

Six traffic-free bike rides in North and Mid Wales



Suitable for all abilities

Easy and enjoyable rides

As custodian of the **National Cycle Network** we've put together some of our favourite traffic-free bike rides of Mid and North Wales.

Pedal through picturesque woodland, alongside peaceful waterways, and admire the dramatic mountains and architectural wonders this region has to offer.

Key to route maps:



Bike Hire



Pub



Café



Restaurant



Routes Menu

Tap on a desired route below or scroll

MENU



Route one – Powys

Elan Valley Trail



Route two – Gwynedd

Mawddach Trail



Route three – Denbighshire

Llangollen Canal



Route four – Gwynedd

Lôn Las Menai



Route five – Anglesey

Lôn Las Cefni



Route six – Conwy

North Wales Coast Cycle Route



Top Tips



Buy the guide





Route one

Elan Valley Trail, Powys



Elan Valley Trail

Taking in four impressive reservoirs and nestled amid the majestic Cambrian Mountains, this route is a great way to experience a beautiful Mid-Wales valley. From Cwmdauddwr, pass the Rhayader Tunnel Nature Reserve and consider stopping off at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre. There's a climb through fragrant conifer woods by Garreg-ddu Reservoir, and toward the end of the trail the views become even more commanding.



Key route information:

Start:	Rhayader
Finish:	Pen-y-garreg reservoir
Time:	1 - 2 hours
Length of ride:	8.5 miles

Route one

Elan Valley Trail, Powys

MENU



Start

Cwmdauddwr

Nr. Rhayador
LD6 5AS

GPS: 52.298374,
-3.517297

Finish

Craif-goch dam

Craig-goch dam
Pen-y-garreg reservoir
Nr. Rhayader
LD6 5HS

GPS: 52.304644,
-3.624078

Terrain, gradients and access

Gently climbing along tarmac path and stony trail, becoming more rugged in the second half. Several gates and small roads to cross.

Ideas for things to do:

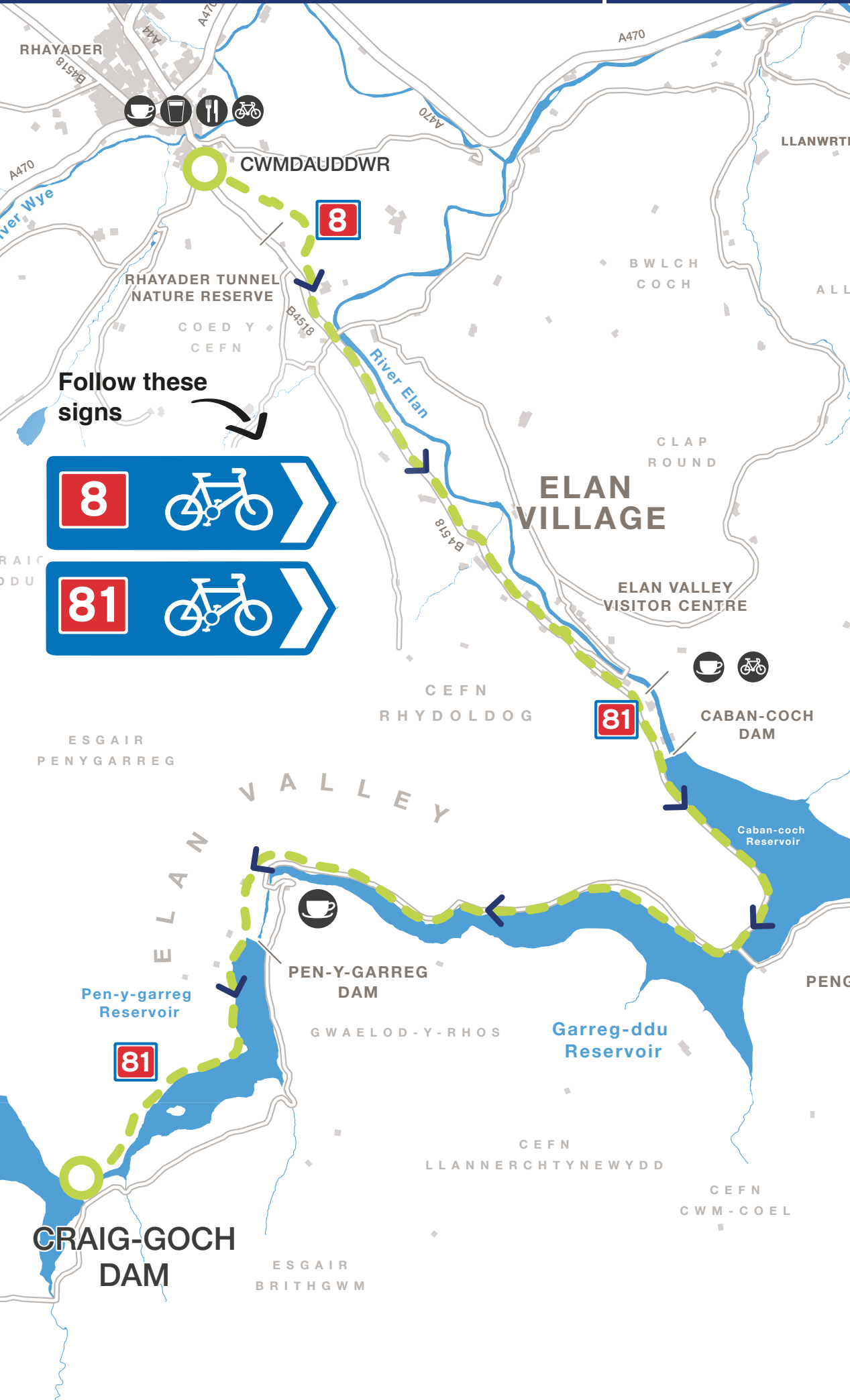
- Visit Gigrin Farm near Rhayader for the afternoon feeding of Red Kites – and stop off at their coffee shop and picnic area
- To extend your ride from Rhayader cycle another 10-miles on National Route 825 to reach the National Cycle Museum at Llandrindod Wells, or join National Route 8 to begin the 84-mile circular Radnor Ring
- Fuel up for your ride with some pub grub at the 16th-century Triangle Inn at the start of the Elan Valley

Route one

Elan Valley Trail, Powys



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Route two

Mawddach Trail, Gwynedd



Mawddach Trail

In an area rich in bird life, with Cadair Idris glowering in the distance, this is amongst the most picturesque rides in Wales.

Starting at Barmouth's sandy beach, you'll cross the wooden bridge and ride past the Arthog Bog RSPB Nature Reserve. The route curves pleasantly along the banks of the estuary, with plenty of places for a potential picnic stop, before Dolgellau's grey stone buildings herald the ride's end.



Key route information:

Start: Barmouth

Finish: Dolgellau

Time: 1 - 2 hours

Length of ride: 9.5 miles



Start

Barmouth seafront

The Promenade
Barmouth
LL42 1NF

[GPS: 52.721127,
-4.056102](#)

Finish

Marian Mawr car park

Dolgellau
LL40 1UU

[GPS: 52.744317,
-3.885401](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

Flat, wide promenade, tarmac path, and fine gravel track with some road crossings and short, on-road sections at Barmouth and Penmaenpool. Some gates to pass through.

Ideas for things to do:

- Schedule a drinks stop on the staggered terraces of the George III Hotel in Penmaenpool
- Stay in the attractive town of Dolgellau – a perfect base to explore Snowdonia and the surrounding mountain bike trails
- For a challenging return trip, follow National Route 82 from Dolgellau and tackle the long and scenic on-road climb before dropping back down to the Mawddach Trail at Arthog

Route two

Mawddach Trail, Gwynedd



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Route three

Llangollen Canal, Denbighshire



Llangollen Canal

A memorable and scenic ride through the picturesque Dee Valley and over the spectacular Pontcysyllte Aqueduct known as the 'stream in the sky'. The beautiful canal path passes through pretty towns, below medieval castles and offers stunning vistas of the lush green Vale of Llangollen. But the elegant arches of Thomas Telford's engineering masterpiece is without doubt the highlight of this extraordinary ride.



Key route information:

Start:	Llantysilio
Finish:	Chirk
Time:	1.5 - 2 hours
Length of ride:	9.5 miles



Start

Horseshoe Falls

Llantysilio
LL20 8BN

[GPS: 52.981196,
-3.196538](#)

Finish

Chirk town centre

Chirk
Wrexham
LL14 5HA

[GPS: 52.932245,
-3.056823](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

Flat tarmac and gravel path. There are some small steps at Trevor Basin and cyclists must dismount and push over Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. Take care passing under low bridges along the canal close to the water's edge and through the unlit Whitehouse Tunnel near the route's end.

Ideas for things to do:

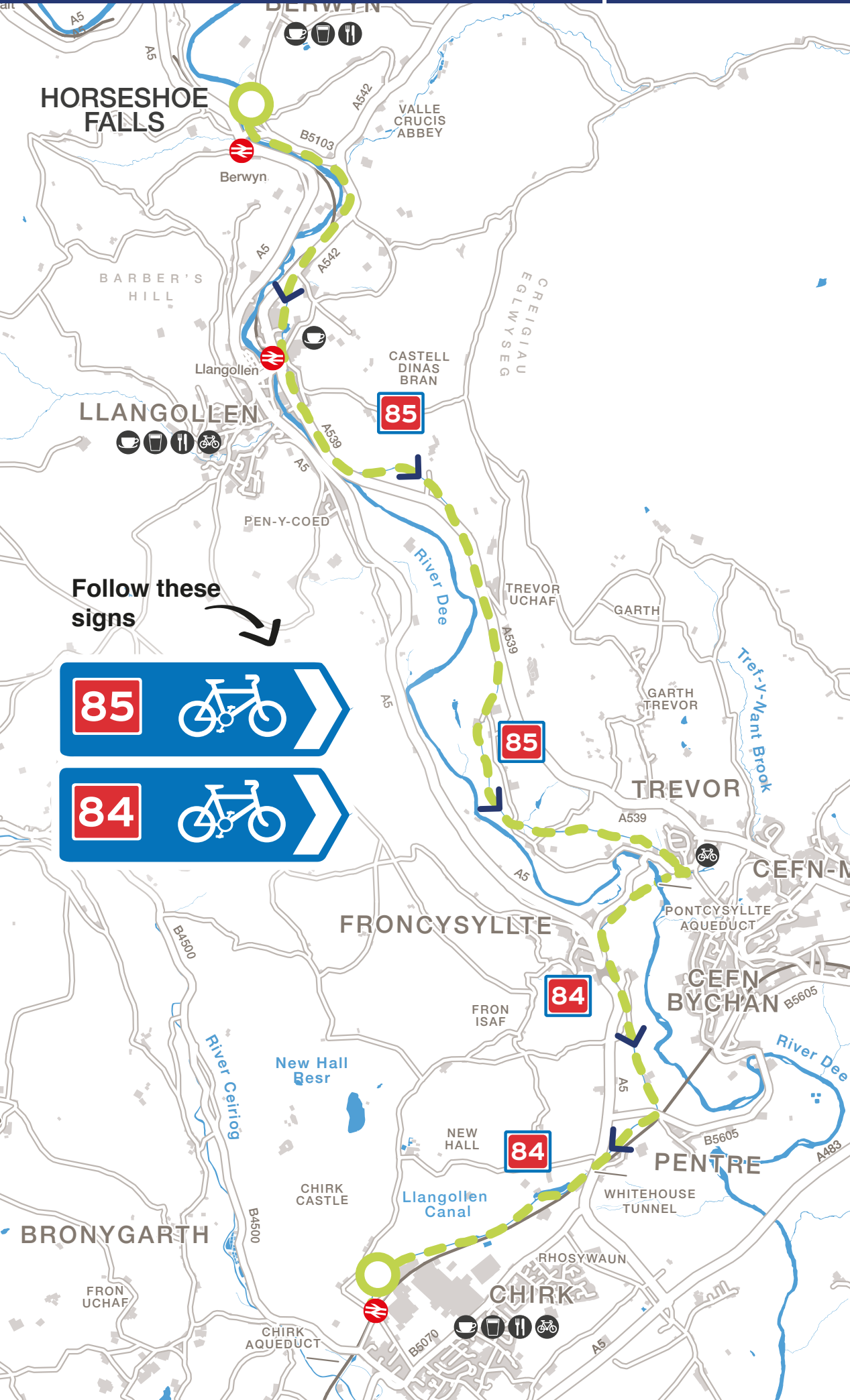
- Visit the medieval ruins of Castell Dinas Bran – home to the famous Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod every July
- Stop at the benches near Trevor Uchaf for a scenic picnic over-looking the valley
- From Chirk, continue your ride for one and a half miles on-road to visit Chirk Castle and its award-winning gardens

Route three

Llangollen Canal, Denbighshire



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Route four

Lôn Las Menai, Gwynedd



Lôn Las Menai

An easy ride, much of it along the coast, with fine views across the Menai Straits towards Anglesey. Starting on the cobbled streets of Caernarfon, the route heads north following the shimmering waters of the tidal strait before marine views give way to the shade of Gwynedd woodland. The final stretch is a short on-road section descending in to the old slate harbour of Y Felinheli.



Key route information:

Start: Caernarfon

Finish: Y Felinheli

Time: 30 mins

Length of ride: 4 miles



Start

Castle Ditch

Caernarfon
LL55 2AY

GPS: 53.139183,
-4.277392

Finish

Beach Road

Y Felinheli
LL56 4RQ

GPS: 53.184061,
-4.211088

Terrain, gradients and access

Mostly flat tarmac path with some road crossings and short, quiet on-road sections at Caernarfon and Y Felinheli.

Ideas for things to do:

- Follow National Route 8 Lôn Las Cymru north from Y Felinheli along a mix of on-road and traffic-free route to the attractive Menai Suspension Bridge
- Book yourself into one of the watersports courses or outdoor adventure activities at Plax Menai, National Outdoor Centre for Wales
- Wander the medieval streets of Caernarfon, explore the castle and visit the award-winning Galeri Caernarfon arts venue on the waterfront

Route four

Lôn Las Menai, Gwynedd



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Route five

Lôn Las Cefni, Anglesey



Lôn Las Cefni

A bike ride through a beautifully unspoilt and remote area of north Wales from the pretty village of Malltraeth to the shores of Llyn Cefni, a reservoir and local nature reserve. The path follows alongside the River Cefni through RSPB's Malltraeth Marsh Wetland Reserve and into the lovely historic market town of Llangefni. There are sculptures to spot along the way, ancient woodland to explore and stunning views of the river as you ride above it on an impressive boardwalk.



Key route information:

Start: Malltraeth

Finish: Llyn Cefni

Time: 1 hour

Length of ride: 8 miles



Start

Malltreath

High Street
Bodrogan
LL62 5AU

[GPS: 53.192245,
-4.385573](#)

Finish

Cefni Reservoir

Llangefni
LL77 7PQ

[GPS: 53.268679,
-4.330930](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

Tarmac path and stony trail. Flat from Malltraeth village but undulating through The Dingle. A quiet, on-road section leads from Malltraeth to Pont Marquis with some road crossings at Llangefni. Beware the winds on Malltreath marshes which can make for hard cycling if it's against you.

Ideas for things to do:

- From Malltreath, follow the Lôn Las Cefni south into Newborough Forest, famous for its red squirrel population
- At the shores of Llyn Cefni, follow the path to the left for great views of the reservoir or take the trail to the right for a nice picnic spot
- Explore the ancient woodland of The Dingle and spot its hidden sculptures and plentiful wildlife

Route five

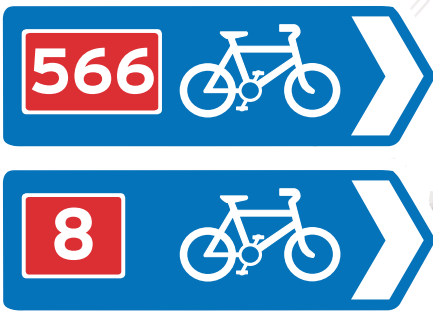
Lôn Las Cefni, Anglesey



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Follow these signs





Route six

North Wales Coast Cycle Route,
Conwy



North Wales Coast Cycle Route

A long but entirely flat ride that can be split into shorter sections between the villages and towns en route. No matter the entry and finish point, this 16-mile seaside route features fantastic sea views and family-friendly beaches and attractions throughout. The path, against the mountainous backdrop of Snowdonia National Park, is a joy to ride with plenty to see and do – and lots of cafés to stop at if the coastal headwind picks up too much.



Key route information:

Start:	Prestatyn
Finish:	Rhos-on-Sea
Time:	2 hours
Length of ride:	16 miles



Start

Prestatyn train station

2 Bridge Street
Prestatyn
LL19 9BQ

[GPS: 53.336174,
-3.407551](#)

Finish

Rhos-on-Sea tourist information centre

70 Rhos Promenade
Colwyn Bay
LL28 4EN

[GPS: 53.308704,
-3.738891](#)

Terrain, gradients and access

Flat, wide concrete promenade with a couple of very short ascents and descents around Llanddulas. Short, quiet on-road section from Prestatyn train station. Be prepared for a headwind when riding westwards.

Ideas for things to do:

- Admire Colwyn Bay from the rooftop viewing area of the contemporary Porth Eirias Watersports Centre
- Visit St Trillo's Chapel, thought to be the smallest church on the British Isles seating just six people
- For a long distance challenge ride, follow the entire 105-mile North Wales coastal route from Holyhead to Chester on National Route 5

Route six

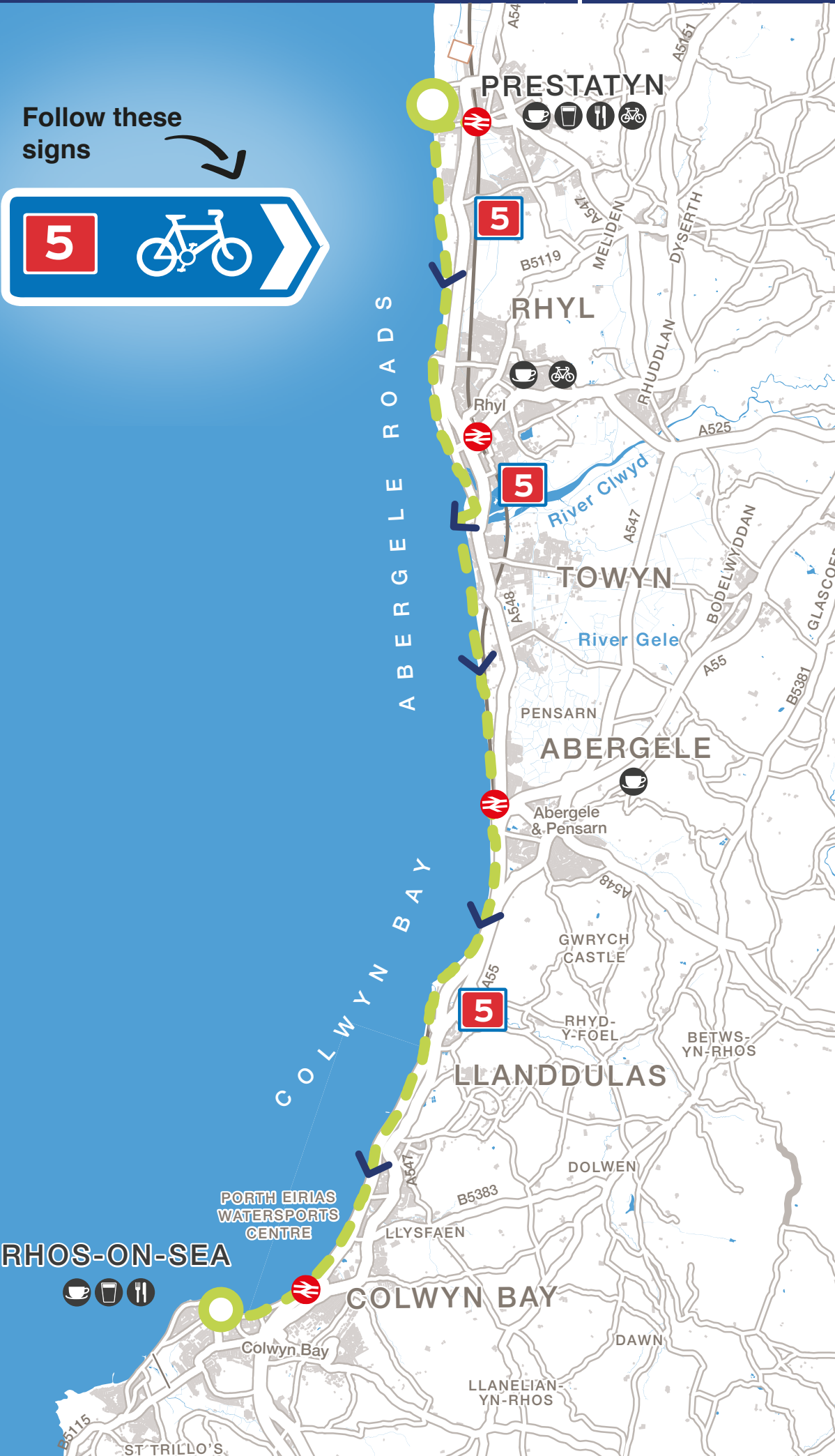
North Wales Coast Cycle Route



MENU



Follow these
signs





Bike ride checklist

You don't need special or expensive equipment to enjoy a short bike ride but here are some items you'll certainly find useful.

For you:

- A hat and suncream if it's sunny
- Waterproofs and extra layers of clothing
- Bike helmet – it's not compulsory to wear one in the UK but a well-fitted helmet is especially recommended for children
- Snacks and drinks to keep energy levels up
- Mobile phone and money

For your bike:

- Water bottle
- Puncture repair kit and pump
- Tyre levers, a bike 'multi-tool' or Allen keys and adjustable spanner
- Spare inner-tubes (saves you having to repair a puncture immediately)
- Bike lights
- Bike lock
- Bike bell – when on a shared-use path a friendly tinkle will let people know you're approaching.



Keep it safe and fun

Here are some tips to keep in mind when out on your ride:

- Let the slowest rider in your group set the pace for your ride.
- Ride in line on busy paths with any children in the middle of the adults. If there's only one adult, ride at the rear so you can keep an eye on everyone in front.
- Take extra care along any on-road sections and at road crossings. You may prefer to push your bike, especially with younger children or less experienced riders.

Plan your route



The routes in this guide are signed and easy to follow – just look out for the National Cycle Network blue signs. You can also check out your route in detail on our online map.

Check your bike



Before you set off on your ride, check your bike is in good condition. We've put together a guide to help you safety check your bike in 11 easy steps.

Fix a puncture



Thankfully, punctures don't happen often and are easy to fix yourself. All you need is a pump, puncture repair kit and a set of tyre levers. Watch our video to learn how to repair a puncture.



Please be aware that routes in this guide may not be accessible to everyone.

One of our top priorities is making the National Cycle Network accessible to everyone.

But not everyone can easily access the Network.

We work hand in hand with communities to find the best ways to remove and redesign barriers.

This is to help everyone experience the benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling in their local area.

Improving accessibility



As custodians of the National Cycle Network, we're committed to making it safe and accessible for everyone.

We deal with restrictive barriers at a local level, working with communities, local groups and landowners to design alternative solutions together.

How we remove barriers



Find out how our team go about removing barriers.

Enjoyed your ride on the National Cycle Network?

Donate to Sustrans



Please help us to look after and improve the National Cycle Network for everyone to enjoy.

Buy the guide



For more inspiring bike ride ideas buy our Traffic-Free Cycle Rides guidebook. It includes 150 hand-picked routes across the UK to help you plan the perfect day out.

Buy a regional map



Find and explore every local route and mile of the National Cycle Network in the UK with one of our pocket-sized regional cycle maps.



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Find out more at
www.sustrans.org.uk

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The rides in this guide have been suggested by Sustrans to help you enjoy traffic-free routes on the National Cycle Network. Cycle routes change over time, which may affect this collection of rides. Weather conditions may also affect path surfaces. Please use your own judgement when using the routes based upon the weather and the ability, experience and confidence levels of riders in your group.

Sustrans accepts no responsibility for any accidents or injury resulting from following these routes.

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