

Teithiau Penllyn

Cylchdaith Y Bala

Cymdeithas Twristiaeth y Bala a Phenllyn

Go Bala

A circular trail around Bala

Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association

Cerdded | Scenic Walk



SUMMARY

A circular walk around the town, with views of the lake, rivers, mountains and "the caves".

The first part of the walk is generally level on paths; the second part is over farmland with some steep, but short sections and many stiles. Near fast flowing rivers with rapidly changing water levels, slippery banks and crossing/along busy roads, children must be supervised.

Other Trails are available which explore the history of Bala in more detail Bala & Penllyn Tourism Association have checked the information given in this leaflet but changes may occur. You must be responsible for your own safety, please heed warnings, follow the Country Code & see Safety and Conduct information at www.GoBala.org (Information/Safety)

Tourist Information:	www.VisitBala.org or www.visitsnowdonia.info
Trails Information:	www.GoBala.org

Plan your Trip

Distance	6½ km (4 miles)
Ascent	170 m (560 ft)
Time	2 - 2½ hours
Map	OS OL23 or OL18
Terrain	Paths, busy-roads, farmland, many stiles
Start / Finish	Leisure Centre, Pensarn Rd., Bala, LL23 7SR SH922355
Parking	At start (Pay & Display)
Refreshments	Leisure Centre and in Bala
Public Transport	www.GoBala.org (Information/Public Transport)
Important	Near fast flowing water, slippery slopes and crossing/along busy roads, children must be supervised

www.GoBala.org

The Trail

- 1** **START** Leave Leisure Centre, towards lake & left onto elevated path (flood bank) **A**
- 2** Right onto minor road, then right to join main road B4391
- 3** After 50m cross road and take waymarked path on flood bank with River Dee on right **B**
- 4** Pass the confluence of Rivers Dee & Tryweryn **C**, keep on waymarked path (flood bank), now with River Tryweryn on right **D E F**, to road-bridge (A494)
- 5** At bridge (Pont y Bala), cross road (A494) & turn left
- 6** At cross-roads turn right on to A4212 (Trawsfynydd) passing Christ Church **G** and the secondary school Ysgol y Berwyn, which are on the left
- 7** After Cysgod y Coleg & before Coleg y Bala **H**, turn right into lane (waymarked) and follow to former Mill on the River Tryweryn
- 8** Before the Mill **I** turn left into field then right, follow waymarked path (Mill on right), note the leet (mill race) on the right **I**
- 9** Go through wood following waymarkers - now going away from river
- 10** Follow waymarkers over field (parallel to river) & then back to the river (**Danger:** note steep slope to river) - across the river is the principal house of the Rhiwlas Estate
- 11** Continue along river (waymarked) and up a steep bank, which can be slippery when wet, then to road (A4212)
- 12** Cross the road & turn left, go along road to lay-by, into field then left (waymarked)
- 13** At field corner, continue ahead between houses - the house on right is Penrhiw **J**



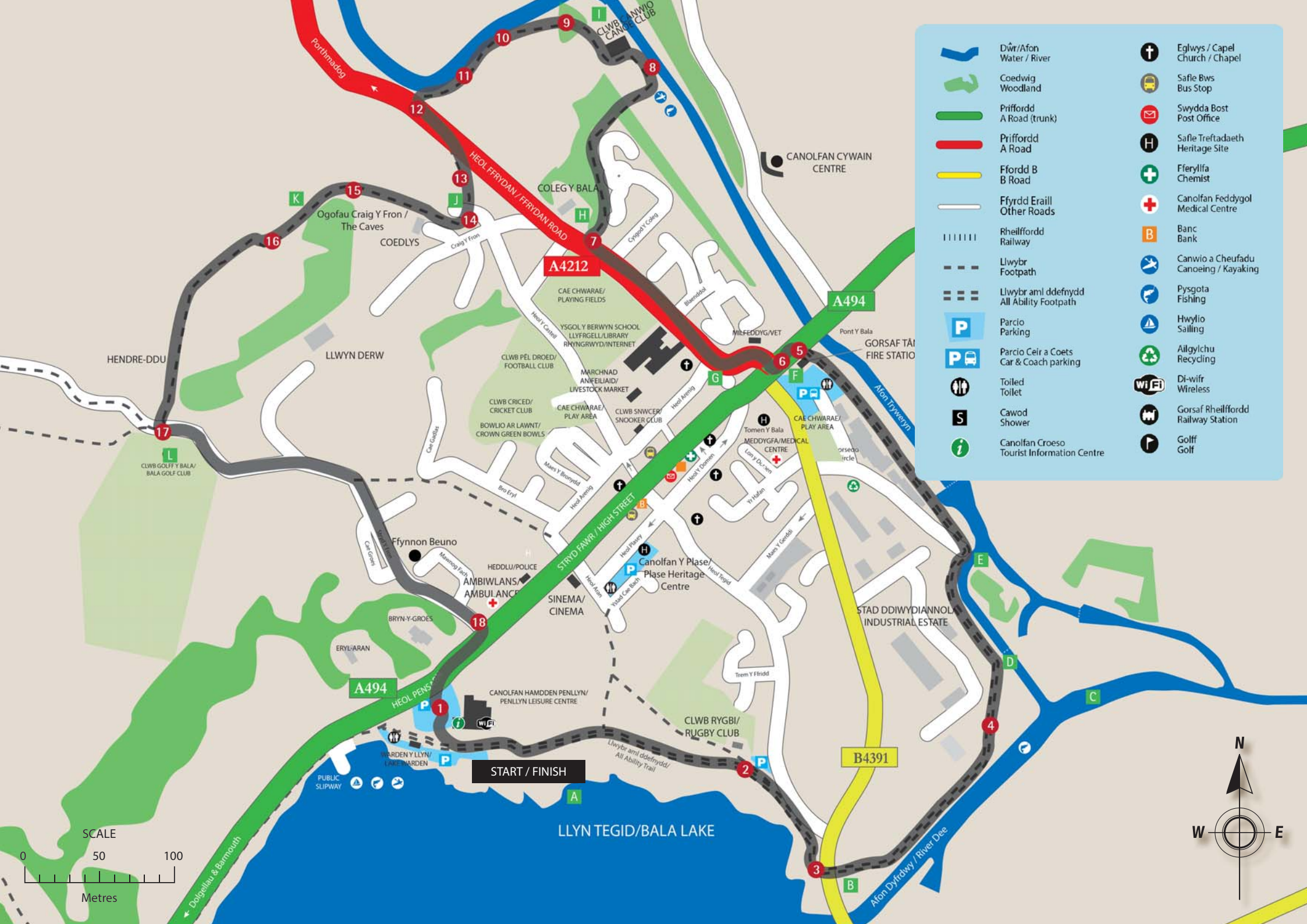
- 14** Left at the access road of Penrhiw then immediately turn right onto a waymarked footpath with hedge on left side. Continue on waymarked path over a field
- 15** Over a stile to reach Craig y Fron **K**, known as "the caves", a stone quarry, then follow a faint path keeping the caves on your left, continue on waymarked faint path with old wall/hedge on left
- 16** Pass a ruined building, through an open gate, then bear right, downhill to and along the fence/hedge on right. At waymarked gate/stile continue passing a white house on right (Hendre ddu) to minor road
- 17** At minor road turn left, initially uphill pass Golf Club **L** continue on road downhill. Views of Bala and Berwyn mountains in the distance. On your left will be Ffynnon Beuno (The site of St Beuno's Well)
- 18** At main road (A494) turn right and you will see the Leisure Centre

FINISH



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig: Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardalwedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe Investing in Rural Areas





A Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake), is the largest natural lake in Wales, approx. 3½ miles long and 150ft deep, lies on the Bala – Tallyllyn geological fault-line. The basin was probably created by glacial erosion during the Ice Age. The Gwyniad, a survivor of the Ice-Age, is a species of fish, similar in features to a herring, is unique to the lake.



Local legend relates that the lake was formed as punishment for the misdemeanours of Tegid Foel (Tegid the Bald) – a local prince. His mansion, with all its occupants, were reputedly drowned one night during a drunken orgy, after guards neglected replacing the cover on a magic well which would otherwise overflow at night. Only one survived – an itinerant harpist who was led out of danger by a small bird calling repeatedly, “Vengeance has come...”. When he awoke on the hillside in the morning he saw a huge lake filling the valley with his harp floating on its surface! More recent tales exist about a monster lurking in the dark depths of the lake. In 1995 a Japanese mini submarine conducted a survey beneath the waters but did not find a monster!

B The name Bala means “the outlet point of a lake” and the Dee in Welsh is Dyfrdwy meaning “Holy Waters”. It was named in Celtic times when rivers and lakes were worshipped.

In 1805, Thomas Telford constructed a set of sluices immediately downstream of the lake to control the lake level and supply water to the Llangollen Canal for the Pontcysyllte Aquaduct. Although the sluices have been replaced the principle of low flow regulation, still applies, and water is abstracted from the river Dee as far as Chester, to 3 million people daily.

In the 50's the Bala Lake Scheme was built lowering the natural lake outlet by 1.5 m significantly reducing the flooding that affected Bala. A new road bridge was constructed and the old multi-arched bridge now stands high and dry. The flood-banks which form part of the walk also assist in alleviating flooding.

C The piers of the old railway bridge can be seen where the Bala – Blaenau Ffestiniog branch line crossed the River Dee. Downstream are the sluice gates which are the control part of the Dee Regulation Scheme where water is released from Bala Lake, and supported by releases from Llyn Celyn (via the Afon Tryweryn). The water that you see in the Tryweryn may of already been used to generate electricity (hydro-power), used recreationally for fishing, canoeing, rafting and water safety training.

D Weir Y as named during construction of the Bala Lake Scheme and refurbished in 2012 - the centre section is to assist fish to move upstream for spawning. If you are lucky especially during the autumn you may see salmon jumping in this area.

E Going through 2 gates you cross the old railway line, now the access road to Bala Sluices, you will also see the diverted section of the Afon Tryweryn. In periods of heavy rainfall flood water is allowed to flow over another Weir known as Z. (Not visible from here.) Along the flood bank is Weir X, also refurbished in 2012. On the opposite bank you can see the measurement hut, from here river level data is sent to the Dee Regulation telemetry system.

F The Green Car park - was the site of the Bala railway station on the Blaenau Ffestiniog branch line.

G On the left is Christ Church the parish church of Bala, which was built in 1858.



H Colleg y Bala is the Children and Youth Centre of the Presbyterian Church of Wales, which was built in 1837.

I Woollen Mill (Felin): During the 18thC one of the main industries of the town was the knitted stocking trade. Bala's wool trade was of prime importance. A cottage industry with substantial turnover, it supplied stockings for George III to ease his rheumatism and, later, to Prince Albert. By 1830s 32,000 dozen pairs of stockings and 5,500 dozen pairs of woollen mittens sold annually.

The old Woollen Mill has been rebuilt and is now used by the Canoe Club, who has a slalom training course on the River Tryweryn. The river was host to the International White Water Canoe Championships in both 1981 and 1995 - now the National Whitewater Centre is located upstream, near Frongoch.

The “leet” (mill race) can be seen. Water was taken from above the “Mill Falls” to drive the mill wheel. The leet is now used as part of the portage for canoeists avoiding the Mill Falls.



J Penrhiw was the home of Betsi Cadwaladr, a nurse who worked alongside Florence Nightingale attending to the needs of wounded soldiers during the Crimean War in 1854. (See Betsi Cadwaladr Trail).

K Craig-y-Fron, known as “the caves” provided stone for many buildings in Bala, including Coleg-y-Bala. The excavations have left a cavern with the roof supported by regular pillars of rock, known locally as “the caves”. The rock type is tuff (a rock formed from volcanic ash), sandwiched between mudstone (above) and siltstone (below). The internal roof (mudstone) has ripples - indicating sedimentary rock formed under the sea.

L The Golf Club has a challenging course and splendid views – visitors are welcome.