

Newtown Circular Walks –

No. 3. Fachwen Pool

This walk starts and ends in the centre of Newtown. The route follows the long distance Severn Way to the lake and returns via Penshwa Lane and Ffrydd Farm. It includes lovely views over Newtown and the surrounding hills and the hills to the north. The lake is a delightful place to pause or picnic. There is a mixture of road and off-road walking with some sections muddy after heavy rain. This walk is rated as easy to moderate.

Distance: 5.7 miles.

Timing: 3.5 hours.

Directions

This walk starts under the Town Clock (1) at the intersection of Broad St, High St and Severn St. The Cross Buildings, now housing Barclays Bank, was erected by Sarah Brisco to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee in 1897. Sarah Brisco, a descendent of the Pryce family of Newtown Hall, presented the clock to the town in 1900. Opposite the clock on Severn Street is the Robert Owen museum and the Robert Owen memorial rooms are over the HSBC on the other corner. Robert Owen, the founder of the cooperative movement, is one of Newtown's most famous sons.

Walk along Broad St towards Longbridge and cross to Pont Hafren on the north side of the river. Pont Hafren is a lovely old building, now operating as a registered mental health charity, <http://www.ponthafren.org.uk/>. At the roundabout turn left along Milford Road and walk past the Plas Dolerw, (the former home of Pryce Pryce-Jones, the man who brought the world mail-order shopping) on your left at the entrance to Dolerw Park. Just past Plas Dolerw you will see a turning on your right, Llwynon Lane, and immediately after this there is a small flight of steps also on your right. There is a fingerpost there pointing out the Severn Way but it is set back and difficult to see. Climb the steps and follow the mud path upwards between fences. Towards the top of this first section is the Arts and Crafts style property known as The Bungalow on your right. Just after this cross the road and go up steps to continue to follow the path. Go through the broad kissing gate and follow the path through the beech wood to another gate at the end of the wood and follow the hedge on your right.

Go through another gate and bear left (WNW) aiming for a tall tree (ash?) on the skyline. Pass through another gate and continue uphill to the tree alongside yet another gate. Go through and follow the hedge on your left. Continue in this direction through 3 more gates which will bring you out on to the road (Beehive Lane) at a fingerpost. Cross the road and go through a gate with a fingerpost that tells you that Caersws is 6¾ miles. Bear right (NW) go through a gate in the fence then across to a gate in the hedge in front of you, then bear right (N) following the hedge on your right. Go through another 2 gates, cross a track, through a gate then bear left (NW) to a stile. Go straight ahead across the open field and you will soon see roofs in the hollow below you. Head for these. As you approach you will see a gate and the short hedge to the right of it. Don't go through the gate. At the right hand edge of the hedge, where it turns downhill, you can see the fingerpost indicating the path. Follow the narrow mud path with the hedge on your left, scrubby trees on your right. Cross over the stile which brings you to a drive alongside the Rhydfelin Baptist Church and cemetery. Follow

the drive ahead, past Rhyd y Felin cottage to the road. Turn right, past the entrance to Upper Rhyd y Felin and Rhyd y Felin on your right then go through the way-marked farm gate on your left. Follow the hedge on your right through this often boggy field to Fach Wen Pool. This is a coarse fishing pool, stocked with perch, tench, carp and pike and run by Severnside and Newtown Angling Club. Parts of this lakeshore are not public rights of way but public access is permitted by the club.

Go around the pool clockwise, there is a stile part way along the pool and another at the end of it. A gate on your right leads to a bridge over the exit stream. At this point the Severn Way continues straight ahead but we turn at the green inspection cover to continue following the lake around to the right along the other shore, i.e. with the lake now on your right. Go past the fishing platforms, through beech trees and 2 gates then at the other end of the lake follow the path ahead to reach the paved lane. Go over the hurdle on to the lane and turn right to reach the crossroads. The road ahead is Bryn Lane which will bring you back to Newtown in 1¾ miles but we turn left here. At the next crossroads, next to a phone box, turn right down a road marked with a no exit sign. Just before a sharp left hand bend in the road there is an overgrown stile on your right. Go over the stile and turn left, following the hedge on your left, over another fence/stile where this hedge meets the one ahead of you. Continue ahead along a green path following the hedge on your left. This soon becomes almost a stream bed but is passable (you can go up to higher ground to avoid the worst of the wet) and will bring you to another rickety stile. Go over this and follow the hedge/ravine on your right to reach another stile on your right. Go over this, bear sharp right along a track, cross a small stream, over a stile then over a small bridge over another stream. Turn left and follow the hedge on your left, through a gate, over a stile on to the road, Peshwa Lane.

Turn left on Peshwa Lane until you reach a bungalow, Ashdale, on your left. A little past this bungalow there is a tied gate and a fingerpost on the right. Untie the gate and head downhill to a stile, go over the stile and follow the hedge on your right. Continue to follow hedge on your right over 2 more stiles. At a third stile and gate the hedge turns away but you continue ahead (S) across the field. Go through another gate and follow the hedge and ravine on your right to a stile. Cross this stile and bear left towards the farm gate to the left of the farm buildings. Go through this gate into the yard of Ffrydd Farm, cross the yard and exit through the other farm gate ahead, not down the adjacent drive. Go down the field, hedge on your left, through a gap in the hedge (next to a redundant stile) and bear right around the contour of the hill to a stile by the stream. Go over the stile and follow the mud path through the trees, taking care since the path overlays slippery rock slabs. You will then reach the farm drive, turn right over the bridge and up the hill to the road, Bryn Lane. Turn left, past the housing development and when you pass a drive leading to cottages on your right leave the road to take the tarmac track ahead. This leads to a footpath between hedges that ends at some drives. Follow the drives down to the road, Bryn Gardens, which is the lovely Victorian terrace off to your right. You go straight across this road and follow Bryn Street downhill ahead of you. You will pass weavers cottages and have a glimpse of the ruins of St Mary's church ahead of you on the other side of the river. When you reach the main road, Commercial Street, turn right and pass the Textile Museum on your right. If time permits, you might want to visit the museum which celebrates Newtown's pre-eminence in the woollen industry in the 19th century. It is open June to August Mon to Sat (closed Wed) 2-5 pm. Information from the curator 01938 554656 or at powysland@powys.gov.uk entry is £1 or free to local residents. After passing the museum you will pass the Grapes pub and arrive back at the roundabout. Turn left here, over the Longbridge, along Broad Street and back to the clock.

