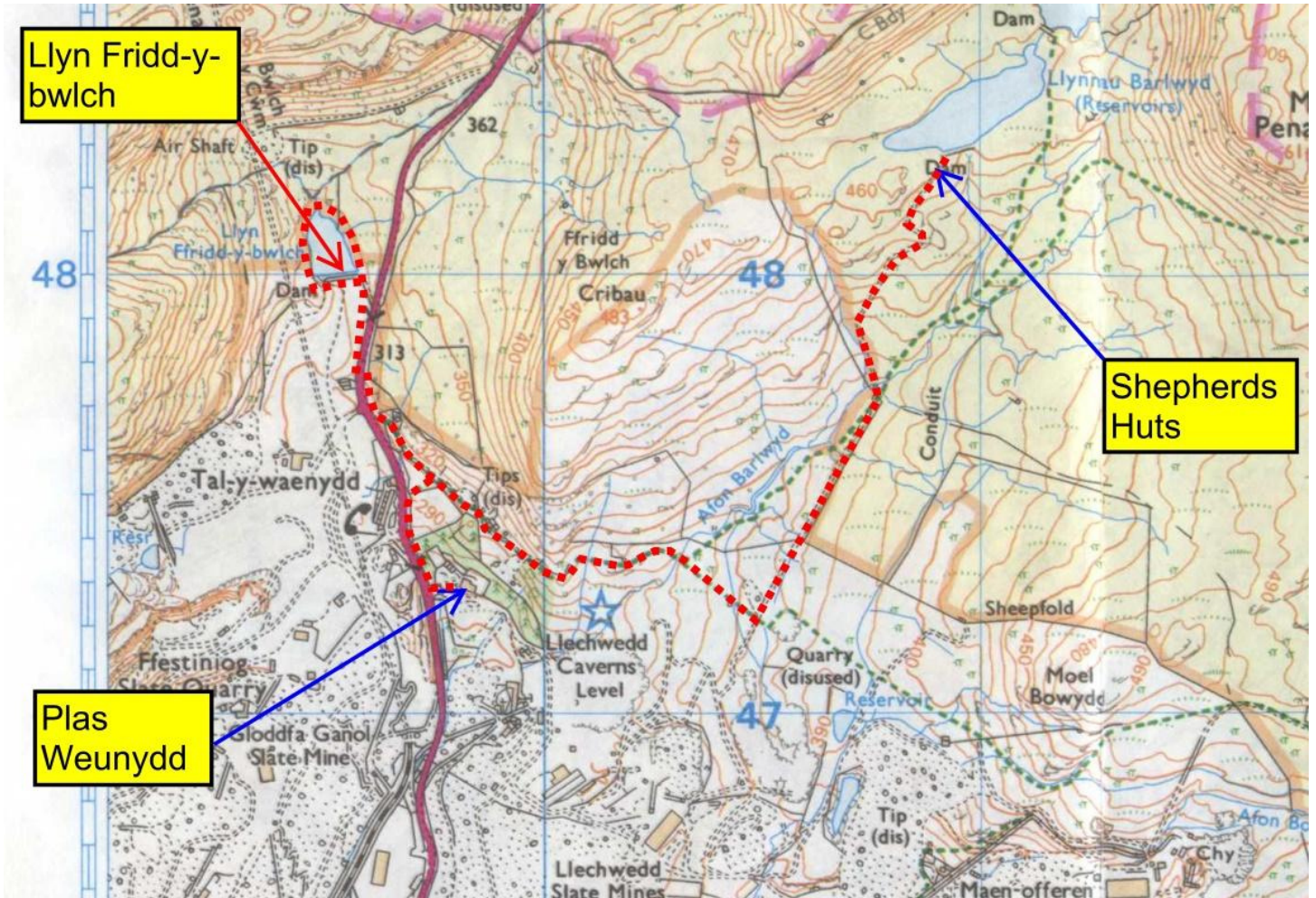


Walk 1 – Plas Weunydd and or Llyn Fridd y bwlch - 7km return

This linear walk will take you from your hut to either Plas Weunydd or to Llyn Fridd, a reservoir. Along the way, you will catch breathtaking views of the valley and witness the largest slate mine in the world.



To reach your destination, you can either walk or take the buggy down the access track. If you choose the latter, please leave the buggy off the road at a yellow post on the right, which is located 190m beyond the lower cattle grid. Don't forget to take the key with you. Afterwards, turn right and head down the slope, following yellow marker posts. You'll come across a stone structure on your right, which housed the Olwyn Goch Water Wheel, fed from the Barlwyd dam. This wheel was used to pump water and haul wagons of slate from the underground workings. On the far side of the building lies a fenced shaft.



The turning off the access track. With the remains of the Olwyn Goch water wheel.



Footbridge, straight across here.

As you continue down the slope, you'll be able to see the stunning Moelwyn Bach, Allt Fawr, and the enormous Oakeley Quarry complex on the hillside to your left. The said quarry was the largest slate mine in the world, and its workings extended as far down as sea level. Once you reach the bottom of the slope, you'll come across a small bridge and a fence. The bridge crosses the Afon Barlwyd River, which was rerouted via a series of tunnels to prevent water from entering the mine's workings. Nowadays, the river is barely a trickle. The water reappears at the "Secret Waterfall," located between Plas Weunydd and the Zip World car park.

As you head uphill, make sure to pass to the left of the ruined building. From this spot, you will have a clear view of the Llechwedd complex to your left. You'll come across a downhill mountain bike track, but please stay on the footpath with yellow markers to ensure your safety as the bikes move quickly. Cross over the bike track by a wooden fence and continue heading up to the ruined building known as Cribau, which was built on a hill. Pass to the left of the ruin and then cross the bike track again. From there, continue under a metal bridge, and you'll soon start heading downhill on a broad track. As it levels, you'll come across more ruined cottages called Tai'r-frest and go under another metal bridge. Keep following the track, and you'll see a terrace of cottages called Tal-waenydd in the valley below. Before you reach a gate, take note of a small tip of waste rock above you. This, along with several others you've already passed, are remnants of the three attempts, only the last one being successful, at driving tunnels around the quarry to divert the water from the Afon (River) Barlwyd around the edge of the quarry. Deep underground, water rushes beneath your feet. Pass through the gate, and in a further 20m, you'll arrive at a junction of paths and a large tree.



The path here is on the grass to the left of the mountain bike track which you cross at the far end of the fence.



Llyn Frith. A circular walk goes all around this.

To reach the Hotel for a drink or a meal, or the main site featuring Zip Wires and a mountain bike track, take a left turn from the junction. Then pass through a wall and drop down over a rough field. After that, you'll emerge through a gate onto a footpath alongside the A470. Turn left and follow the pavement downhill before turning left again into the site.

To reach Llyn Fridd y Bwlch, continue straight ahead at the junction on the main track until you reach a pedestrian gate and a vehicular gate. Take the pedestrian gate that leads to the side of A470 and cross the road when it is safe to do so. On the left, you will see the first pedestrian gate where the wall becomes a fence. Take this gate and cross the grassy area before turning right onto a track. Follow this track until you reach Llyn Fridd, which was built for the Oakeley Quarry. Although the lake is used by fishermen (a permit is needed from Cambrian Angling), the herons that are often seen there do not seem to bother them. A small track runs all the way around the lake. If you decide to walk around the lake, take note of the spoil tip located above you at the end of the lake. This resulted from one of two shafts which helped speed up the driving of the 4km long railway tunnel that links Blaenau Ffestiniog with the Lledr Valley.

To return to your hut, retrace your steps.

If you have any feedback on the walks or you think the notes are not clear please email Jon at jonknowles1@btinternet.com