

Brecon

Heart of the Park



So much to explore

Great food & drink

Adventure time!

Version 3



Brecon Town Council

Visit Brecon

The Regimental Museum

of The Royal Welsh

"The Museum tells the fascinating story of The Royal Welsh, one of the British army's most famous regiments. The Regiment's long history, dating back to the 1680s, is told through many kinds of objects including uniforms, medals, weapons and models. The Regiment has seen action in many prominent events, including the British campaign in South Africa (visit us and discover what really happened in the 1879 Zulu War!), and both world wars. Forty-three of the Regiments' soldiers have received the Victoria Cross, and we commemorate their sacrifice and heroism as well as that of all the men and women associated with our Regiment who have contributed so much to our country." Telephone 01874 613 310



www.royalwelsh.org.uk
facebook @royal.welsh.museum

each other and harmonise within a unique architectural setting blending the old and new. The fully accessible venue celebrates and presents the cultural identity and heritage of Breconshire as a welcoming place for people of all ages to create, explore and discover historical collections, outstanding art works, digital interpretation displays and wonderful literature.

y Gaer offers a café as well as event, activity and exhibition spaces to stir the senses, peaceful corners for study and contemplation and relaxed areas, both in the stunning new atrium and outdoors in the beautifully landscaped Captain's Walk Gardens, in which to socialise, play and rest.



Museum, Art Gallery & Library, Glamorgan Street, Brecon, Powys LD3 7DW
Tel: 01874 623346
Email: ygaer@powys.gov.uk
www.ygaerpowys.org.uk

Captain's Walk Gardens

Designed by Chelsea Garden Show gold medal award winners Harry & David Rich, Captain's Walk Gardens adjoins y Gaer and features beautiful indigenous planting and a creative themed landscape design reflecting the surrounding Brecon Beacons countryside. The town centre gardens are a public realm accessible outdoor space with seating, event areas and an adjacent café.

y Gaer

IN EACH BOOK, ALL ART, WORLDS LIE ASLEEP: COME WAKE A WORLD

y Gaer is an exciting and inspirational cultural attraction uniting the classical Shire Hall, containing the refurbished Brecknock Museum & Art Gallery and its remarkable Victorian court room, with a new 21st century public library for Brecon. The collocated library, museum and art worlds complement

On The Water

There are many opportunities to indulge in activities in and around Brecon. Canoeing or kayaking may be of interest. There is the Brecon & Monmouthshire Canal which starts at the Brecon Basin and flows on down towards Talybont-on-Usk through the Brynich Lock (at this point the paddler may wish to turn around and head back to Brecon having travelled 2.5 Miles). The canal's water is fed from the River Usk and is available for most of the year.

Boat Hire

Boats can be hired at the basin or take a 2.5 hour organised cruise in a narrow boat with refreshments and commentary whilst passing through beautiful countryside, turning at the winding after inspecting the Brynich Aqueduct, then returning to the basin.

Canoeing

For the paddler looking for moving water there are the Rivers Usk, Tarell and Honddu, which all flow through Brecon Town and down through the picturesque Usk Valley.

The river can be interesting and challenging and can be run between October and March or on other occasions as indicated by the local gauges. There are some access/egress points provided to assist the paddler both on the canal and the river.
www.breconbeacons.org.uk

The paddler may consider contacting Brecon Canoe Club for local advice
www.breconcanoeclub.org.uk
www.wyeuskfoundation.org

Fishing

If fishing is the interest then the River Usk between the Promenade to Gwennies Lane will provide good fishing opportunities in the appropriate seasons in a tranquil setting. There are two fishing associations for this stretch of water, Brecon Angling Society and Breconshire Usk Fishery Association. Fishing permits are available from Visit Brecon and various other outlets in the town. Don't forget a rod licence is also required. To fish on the Brecon & Monmouthshire Canal a further licence is required which can be obtained from Canal & River Trust.
www.canalrivertrust.org.uk



The Promenade

The Promenade offers a fantastic outdoor space in which to walk, play, picnic and enjoy the wonderful fresh air. Sitting adjacent to the River Usk, the longest of the rivers in the National Park, it is an important area for wildlife and nature.

Hire a rowing boat or pedalo, play in the park, be entertained in the amusement arcade or just enjoy the views with a coffee or ice cream. Newly refurbished toilet facilities are available and there is plenty of parking.

The bandstand hosts regular entertainment events through the summer (contact Brecon Town Council on 01874 622884
www.brecontowncouncil.org.uk for info).



Riding

The nearest Riding Centre is licensed to take pony treks up to the main peaks of the Brecon Beacons. Situated 5 miles outside Brecon it can provide local short rides and hacking. They have rides to suit all ages and abilities lasting from 20 minutes to a full day. They can also provide the Brecon Beacons Explorer Ride and the local Welsh Pony Trail Ride along the lanes and the countryside where lovely sights and sounds can be experienced. www.cantref.com/ride



A Brief History of Brecon

Brecon is steeped in history dating back as far as the Iron age, embodied by the fort at Pen Y Crug (800BC to 75AD). The town has a strong Norman influence with the ruins of the Castle, built within 25 years of the Norman conquest and the impressive Cathedral. The name Brecon, is traced by scholars from the 5th century Brychan through Latinised spelling such as Breconia to Anglo-French Brecon. The Welsh name for the town 'Aberhonddu' is translated as 'mouth or confluence' of the river Honddu.

Brecon was granted its borough charter in 1276 by Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, Constable of England and Lord of Brecknock and in 1411 the Borough of Brecknock received a Royal Charter from King Henry IV granting it its status as an officially recognised town. This paved the way for Brecon to become the centre of a thriving local wool industry, and was subsequently named as one of the four 'Local Capitals' for Wales in the Act of Union of 1536.

Developments during Tudor, Elizabethan and subsequent periods can be seen in Buckingham House and Havard House (1556) in Glamorgan Street and at Newton House (1582). The Guildhall site (1624), originally a butter market, signified the movement of power away from the Castle to the Town and is home to the current Town Council chamber and Adelina Patti Theatre.

Brecon Cathedral

Brecon Cathedral started life in 1093 as the Benedictine Priory of St John the Evangelist, built by the Normans on the site of an earlier Celtic church. Christians have worshipped at the Cathedral for nearly 1,000 years. At the dissolution of the monasteries in 1537 it became Brecon's Parish Church, and became a Cathedral only in 1923, on the establishment of the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon.

For centuries pilgrims, visitors and tourists have visited the Cathedral. The Cathedral welcomes everyone who passes through. If you are visiting as a tourist, come to offer your personal prayers and light a candle, or if you are interested in history, architecture or stained-glass windows, there are many things to see and learn about.

www.breconcathedral.org.uk



Brecon with Bells On

Brecon with Bells On is an annual event, full of fun, entertainment and festive outdoor stalls selling a wide variety of food, drink and Christmas gifts followed by the switching on of the Christmas Lights. Details at www.brecontowncouncil.org.uk

Brecon Jazz Festival

Brecon Jazz Festival is an annual celebration of jazz held in and across the town, its streets and concert halls. World-famous, the Festival began in 1984 and has successively hosted many of the greatest names and legends of international jazz. Today, 'BJF' remains a vibrant event held on the 'second weekend of August' every year; it features leading jazz performances, an outdoor stage, street food and market stalls. There are also community and family activities, music everywhere, and a colourful carnival parade which processes through the town. Followers of jazz can also attend top quality events every month throughout the year run by Brecon Jazz Club at a welcoming local town centre arts venue. For more information, check www.breconjazz.org
Running alongside Brecon Jazz Festival is the successful Brecon Fringe.

Brecon Baroque Festival

Brecon Baroque Festival was established in 2006 by Rachel Podger, one of the world's leading interpreters of Baroque music. Each October Rachel gathers together leading international musicians for a long weekend of themed performances, talks and workshops in her home town of Brecon.

Alongside performances at Theatr Brycheiniog and the Cathedral, there is a pop-up café and venue at The Muse and work with local young musicians and schools, plus an ever-popular Baroque Tea Dance with live music.

Find all information and contact the Festival to join its mailing list at

www.breconbaroquefestival.com.



Brecon Market

Brecon Market Hall is located in the centre of the town and has weekly markets on Tuesdays and Fridays as well as regular craft markets, farmers markets and other community events. The Market Arcade is home to a café, along with a further array of shops selling a variety of food products, gifts, household goods and clothing.

Family Fun in Brecon

Brecon is a great family town and has plenty to keep children of all ages entertained. For younger children, the Play Barn at Brynich and Cantref Adventure Farm are a must. The Leisure Centre is superb for all ages, for swimming, squash, badminton, the gym and many other activities. You may simply want to choose from one of the free parks sited around the town or visit the skate-park to test any daredevil skills! The Coliseum Cinema and Theatr Brycheiniog are excellent places to unwind after all the excitement. Don't forget to treat yourselves to a fresh locally made ice cream at Llanfaes Dairy and be sure to visit the Promenade for more family fun!

Cycling

There is a traffic free cycle route, running alongside the Brecon & Monmouthshire canal to Brynich Lock on a level surface, perfect for family rides. A useful guide for safe use of tow paths can be found at www.waterways.org.uk

For those who ride mountain bikes and are more adventuresome consider the 25 mile Gap circular mountain bike route. It leads out of Brecon into the hills passing through Llanfrynach, Talybont-on-Usk, Abercynafon through the Gap, then downhill, experiencing stunning views on the way. Then head back to Brecon for a refreshing drink in one of the many pubs or cafes in the town. www.breconbeacons.org



Brecon

Brecon Town sits at the confluence of three rivers, River Usk, Honddu and Tarell, at the Heart of the Park in the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The town nestles in the foothills of the Beacons which boasts the majestic Pen-y-Fan, the highest mountain in Southern Britain at 886m above sea level.

Wander around the ancient cathedral, take in a show at the theatre; buy fresh local produce at Brecon Farmers Market, take a leisurely stroll or cycle along the canal, enjoy some retail therapy or simply enjoy the variety of historic buildings and take a break at one of our fine eateries.

The choice is yours!

Pen y Crug walk

A walk up to the Iron Age!

Walk through time and enjoy the spectacular views.

The walk is about 3 miles/5.5km long and should take about 2 hours. There are six stiles to negotiate.



From Brecon Cathedral head uphill on B4520. As you leave the town take the left turn into "Maes y Ffynnon", turning immediately right and follow this road towards a turning circle - if driving park here.

On your right is a public footpath across a grassed area - just off the path on the right is Maendu Well - a stone building with a well-pool inside, dating from the mid-1700s.

Looking toward the peak of Pen y Crug, cross the stile to the left of Maendu Well. The path rises gradually through fields to open hillside towards the summit which is marked by a stone pillar - trig point.

Close to the top the path crosses the fort's ramparts, rounded earthwork banks and ditches. These were originally of stone and earth with a wooden palisade (fence) on top as a defence against attack. Entry to the hillfort was through a single well-guarded entry on the South-East side.



Did you know?
Brecon Market Hall hosts arcade shops, general markets on Tuesdays and Fridays, Farmers Markets and Craft Markets on various weekends, as well as other events throughout the year. Always worth a visit!

Did you know?
You can explore Priory Groves - a mixed woodland alongside the Honddu river. Ideal dog walking territory!

Did you know?
Brecon has a 9 hole Golf Course with a yardage of 6122 and a par of 70 www.brecongolfclub.org.uk and Cradoc Golf Club offers 18 holes and a driving range www.cradoc.co.uk

Did you know?
Theatr Brycheiniog is a modern arts, theatre and community venue sitting alongside the basin of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.

Did you know?
There is an annual Gurkha Parade in the Town Centre. Contact Brecon Town Council 01874 622884 for details of this year's event. www.brecontowncouncil.org.uk

Poetry Trail

Brecon has a lively arts scene and is well known for the walks in and around the surrounding countryside, but are you aware of the town's own poetry trail? The trail encourages you to explore the corners, streets, shops and rivers of the town and gives you a different view on the historical town's celebrated landmarks.

Ten Welsh poets were commissioned in 2012 to compose four-line verses (5 in English and 5 in Welsh) These poems have been reproduced on slate plaques and attached to buildings around the town as a permanent artistic installation for the enjoyment of the people of Brecon and visitors to the town.

The trail takes approximately an hour and starts at Theatr Brycheiniog where award-winning poet and playwright Menna Elfyn cleverly incorporates references to the myths of the Mabinogion.

- 1 Theatre Brycheiniog, Canal Wharf - Menna Elfyn
- 2 Riverside Walk near Boar's Head - Owen Sheers
- 3 Promenade / Watgate - Grahame Davies
- 4 Bench in Market Street - Ceri Wyn Jones
- 5 Mount Street Junior School - Catherine Fisher
- 6 Old TIC Building - Chris Meredith
- 7 Brecon Bus Station - Paul Henry
- 8 Brecon Books, Lion Yard - Clare E Potter
- 9 Ardent Gallery, High Street - Tony Curtis
- 10 The Hours Café & Bookshop, Ship Street - Gillian Clarke

THE GURKHA WALK

A 7km circular walk from Brecon Promenade car park near The Boathouse (LD3 9PG). There is ample parking alongside the River Usk but please allow at least 2 hours when feeding the Pay and Display meter. The walk is fairly easy but unsuitable for those in wheelchairs due to rough uneven terrain in places.

Facing the River Usk, leave car park at the bottom right hand corner and follow the path along the river bank. On your right you'll pass a small play area, Brecon Town Council's information board and The Bandstand - a popular entertainment venue during Summer months.

A path veering off across the field to the right goes to public toilets but stay parallel to the river bank, following the grassy path until you reach a stile. Continue to follow river path through mixed woodland. There are a few tricky rises and falls along the path, so a good pair of walking shoes is advisable. The bridges and boarded areas have been constructed by Gurkha soldiers stationed in Brecon, hence the name.

The Usk is famed for its wildlife so do stop along the way and look out for leaping salmon, otters and herons.

The path eventually turns right up a short slope. At the top turn right and walk back along the road, (taking care because it's quite narrow) to The Promenade car park. Here you can sit and eat an ice cream whilst admiring the spectacular uninterrupted view (across Brecon Golf Course) of Pen y Fan in the distance.



Information

- Tourist Information
- Police station
- Fuel station
- Church / Cathedral
- Theatre/Cinema
- Bus station
- Hospital
- Leisure centre
- Museum
- Supermarket
- Toilets
- Doctor/surgery
- Post office
- Canal basin

USEFUL NUMBERS

- Visit Brecon: 01874 620860
- Brecon Medical Centre: 01874 622121
- Brecon War Memorial Hospital: 01874 622443
- Well Pharmacy Brecon: 01874 622789
- Boots Pharmacy Brecon: 01874 622917
- Abbey Vets: 01874 622464
- Honddu Veterinary Practice: 01874 611811
- Brecon Town Council: 01874 622884
- Powys County Council: 01597 826000

Photography: www.nigelforsterphotography.co.uk
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Freedom of Information
Design: www.greenergraphics.co.uk
4th print: July 2020
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