

Llandough, the Celtic Cross and River Ely

Nearly 3 miles, 1.5 hours

By Penarth & District Ramblers for Llandough Community Council

An interesting short walk partly beside the river Ely, with a some historic features. Easy to follow with one woodland path, but mainly on well made paths and pavements. This is a good walk for the winter months when countryside walking can be very muddy.

Map: O.S. Explorer 151.

Parking is available at King George V Playing Field (entrance next to the car sales forecourt) on Leckwith Road, Llandough. Leaving the car park, cross Leckwith Road and turn right to walk to St. Dochdwy's Church.

Walk starts at St. Dochdwy's Church Llandough Hill, Llandough, CF64 2NA

- ST 16758 73279. Enter the churchyard and follow the path towards the church. As you approach the door turn right and head for the old stone, square sided, pillar (no cross at the top) to the right of the church. Take care not to trip on any gravestones. *This is an ancient Celtic cross dating back to the C10th/C11th. and shows that this has been a religious site many hundreds of years. It is known as the IRBIC cross as the word IRBICI can just about be made out on front side facing the road. Looking at the tapering faces of the base there are five standing figures on the back, a figure on horseback on the western side and busts of men on north and southern side. Across the churchyard wall to the left of the church (now under housing) was a large early medieval graveyard which was excavated in 1994 revealing 1,026* burials. An earlier excavation to the south of the church showed a Roman villa occupied until the early C4. It is a remarkable historic place.*

- Leave the churchyard and take the path ahead just to the right of the green to reach the pavement alongside Leckwith Road. Cross the entrance to Church View Close and after the second house turn right by a way-marker post to take the straight path between the houses. At the end of the gardens the path bears left and goes down steps to then cross a couple of short wooden sleeper "bridges". Take care here as the sleepers can become very slippery when wet. Stay on the path, passing a stile, to eventually emerge onto the grass beside a light industrial warehouse unit. Turn right to walk in a straight line along the verge parallel with the fence on your right. Continue ahead with the car park to your left and on passing the large rectangular grey/blue "Llandough Trading Estate" sign leave the car park through a gap in the fence ahead next to a footpath way-mark post.
- ST 16728 73641. Cross the road heading diagonally left to climb a well worn path going up to the left across the grass verge to emerge on the pavement beside Penarth Road. Go left across the bridge.

The yellow and red brick building across the road is The Pumping station. It is grade 2 listed, and a fine example of an Edwardian sewerage pumping station, built between 1907/1910.

- On reaching a pedestrian crossing cross Penarth Road and then turn left. Just before the bus shelter take the path on the right marked "Ely Trail". Please be aware this busy path is shared by many runners, cyclists, walkers and dog walkers. The path soon runs alongside the river before passing underneath a railway line. Stay on the main tarmac path by the river to then pass under the flyover to join a road (Dunleavy Drive). Turn right to walk along the right hand pavement for just over 600 metres and then turn right onto Watkiss Way at the traffic lights just before the Harvester public house. As you approach some tall flats with balconies and some wood cladding, turn right along the red brick path to walk beside the river. Stay on the path to pass the flats and boat moorings and at the end of the path turn right onto the Pont Y Werin footbridge.
- ST 17704 72802. Cross the bridge and turn right to join the road up to the roundabout where you again turn right to cross the bridge over the railway line and walk beside the A4160. At the traffic lights initially cross towards Barons Court, but on the third (final) traffic island turn left to cross the A4160 towards the house above the high cutting. On the pavement turn right and immediately fork left to take the tarmac path across the grass. Cross an access road and take Cogan Pill Road opposite. Stay on Cogan Pill Road as it becomes a pleasantly wooded Restricted Byway and eventually comes out by the flats at Tuscan Close. Here turn left to go uphill past Ilandough Primary School and reach Penlan Road. Turn right for around 200 metres to return to St. Dochdwy's Church. If you started your walk from the car park continue past the church and retrace your steps to King George V Playing Field.

**Figures from Cotswold Archaeology.*