

Walk: NOC 10

Location: Mountain walks between Heol Senni and Ystradfelte

Directions: You are parking in the same place as for Walk NOC 02: Aim for Ystradfelte but set your sat nav to travel to Ystradfelte via Heol Senni. This should work.

Or follow these directions: Turn right out of castle heading north. With the Crai Reservoir on your left, take left turning up a narrow lane, signposted Heol Senni. Just before you get to Heol Senni (a clutch of houses after the small bridge) and before the bridge over a stream, turn right up a very narrow single track road and continue for some miles. You are hemmed in by hedges on either side, so drive carefully in case you meet someone coming the other way. No passing places for some distance here.

Eventually you cross over a rickety looking bridge and come to a T junction. Turn right. You carry on uphill and after a few hundred yards the road doubles back on itself a couple of times as you climb up a steep switch-back mountain road (there are some nice views looking back on your left, the way you came).

The road levels out at the top of the mountain and there are various spots you can walk up here, including a short walk off to the right. However for the purposes of walk NOC 02, you continue for maybe two miles (approx guess) and after a relatively long straight stretch going down the valley, you turn left into a picnic woodland car parking area. This is on your left at the end of the long straight stretch, opposite a field gate leading off to your right, and before the road curves as it goes down the mountain side. If you get to a bridge in a wooded area you have gone too far.

Distance (miles): 21.1 by car
 Time (hours): 38 minutes
 Length of Walk: 1-2 hours with benefit of scenic drive to get to it.
 Dates Walked: 02/08/2008

Parking: Free

Pop in to: Nothing up here at all: very remote, desolate / scenic.

Description: Option One - Woodland Walk: Head over the foot bridge in front of where you have parked and turn left into the woodland. You can then do your own circular walks in the woodland, by heading off on a left path and then following your way around to the right until you rejoin the main path.

Option Two – Mountain Walk with views: An interesting and more laborious alternative is to turn off left after the bridge (or you can turn off left before the bridge).

There is a most promising looking tarmac path off to the left after the bridge which you can see in the first picture below. However, this is just to tempt you. Do not be fooled into thinking you can avoid proper walking boots. You very quickly end up trudging over a steep stony mountain track, crossing a stone wall and wire fence arrangement, manoeuvring some boggy areas with very uneven ground, including navigating another stream, before eventually finding your way on to the main well-walked mountain path to the top of the mountain. If you opt for the deceptively

reassuring path on the left, you will need to do a left pretty quickly to gain the mountain path.

If you cross the fence before the bridge, that is not much better either. I recall there was a stile but then you end up on rough ground. You have to look for the mountain path, but once you find it, it is wide and clear and you simply follow it to the high point.

Someone may have improved the approach path since I last went on this walk.

On this second walk you are effectively walking parallel to the road you drove down, with a steady uphill walk, ending in some superb views. Indeed, the views are spectacular and well worth it, even though you do have to head back exactly the same way you came.

Pictures taken on 02/08/2008:

Note the bridge leading off to the left. Promising looking isn't it? When I last did this walk, it dead ended and you had to make your own way across open mountain to the proper track for your mountain walk with views. Off to the right you can see there is a nice inviting forest track, which you follow through a gate for the forest walk. The forest walk is nothing special however, but pleasant enough for a more leisurely (circular) walk.



Here we start off on open mountain, left after the bridge (pic on left), before finding our clear mountain path to follow to top (pic on right).



