmer months. Interesting fungi species can be found along the river banks and along the tree lined paths during the autumn.

Hérons, kingfishers, swans, ducks and goosanders can often be seen along the river as buzzards soar overhead. In the winter, long-tailed tits flock noisily near the canal and both greater spotted and green woodpeckers tap loudly in the surrounding woodland. On summer evenings, bats dart along the river hunting for moths and house martins swoop down along the water. Otters are sometimes seen in both the canal and river.

Please remember not to disturb the habitat, plants or animals along the river. They are protected by law.



Henry Robertson's Masterpiece

The Cefn Viaduct was designed by Henry Robertson and stands as a glorious reminder of 'railway mania' during the 19th century. Thomas Brassey was employed to build the viaduct using local Cefn sandstone supplied by the nearby Chatham's Quarry (now disused). Without the help of modern machinery, this took two years to complete at a cost £72,346.

The viaduct carries the Shrewsbury to Chester railway line and was officially opened in October 1848.

*The viaduct is...
460 metres long (1,508 feet),
45 metres high (147 feet)
and has 19 arches*

The first train to cross, carrying local dignitaries, broke down on the bridge and the passengers spent an uncomfortable night in the moonlight with the sparkling river Dee below, before being rescued!

It immediately became of greater value than Thomas Telford's aqueduct, as the steam trains replaced the canal boats for industrial transport, particularly coal. The public, who were keen to explore new places, could not wait to travel on the new trains.

Henry Robertson, who was a pupil of Robert Stephenson, also built the viaduct at Chirk. He was an ironmaster and engineer and constructed much of the inland railway system of Wales including the Vale of Llangollen railway.

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

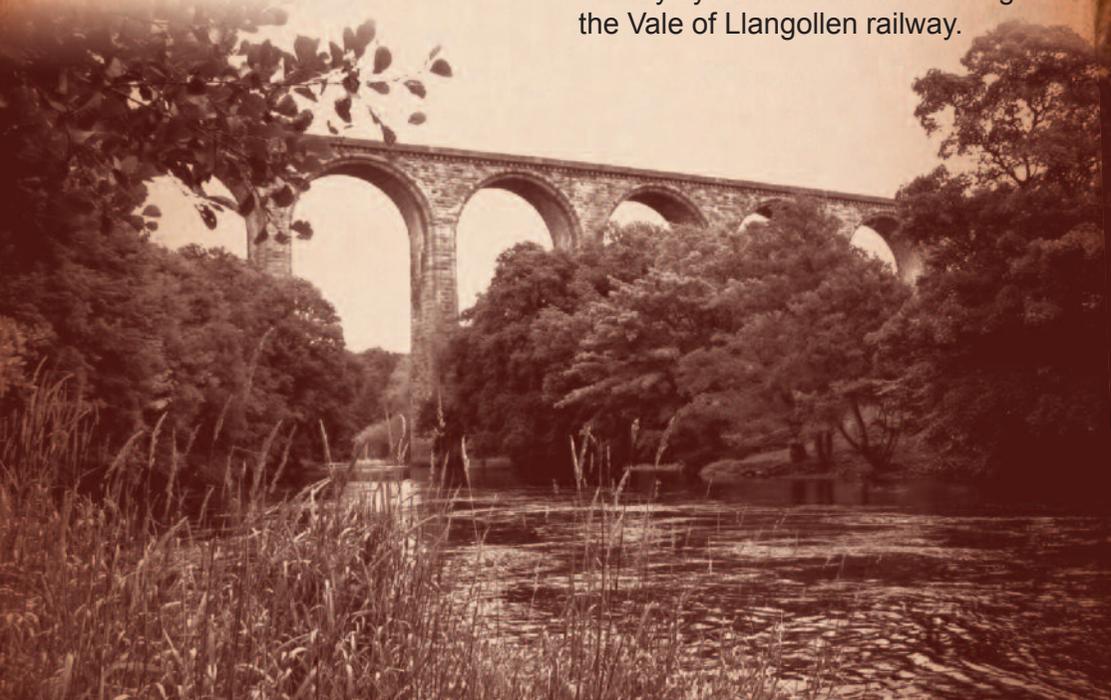
Now a World Heritage Site and Grade 1 Listed Building, this magnificent aqueduct was designed by Thomas Telford and completed in 1805.

Coal, sandstone, iron, chemicals and terracotta goods were produced in the Cefn Mawr and Acrefair area and were transported by canal all over the country. Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is the highest, longest aqueduct in Britain. It is the tallest navigable aqueduct in the world. It cost £47,000 and took 200 men a decade to build. Dressed sandstone, from the nearby Chatham's Quarry, was used to build 19 hollow pillars using

foundry in Cefn Mawr. The trough is 1.60 metres (5.25 feet) deep and the joints for the trough were treated with Welsh flannel dipped in boiling sugar, and then sealed with lead to prevent it from leaking! The canal is fed by River Dee water from the Horseshoe Falls near Llangollen.

The Aqueduct carries the Shropshire Union canal high above the Dee Valley and is nicknamed 'the stream in the sky'. It is now crossed by more than 15,000 boats and 20,000 pedestrians a year.

*The aqueduct is...
307 m ...*



The Tŷ Mawr Trail

(approx. 1 mile)

This walk is approximately 1 mile around. It is easy walking on tarmac surfaced paths. There are sloping sections. There are no stiles.

1. Start from outside the Visitor Centre, go past the barn, across the yard towards the large gate. Turn right following the 'Tŷ Mawr Trail' sign post. Follow the tarmac path around the park.

2. At the goat field, check the sign for information about the field.

3. The path follows the river bank past the 'beach', a lovely spot where you can stop for awhile.

4. Continue along the path, below the Cefn Viaduct arches.

5. At the top of the path, near the dovecote and yellow gates, an information board explains more about the history of the viaduct.

6. Go through the second yellow gate and into the Mini beast woods. This wooded area emerges back onto the picnic field and if you follow the path you will pass the smaller animal houses on your right. Don't miss the duck pond field where a variety of smaller animals will delight young and old alike!

Return to the Visitor Centre. This circular route can be achieved in both directions.



The Viaduct – Aqueduct Walk

(approx. 4 miles return)

This walk is approximately 4 miles long and takes about 2 hours walking at a leisurely pace. It is easy walking apart from 2 sections of steps. There are no stiles.

1. Leaving the Visitor Centre bear left around the front of the barn and head towards the sandstone Cefn Viaduct. The tarmac path takes you through the mini beast woods and past the dovecote where you will find some detailed information about the Viaduct.

2. Follow the tarmac path beneath the towering viaduct arches.

3. Continue along beside the river. Leave the park by turning left through a gate signposted 'Pontcysyllte Aqueduct'.

4. Go down the steps through the trees and follow the path which runs alongside the river Dee. *This is a linear walk and is easy to follow. As you walk look out for fish jumping in the deep quiet stretches of water.*

5. Cross the footbridge over Trefnant Brook and past the old, brick built pump house on the left (once part of Monsanto Chemical Works). Continue along the path through Jeffrey's Wood. *If you stop for a while and you may hear*

woodpeckers busily tapping the trees in this ancient woodland.

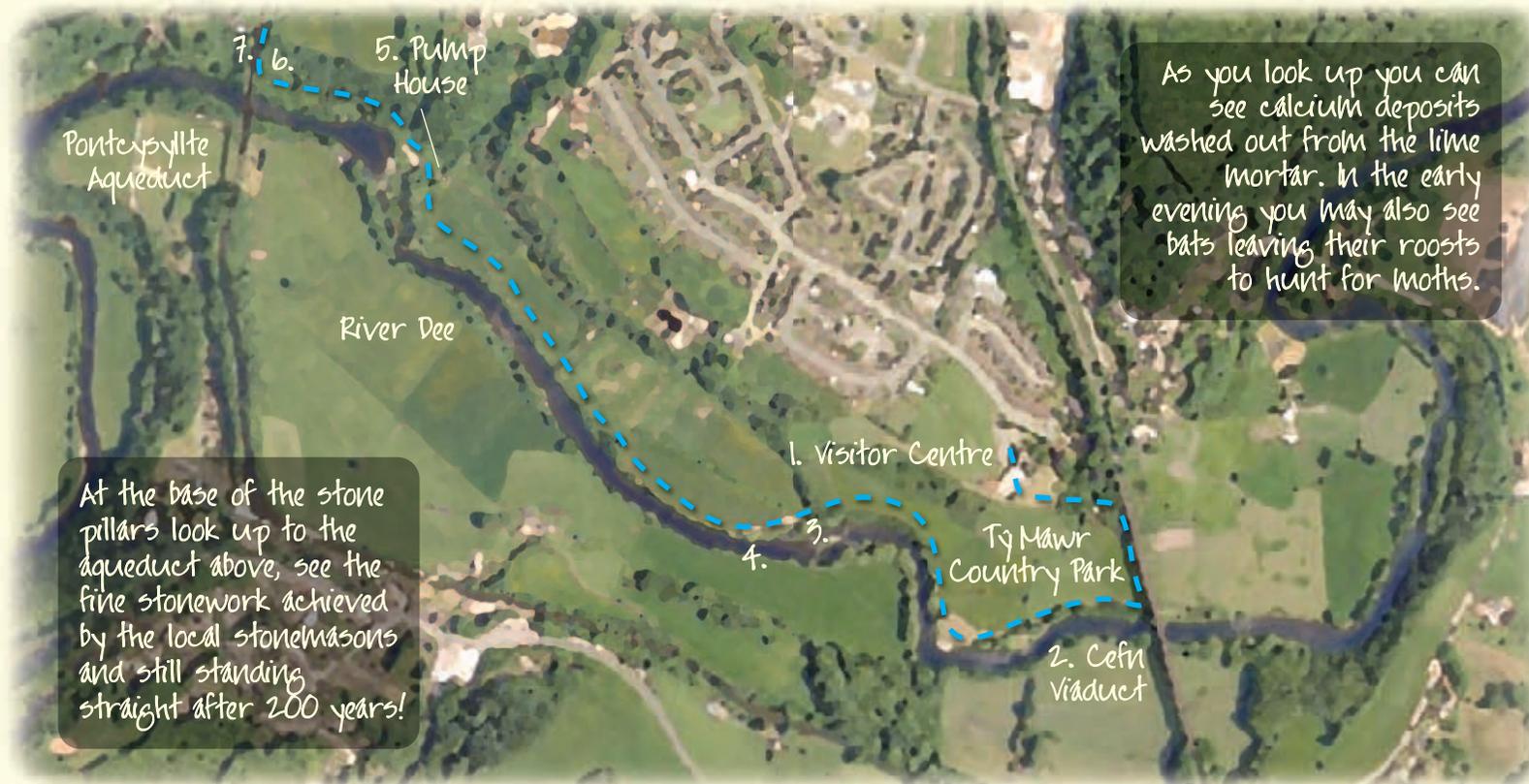
You may notice orange mud or water along the path. This comes from water seeping through old mineshafts which contain iron

deposits and this area is a good habitat for orchids to grow.

6. At the base of the aqueduct, climb the steep steps to your right and go up to the Trevor canal basin. *Trevor Basin is well worth exploring with a Visitor Centre, information boards, sandstone sculptures, colourful boats toilets and a shop for ice cream!*

7. Before returning to Tŷ Mawr, if you have a good head for heights, walk along the canal towpath onto the aqueduct for a splendid view of the Cefn Viaduct and the medieval Bont Bridge crossing the river Dee.

To return, retrace your steps back to Tŷ Mawr.



As you look up you can see calcium deposits washed out from the lime mortar. In the early evening you may also see bats leaving their roosts to hunt for moths.

At the base of the stone pillars look up to the aqueduct above, see the fine stonework achieved by the local stonemasons and still standing straight after 200 years!

Tŷ Mawr — Circular Walk

(Approx. 4.5 miles)

This walk is approximately 4.5 miles long and takes about 2½ hours walking at a leisurely pace. It is easy walking apart from 2 steep sections of steps. There are no stiles.

1. Exit Tŷ Mawr Country Park and turn right along Cae Gwilym Lane, walking under the high railway arch to the B5605. Turn right and follow the road down through Newbridge to cross the River Dee.

2. Before the bridge, on the other side of the road, Wynnstay Lodge, which is a listed building, was once an entrance into the Wynnstay estate.

3. Carry on, passing Ty Maen Farm on the left. Look across to your left and see the modern A483 road bridge, which spans the Dee, and to your right, the Viaduct, Garth and Castell Dinas Bran on the highest hill in the distance.

4. Soon you will see the railway to your right. It stretches out over the Viaduct and across the valley to Cefn Mawr.

5. Just before the bridge over the Shropshire Union Canal, turn right along the canal tow path. The canal is home to many waterfowl especially ducks and moorhens.

6. Continue along the wooded towpath. As you cross a small bridge you may catch a glimpse of Tŷ Mawr on the other side of the valley.

7. Pass the Lime Kiln arches on your left and continue to the black and white lift bridge. Here you need to make a choice.

8. If you are brave enough to cross the 126 feet high Aqueduct, you will witness some of the most magnificent scenery in Wales and have an unforgettable experience. If

so carry on along the towpath, cross the Aqueduct and re join this route at point No 11.

9. Alternatively, cross the lift bridge and bear right to the road to Trevor (there is no footpath). There is an information board at this point.

10. Turn right and follow the road down to the river Dee. Cross the medieval Bont Bridge, with awe inspiring view of the Aqueduct above and turn right up the steep road to Trevor. Before crossing the canal, take the path to the right under the aqueduct arch and bear left up to the canal basin.

11. The Trevor Basin is a colourful sight with canal boats moored, the Telford Pub and restaurant and a small gift shop, visitor centre and toilets. You can also see a series of stone sculptures representing the heritage of the area.

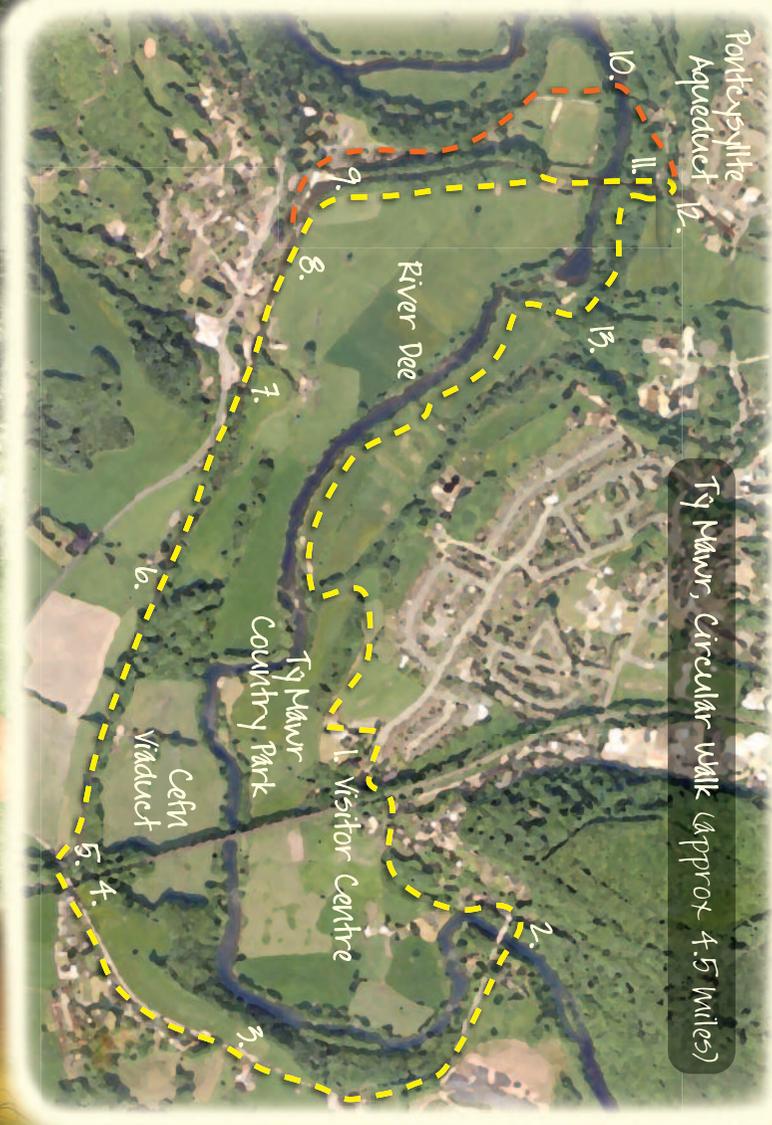
12. At the end of the aqueduct by the the 'hand' sculpture, take the downhill path which runs steeply down below the aqueduct arches. These steps run down to the River Dee. The path then bears left along Jeffrey's Wood which is an ancient woodland.

You may notice orange mud or water along the path, this comes from water seeping through old mineshafts containing iron deposits and this area is a good habitat for orchids to grow.

13. Continue along the path to the old brick pump house. Cross the footbridge and bear right along the river bank, through the meadows and back to Tŷ Mawr Country Park.

You may even see the turquoise flash of a kingfisher dashing by or pike swimming in the muddy depths.





Ty Mawr, circular walk (approx 4.5 miles)

