

PENTYRCH COMMUNITY FOOTPATHS

LLWYBRAU TROED CYMUNED PENTYRCH

Pentyrch Community Council area possesses a valuable network of footpaths and rights-of-way many of which originated in very early periods of settlement. Division of arable and pasture amongst tenants produced paths between land holdings and although settlement patterns have altered over centuries, numerous pathways have survived. Their numbers have been added to by the routes made by early industries for the transport of raw materials.

The paths traverse a varied environment. The area is rich in natural tree cover, as in the woodlands at Coed Rhiw'r Ceiliog (Weathercock Hillwood), Coed y Bedw (Birch Wood) and on Garth Hill (Ridge Hill). A canopy of oak and birch occurs in association with beech, ash and holly. Plant life in the woodland and environs is dominated by bracken, the upper limits of which probably indicate the extent of the original tree line. In the undergrowth, spring flowers such as bluebells, anemones and celandine are common, with more rare species of orchids and clematis. The natural environment support a wide range of animals and birds.

Timber and minerals brought industry into the area at an early date. The presence of iron ore, resulted in the establishment of iron furnaces near the River Taff by the late 16th century. The trend continued in the larger operations of the Pentyrch Iron Company, which ceased production in the 1890's. Brickmaking and stone quarrying were also important to the local economy and quarries still exist in the area. Workers in early industries were housed in settlements such as that of Gwaelod-y-garth, where there are well preserved dwellings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Agriculture is visible in the early field patterns around Pentyrch village and in the present day forms which are typical of vale farming. Settlement here has its roots in prehistory, with cave dwellers inhabiting the cave systems on Lesser Garth.

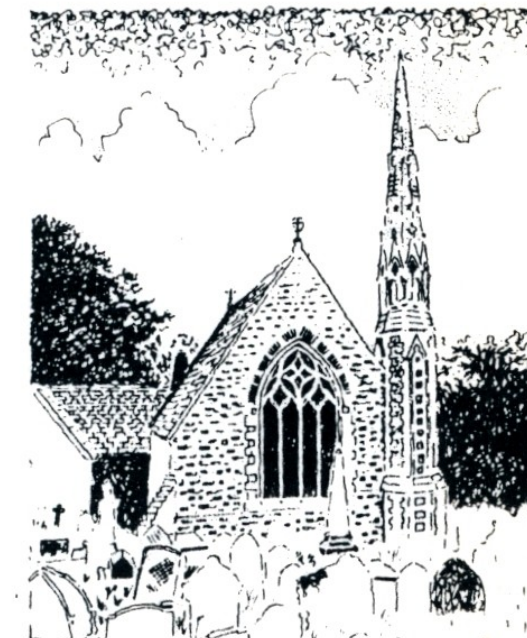
The village of Pentyrch grew around the shrine to St Catwg, a 6th Century Celtic missionary. St Catwg's Well is one of the many springs, such as Ffynnon Gruffydd (Gruffydd's Well) and Ffynnon Wen (Yew-tree Well), which occur in the district. The most famous is Ffynnon Taf / Taff's Well, a tepid spring beside the river which gave it's name to the settlement around the site.

Public footpaths and rights-of-way have been kept open by regular usage over a long period of time. This Community Footpaths project has been undertaken in that spirit, for the benefit of the local community and visitors to the area.

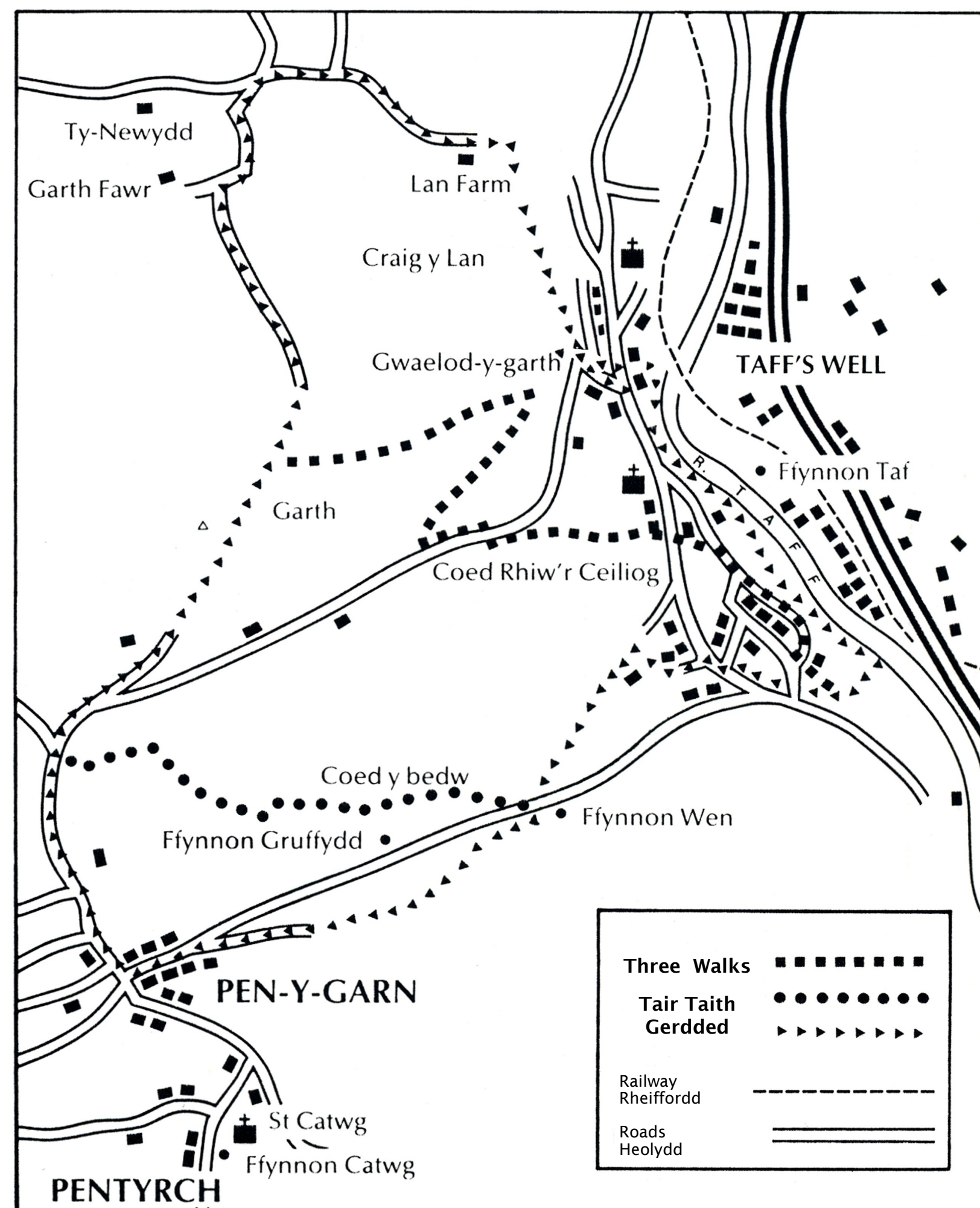
The project was undertaken in 1990 by the Taff Trail for Pentyrch Community Council with funds from Mid Glamorgan County Council, The Prince of Wales' Committee and the Shell Better Britain Campaign.



Mynydd y Garth Hill



Eglwys St Catwg Church



Mae gan ardal Cyngor Cymuned Pentyrch rwydwaith gwerthfawr o lwybrau troed a hawliau tramwy, lawer ohonynt yn dyddio'n ôl i ddyddiau cynnar gwladychu'r ardal. Wrth i dir aredig a thir pori gael ei rannu rhwng tenantiaid crëwyd llwybrau rhwng y daliadau tir, ac er bod patrymau anheddiad wedi newid dros y canrifoedd, mae llw o lwybrau wedi goroesi. Ychwanegwyd at y rhain gan y llwybrau a grëwyd gan ddiwydiannau cynnar i gludo eu defnyddiau crai.

Mae'r llwybrau'n tramwyo tirwedd amrywiol. Mae gan yr ardal gyfoeth o goedwigoedd naturiol, fel y gwelir yng Nghoed Rhiw'r Ceiliog, Coed y Bedw, ac ar Fynydd y Garth. Ceir canopi o goed derw a bedw yn ogystal â ffawydd, ynn a chelyn. Y rhedyn yw'r planhigyn mwyaf cyffredin yn y goedwigoedd a'r wlad o gwmpas. Yn ôl pob tebyg, dynoda terfynau uchaf y rhedyn i ble yr arferai'r coed ymestyn yn wreiddiol. Yn y tyfiant oddi tano, mae blodau'r gwanwyn megis clychau'r gog, blodau'r gwynt a llygaid Ebrill yn gyffredin, gyda rhywogaethau prinnach megis y tegeirian a barf yr hen ŵr, ac mae'r amgylchedd naturiol yn gynefin i amrywiaeth helaeth o greaduriaid ac adar.

Daeth torri coed a chloddio mwynau â diwydiant i'r cylch yn gynnar iawn. O ganlyniad i ddarganfod mwynau haearn, sefydlwyd ffwrnesi haearn ger Afon Taf erbyn diwedd yr 16eg ganrif. Parhaodd y duedd hon gyda sefydlu gweithfeydd mwy o faint Cwmni Haearn Pentyrch, a orffenodd gynhyrchu yn y 1890au. Roedd gwneud briciau a chloddio cerrig o bwys yn yr economi leol hefyd, a cheir chwareli yn y cylch hyd heddiw. Darparwyd cartrefi ar gyfer y gweithwyr yn y diwydiannau cynnar hyn mewn treflannau megis Gwaelod-y-garth lle ceir tai sy'n dal mewn cyflwr da, yn dyddio o'r 18fed a'r 19eg ganrif.

Gwelir effaith amaethyddiaeth ym mhatrymau'r caeau cynnar o gwmpas pentref Pentyrch ac mae'r ffurfiau presennol yn nodweddiadol o amaethu yn y fro. Mae pobl wedi byw yma ers y cyfnod cyn-hanesyddol, gyda phreswylwyr yn yr ogofeydd ar y Garth Isaf.

Tyfodd pentref Pentyrch o gwmpas y gysegrfa i Sant Catwg, cenhadwr Celtaidd o'r 6ed ganrif. Mae Ffynnon Sant Catwg yn un o nifer o ffynhonnau megis Ffynnon Gruffydd a Ffynnon Wen, a geir yn y cylch. Yr enwocaf ohonynt yw Ffynnon Taf, ffynnon glae'r ger llaw'r afon a roes ei henw i'r pentref a dyfodd o gwmpas y safle.

Cadwyd y llwybrau a hawliau tramwy cyhoeddus ar agor drwy fod pobl wedi eu defnyddio'n rheolaidd dros gyfnod o amser. Ymgymeryd â'r Prosiect Llwybrau Cymuned hwn yn yr ysbryd hwnnw, er budd y gymuned leol ac ymwelwyr â'r ardal.

Gweithredwyd y cynllun hwn yn 1990 gan y Taff Trail ar ran Cyngor Cymuned Pentyrch gyda chyllid oddi wrth Cyngor Sir Morgannwg Ganol Pwyllgor Tywysog Cymru ac Ymgyrch Gwella Prydain Cwmni Shell.