

Sleeping Giant Country

The Upper Tawe Valley around Abercrave is a particularly beautiful area which lies astride the river towards Craig y Nos Country Park in the Beacons National Park. A new 3km section of traffic free path runs along the route of the former Swansea to Brecon Railway from Penrhos at Ystradgynlais to Coelbren. Perched on the hillside, it gives fantastic views across the valley and of the Sleeping Giant from a new perspective, one that previous travellers on the train would have enjoyed..

With the riverside sections previously developed up the valley, the new section of route is within an easy day's ride from Swansea (24 km or 15 miles), or you could drive to Pontardawe and cycle (10km or 6miles) or continue to Ystradgynlais and cycle the new route (3km or 2miles), depending on your preference - all distances are each way.. Just a little way further, on the quiet road from Coelbren, you can visit the spectacular Henrhyd Falls.

Eventually it is hoped the route will continue to the Cray Reservoirs, but for the moment, apart from a short section in Ystradgynlais, you can enjoy the splendour of the Upper Tawe Valley in a traffic free environment, with many refreshment stops along the way and at Coelbren.

The former railway route can be found on the OS Landranger Maps 159 and 160 or for further information consult www.Wheelrights.org.uk

David Judd



Cycling up the new path from Penrhos