

Llandough, Rivers Ely and Taff, Cardiff Bay & Penarth Marina

nearly 8.5 miles, 4hrs. 15 mins
(Or 7 miles if using a water bus)

By Penarth & District Ramblers for Llandough Community Council

An extended version of the Llandough, Celtic cross and Ely River walk. Mainly on good well surfaced paths and pavements. Toilets and cafes are available at Cardiff Bay, and if you're feeling tired the water bus is a fun way to shorten the walk. 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.

Map: O.S. Explorer 151

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

- (ST 16758 73279). To visit the Celtic Cross enter the churchyard and follow the path towards the church. As you approach the church door turn right and head for the old stone, square sided, pillar (no cross at the top) to the right of the church. Now return to the church gate.
- 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, crossing 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 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, and on reaching a pedestrian crossing, go across 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 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 to reach the Pont Y Werin footbridge. (*At the time of writing, March 2017, the path*

left from Pont Y Werin is temporarily closed for building work. If it is still closed retrace your steps for 110 metres and then turn right on the wide path just before the flyover. Upon reaching the road turn right and continue along Watkiss Way to pass the International White Water Centre, then follow the directions from "Go straight across" below.

- Turn left, away from Pont Y Werin bridge and on reaching the road, turn right along Watkiss Way. Go straight across at the roundabout onto Empire Way, then cross Empire Way at the pedestrian lights. Turn right on the pavement and then take the left hand fork as the pavement splits into two to reach a car park. Cross the car park heading diagonally left towards the edge of the bay at the far left hand corner, and a blue direction post with lots of direction arrows. Turn left onto the boardwalk around the edge of bay. *N.B. the boardwalk can be very slippery during bad weather. Please also be aware that the paths around the bay are also used by joggers and cyclists.* At the end of the boardwalk turn right to continue on the path around the bay. The path curves around and then goes under the busy A4232 road-bridge to follow the Taff River towards Cardiff City Centre. Go past an open grassed area and follow the path to the right just before reaching some flats. Further on when the path joins a road for a few metres, go past a small car park on your right before turning right just before the next flats to remain by the river. Eventually the path turns away from the river to emerge on Clarence Road. Here turn right along the pavement, cross the bridge and then turn right into Clarence Embankment (ST 18624 74612).
- Follow Clarence Embankment for 300 metres, and when the road bears left continue straight ahead through the large metal gates into Hamadryad Park. Follow the tarmac path alongside a stone wall to go around the park adjacent to the river, and then at the far side, away from the river and under the A4232 road. Leaving through the gates of the park continue straight ahead to a roundabout. Cross the road entrance to Cardiff Yacht Club to the right of the roundabout and then take the edged path into Cardiff Wetlands Reserve. At the dressed stone Cadir Idris sculpture follow left along the wide gravel path.
If you wish to make a deviation to view the birds that frequent the wetlands, turn right at this point onto the boardwalk which also overlooks the boats moored at Cardiff Yacht Club.
- At the end of the reserve, by a small roundabout with a rope sculpture, turn right along the pavement. At the next roundabout go left and then down some steps to take the boardwalk that circumnavigates the St. David's Hotel. At the end of the boardwalk go up the steps and turn right to walk beside the old Mount Stuart Graving Dock.
During bad weather the boardwalk around the St. David's Hotel may be closed. In this case when you reach the roundabout with the rope sculpture continue straight ahead, taking the path through the car park towards a block of apartments at Ocean Reach. Cross the road and turn left for a few metres, then turn right to then reach the edge of the Mount Stuart Graving Dock. Turn left to follow the path beside the dock.

- Turn right at the end of the dock to pass Techniquest to your left, and then continue ahead passing the end of the next dock and a fine red brick building (currently The Mount Stuart pub) to your right. Go through a wide gap in the tall railings ahead and turn right to reach the waterfront at the Mermaid Quay. Turn left. You can either take the higher pavement or lower walkway around the edge of the bay.

Water buses are available here to take you to Penarth Marina if you would prefer a shorter walk. If using the boat follow the instructions from "At the end of the barrage turn right on the pavement " when you disembark. There are public toilets at the nearby Red Dragon Centre, the Community Toilet scheme means the public can use the toilets at Terra Nova, Mermaid Quay, and at the assembly building there is "a cloakroom facility for public use in the scanner area on Assembly sitting days".

- Continue through the Mermaid Quay with the bay to your right and, if walking the pavement rather than the boardwalk, cross the footbridge over Roald Dahl Plass to pass the ornate red brick Pierhead Building, The National Assembly for Wales and further on the Norwegian Church. Go past the Scott Memorial, then cross the bridge and follow Tardis Walk to pass the entrance to "The Doctor Who Experience". At the mini roundabout take the path to the right, watching out for cyclists and runners coming in both directions. When the path joins a road follow the footpath a little to the right of the road passing a skate boarding area on your left. The open path crosses the Cardiff Barrage and the dock gates. If the dock gates are open to let shipping pass you will need to wait. At the end of the barrage turn right on the pavement opposite the Custom House (ST 18912 72474).
- Take the path on the right in front of the houses and then turn left to enter Penarth Marina. At the lock gates turn right to go through a pedestrian gate and across the lock gate. If boats are entering or leaving the marina this lock will be opened manually so please take care. Continue left and follow the path beside the marina and at the end of the first dock turn left to stay beside the edge of the marina. When the path joins a road continue ahead beside the marina to pass the end of the dock and a row of houses. At the road junction turn left along Penarth Portway and after a couple of metres, cross the road to take the angled path into the grassed area. Ignore a cross path with steps to the right and follow as the path then turns to the right and runs along the length of the green. On reaching a car park turn right to go through the car park and cross the road to the pavement by the flats.
- Turn left on the pavement to follow it to a roundabout, then keep going uphill. At a second roundabout 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 go 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 llandough 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.