

# Growing Better Connections - Nature Walk: - Boncath

This is a moderately energetic walk of about 3.4 miles with 120m of ascent, through beautiful varied countryside and historic buildings. Allow about an hour and a quarter without stops, however I recommend frequent relaxing stops to admire the landscape and architecture.

- Park in the carpark behind Capel Colman.
- Climb the slate steps over the stile just up from the church. Keeping to the right hand edge of the arable field.
- On reaching the driveway to Cilwendeg mansion the path follows the track signed to Gilfach/ Yr Hafod. **Only on a Thursday between 9am and 6pm.** I highly recommend a brief diversion to the Shell House. Walk down the drive, admiring the parkland cedar trees, and turn left onto a track just inside the edge of the woods.
- Following the printed footpath signs keep walking downhill keeping the fine counting house and range of farm buildings with bell tower to your left. Past the elegant gatehouse and garages on your right.
- Follow the track down past the coniferous trees (Brewers Spruce) and turn right at the end of the walled garden across a private yard and delving down into the woods beyond.
- Over a little footbridge and up to a gate leading into a field, follow the left hand side. This is a warm and sheltered field edge full of nettles so a great place to spot butterflies and caterpillars.
- Keeping to the left you may need to hold back the broken fence on the right to pass.
- You will emerge at the junction in Newchapel opposite the Fynnone Arms (which is worth a refreshment stop if it is open). Turn right down the lane to Cilgwyn and straight on through the farm (roughly the halfway point on this walk), down the hill and across the ford at the bottom.
- At the T junction turn right up the track and round the hairpin. If you were to take the track left and left again onto the footpath, it leads to Ffynnone Waterfall.
- Keep following this track until you see a path on the right marked with a Via Beata leading up through an ancient tunnel-like sunken path beneath the hedges.
- Keeping the buildings for the glamping business on your right, turn right onto the track.
- This will lead you back up to Capel Colman.

## Capel Colman

Capel Colman was originally a medieval site recorded as abandoned c1720, rebuilt in 1764, restored 1810 but rebuilt again in 1835-7. [Pembrokeshire Historical Society](#)

There is a multi-stemmed yew tree near the door arising from a broad base, suggesting that it is likely to have been rooted in that spot for 500 years or more.

Just down the hill towards Glanpwlldu is a Christianised standing stone with a wheel cross engraved onto it known as Maen Colman, said to mark the grave of the Irish Saint Colman.

These features suggest that this sacred site was likely established in the early medieval era.

## Cilwendeg

***Please respect the privacy of the residents of Cilwendeg, by staying on the public footpath.***

The name Cilwendeg means something like fair white nook, and is first listed in the 16th Century. It was sold to Jacob Morgan the younger in about 1699. The family wealth coming primarily from the unlikely source of his sister-in-law being the only daughter of William Tench who built and owned the Skerries lighthouse, and was granted a toll of one penny per ton from each ship that passed within sight of the light. Shipping to and from Belfast, Dublin, Liverpool and Cardigan Bay was expanding rapidly at the time and yielded a substantial income. [I J Baker](#)

All of these buildings are listed with details [here](#). They are primarily attributed to the extensive development and ornamentation made by Morgan Jones II in the 1830s to achieve a model farm. The core of the estate had been established by his uncle (also Morgan Jones) over the previous 50 years, who "did good by stealth."

Of particular note are the ostentatiously elegant [Shell House](#) , [Dovecote](#) and [Coach House](#). Later renovations were made by the Saunders-Davies family (who also owned the impressive farm buildings at nearby [Pentre Mansion](#)). Their improvements included the adaptation of the coach house into garages to accommodate Owen Saunders-Davies' passion for racing Bugattis in the 1920s.

Brewers Spruce - *Picea breweriana* is native to the seasonally icy ridges of Oregon and California, where its pendulous foliage helps it to shed snow. It is generally grown as an ornamental in the UK and was widely planted by wealthy victorians along with other newly collected status symbol trees such as Wellingtonias. It can be identified by the little studded scars on the twigs where needles have been shed, which are characteristic of spruces, combined with remembering that the branches on the brewers droop.

## Ffynone

This area is worthy of a separate walk, however if you wish to visit the waterfall it adds just over a mile and a half to the route. It is a special place that is described in the first branch of the Mabinogion as the gateway to "Annwn" the otherworld. Here Pwll atones for dishonouring Arwen the lord of Annwn by swapping places with him for a year, and engaging his nemesis in combat.

