



Cerdded Llwybr | Walking Trail 

SUMMARY

Choose a circular walk around Bala Lake or a shorter linear walk using the Bala Lake Railway (seasonal) or local bus service (Llanuwchllyn-Bala) for return transport. The walks use footpaths on the low-lying hill around the lake with many stiles. There are excellent views of the lake, the surrounding mountains and much further.

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](http://www.GoBala.org) (information/safety)

Tourist Information:	<a href="http://www.VisitBala.org">www.VisitBala.org</a> or <a href="http://www.visitsnowdonia.info">www.visitsnowdonia.info</a>
Trails Information:	<a href="http://www.GoBala.org">www.GoBala.org</a>

Plan your Trip

Route	Many different routes available
Map	OS OL23
Terrain	Paths, short sections on busy-roads, farmland, moorland.
Start / Finish	Leisure Centre, Pensarn Rd., Bala, LL23 7SR, SH922355 or SNPA car park
Start / Finish	Llanuwchllyn, Bala Lake Railway LL23 7DD, Commemorative Monument (A494)
Parking (Bala)	At Leisure Centre (Pay & Display) or adjacent SNPA Car Park on Llyn Tegid Foreshore (Pay & Display)
Parking (Llanuwchllyn)	A494 or Pont-y-Pandy
Toilets	Leisure Centre; Llangower (lake car park); Llanuwchllyn
Refreshments	Leisure Centre Café, Llanuwchllyn
Public Transport	Bala Lake Railway (seasonal, see contacts) <a href="http://www.GoBala.org">www.GoBala.org</a> (Information/Public Transport)
Important	Over steep & wet moorland, many stiles, boots recommended. Short sections on busy road (A494). Over farmland with cattle and perhaps a bull.

Trails around Bala Lake

There are many footpaths around the lake which follow marked routes, such as the Leisure Network or you can find your own route, using an OS map and the map overleaf for guidance. In addition, there is an all ability trail along the A494 (Bala to Glanllyn, planned to be extended to Llanuwchllyn) and paths along the lake foreshore although these can be overgrown or flooded at times. The intermediate stations of the Bala Lake Railway (seasonal) can be used for a shorter walk, e.g. Bala to Llangower or Llanuwchllyn to Llangower.

Some suggested walks starting at the Leisure Centre or SNPA car park in Bala or Llanuwchllyn:

- A short circular walk using the footpaths (see OS map)
- A linear walk using the footpaths adjacent to the lake (see OS map) with return using the scenic Bala Lake Railway (seasonal) which runs along the edge of the lake
- Follow the Leisure Network which is well marked
- If you are more adventurous try the "High Route"

The Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA) **Leisure Network** is well marked with blue signs and comprises:

- Northern Section: Bala-Llanycil-Llanuwchllyn
- Southern Section: Llanuwchllyn- Bala

Distances & Times – Leisure Network

	Llanuwchllyn - Bala	Bala - Llanuwchllyn	Circular
Distance	11 km (6½ miles)	12 km (7 miles)	21 km (14 miles)
Ascent	230 m (750 ft)	440 m (1,450 ft)	670 m (2,200 ft)
Time	3 - 4 hours	4 - 5 hours	7 - 9 hours

The High Route is based on the Bala Challenge - an annual charity walk, organised by the Bala & Penllyn Rotary Club. As the route goes higher than the leisure Network there are better views. On the east side of the lake it ascends to Craig-y-Allor (470 m) and then descends through forest, while on the west side it crosses pathless moorland (Gwastadros) with

the highest point Moel-y-Garnedd (360 m) where there are all-round views. For the High Route, good map reading skills are required and the terrain is more demanding, particularly Gwastadros.

Distances & Times – High Route

	Bala - Llanuwchllyn	Llanuwchllyn - Bala	Circular
Distance	13½ km (8½ miles)	10½ km (6½ miles)	24 km (15 miles)
Ascent	520 m (1,700 ft)	300 m (990 ft)	820 m (2,690 ft)
Time	4 - 5 hours	3 - 4 hours	7 - 9 hours

The Trails

For the Leisure Network use the SNPA map and related information with OS map OL23.

For the High Route use the map overleaf to identify the route with OS map OL23.

Contacts

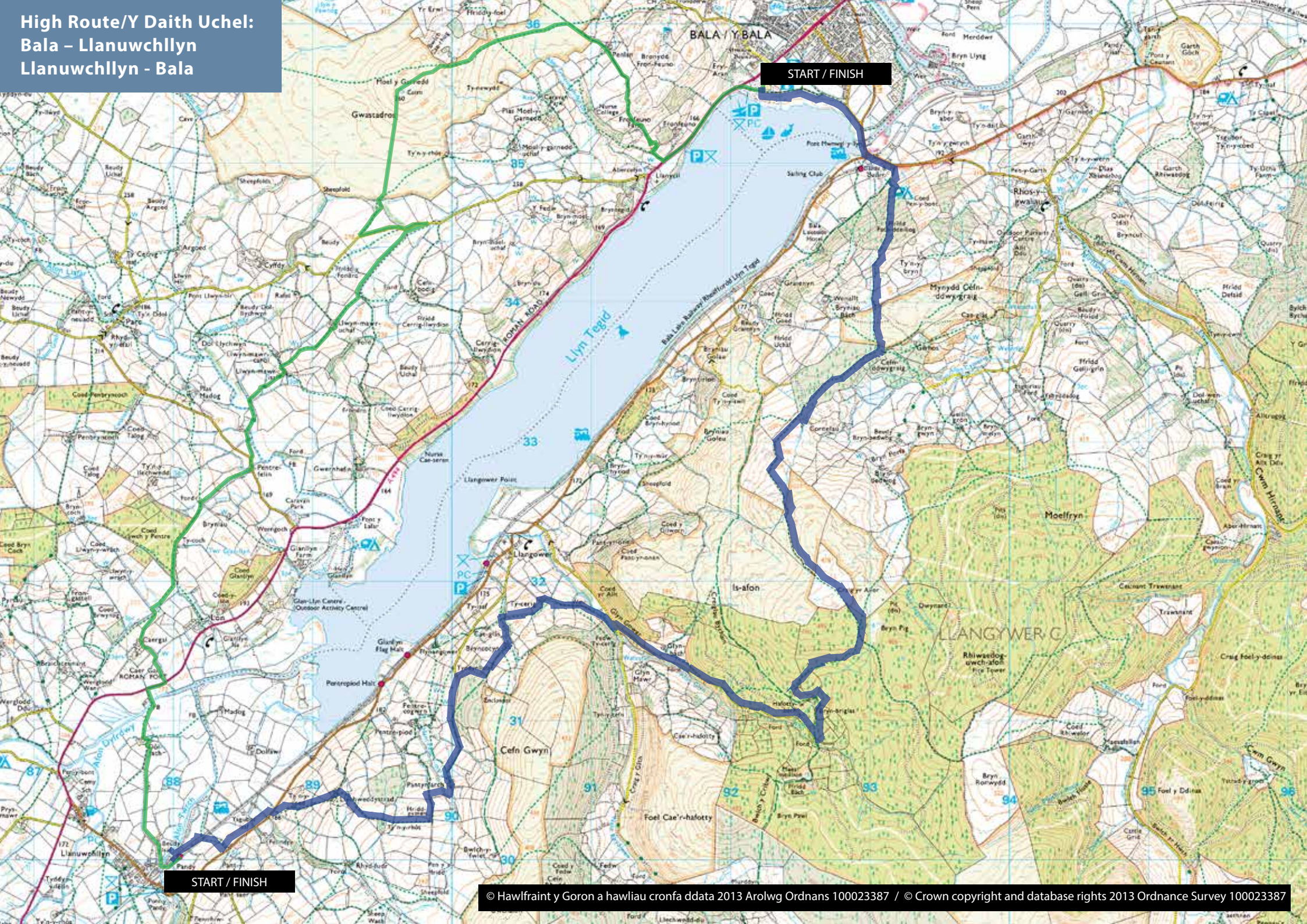
- SNPA Lake Warden:  
01678 520 626; [www.eryri-npa.gov.uk](http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk)
- Bala Lake Railway:  
01678 540666; [www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk](http://www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk)
- Eagles Inn, Llanuwchllyn:  
01678 540278, <http://yr-eagles.co.uk>



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



High Route/Y Daith Uchel:  
Bala – Llanuwchllyn  
Llanuwchllyn - Bala



START / FINISH

START / FINISH

**Bala Lake** (Llyn Tegid) is the largest natural lake in Wales. The lake is approx. 3½ miles (6 km) long, ¾ mile (1 km) wide, over 140 feet (43 m) deep in places with an area of 10.24km<sup>2</sup> or 1,120 hectare.

The principal mountain ranges around the lake are:

- To the south is the **Aran mountain range** the Aran ridge rises from the southern end of the lake to Aran Benllyn (2,904 ft/885 m) and Aran Fawddwy (2,969 ft/905 m).
- To the west is the **Arenig mountain range** with Arenig Fawr (2,800 ft/854 m) one the principal summits.
- To the north-east and east is the **Berwyn mountain range**.

Bala lake lies in a broad valley, originally a major geological fault and subsequently depended by glaciation. The lake was much larger than it is now and was previously probably constrained by glacial moraine until erosion allowed the lake to reduce in water level and size and has silted-up. The northern end of the lake extended significantly further than now - including the area now occupied by Bala town and to Bodweni (north-east of Bala). The south end of the lake also extended much further, probably to Llanuwchllyn.

The mountains were originally formed some 500 million years ago, the lower ones were laid-down under the sea while the higher more rugged mountains were the result of volcanic action including the Aran and Arenig mountain ranges.

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 – know as Tegi. In 1995 a Japanese mini submarine conducted a survey beneath the waters but did not find a monster! The name Bala means “the outlet point of a lake”

**Wildlife**

A wealth of wildlife and plants reside in Bala Lake and surrounding area. The lake is a SSSI and a Ramsar wetlands site of international importance. The lake has 14 species of fish, including the **Gwyniad**, a species of whitefish which is unique to Bala Lake. The shoreline is the only location on mainland UK where this glutinous snail is found. Otters are present at Llyn Tegid throughout the year. The tributary rivers and streams also provide otters with a wealth of feeding and breeding habitats. So when walking these areas keep a watchful eye on any bank side or water disturbance. You may just catch a glimpse of an otter or even a mink!

Many ducks can be seen here too, including the mallard,



moorhen, coot, teal, tufted duck and goldeneye. The pochard and widgeon spend the winter here, while the great crested grebe & little grebe uses the lake as a breeding place. You may also see geese such as: Canada geese and greylag geese.

Along the shoreline of the lake you may see the following birds: common sandpiper, little ringed plover, pied-flycatcher, long tailed tit, willow warbler, reed bunting, tree creeper and nuthatch.

Over the years, some 139 species of birds have been seen around the lake, including some unusual ones such as the great-northern diver, Bewick swans and the green sandpiper. More common birds, that you may see, include birds of prey such as: raven, red kite, buzzards, hen harrier, peregrine falcon, goshawk, kestrel, merlin and sparrow-hawk. Other species of birds include: barn-owl, tawny-owl, woodpeckers, skylark, heron, kingfisher, dipper and wagtail.

As you walk around the lake you may see some of the mammals that live there, such as: otter, grey squirrel, rabbit, brown hare, badger, hedgehog, mole, fox, mink, stoat, weasel, shrew, vole, woodmouse, pole cat.

