

Penrhys Pilgrimage Way Dinas to Penrhys



Start: Dinas Rhondda station (CF40 2PJ)

End: Our Lady of Penrhys (CF43 3PT)

Distance: 2.5 miles / 4km

1. If starting from Dinas Station, turn left to reach the bridge. Go up the path to the right of Ty Lily Mia Guest House (opposite the bridge across the river). This path, which soon becomes stepped, leads to a road (Bryn Dinas View). Keep going straight on up to a main road.
2. Cross this road (A4058, Brithweunydd Road) and continue uphill along Nile Road. You will pass a small general stores (Park Stores) on the left after about 50 yards (45m) which is the location for the Dinas Rhondda stamp. At the top you will see the gates to Garth Park.
3. Do not enter the park but instead take the lane to the right (marked Garth Farm Private Road) and follow it uphill around the edge of the park, keeping the green fence on your left.
4. At the junction, go straight up the steps on a very narrow footpath opposite, to the left of Tyddwyn bungalow. Cross the stile into the field and walk uphill, with the wall on your left.
5. At the top left of the field, cross a stile and follow the track to the right around the edge of the golf course. Soon after passing a mast on your right, you meet a wider track. All the climbing is now behind you!
6. Turn left onto the track, which is the old parish road. You will see the Old Smokey slagheap near Tylorstown to your right, also known as Llanwonno Tip or Tylorstown Tip.
7. After following the track along the ridge (and by a golf course, so look out for flying golf balls) for about 700 yards (650m), you pass a triangulation point on your right. This shows that you are 357 yards (327m) above sea level. There are tremendous views to your left, looking down over Llwynypia and beyond, and back towards Dinas and the route you have taken. Just past the Rhondda Golf Club House, you pass a bungalow. This is on the site of the old Penrhys Isolation Hospital, which was a smallpox hospital, built in 1906.
8. In the distance you can see Penrhys, with the statue of Mary the Virgin just visible in front. With binoculars it is also possible to spot the top of the holy well slightly downhill to the left. After walking about a mile (1.6 km) along the track, fork right onto a grass track immediately after the sub-station to the statue. You have reached your destination!
9. To visit the holy well (Ffynnon Mair), go downhill from the statue, passing the man-made semi-circular amphitheatre in the hillside, to a minor road. Cross the road and follow the footpath (signposted) downhill to reach a track. Turn right and follow the track to the well.
10. To enter the Penrhys Estate, where there is a shop, a fish and chip shop and a community cafe at Llanfair Uniting Church (not open every day), cross to the other side of the roundabout and

follow a footpath up the hill until you can see community facilities on your right. There is an open invitation to walkers to call into the church if it is open to rest awhile. When you've reached the Statue of Our Lady and taken in the views, you may find you need a toilet. If you walk up the hill into the estate you will find a shop called Woodys. If you ask in the shop, they will contact Llanfair Church, which is a stone's throw away, and someone will open the church facilities for you.

With thanks to Janet Sully and all who contributed to mapping the route.

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