

Ride: Carmarthen to Swansea

Start: Carmarthen Railway Station

Finish: Swansea (Sail Bridge).

Distance: 43 miles (4 hours plus stops)

Terrain: A hill in the middle, otherwise flat.

Map: OS 1:50,000 Sheet 159 *Swansea & Gower*

There are two splendid cycle rides between Carmarthen and Swansea. There being a train service between Swansea, Gowerton and Carmarthen it makes sense to use this to get to the start. Arriva need to be persuaded to provide more bike space. Use of this service should help achieve this.

This ride follows National Cycle Route 47 past the National Botanic Garden and down the Swiss Valley to Llanelli. From there it's on NCR 4 back to Swansea. The other route goes via Ferryside and is entirely on NCR 4.

Leaving Carmarthen station turn right and then immediately right again onto a cycle path. Following the NCR 47 signs takes you under the A484 and A40 and on to the B4300.

A mile past Capel Dewi I suggest you turn right onto the B4310. This is shorter than the NCR 47 route which continues on the B4300 to Llanarthe before doubling back to the Botanic Garden. After three miles you re-join NCR 47 at the entrance to the Garden, which you may well want to visit, or at least break there for refuelling.



Leaving the Botanic Garden follow NCR 47 south under the A48 and then, instead of turning left at Porthyrhyd, continue on the B4310 to Drefach and there bear left to Cross Hands where you again pick up NCR 47. This variation on the Sustrans route is slightly easier.

It is now off-road for the 13 miles to Llanelli. Enjoy the views to the west across the Gwendraeth valley. The last five miles, which include the 'Swiss Valley' (pictured), are gently downhill.

You join NCR 4 in Llanelli, half a mile short of the North Dock Visitor Centre where there is a café. From there it's 14 miles on the cycle path to Blackpill and a further three to the Sail Bridge.

Evening Post: 21 June 2014