



Llanrhystud circular walk via Llansanffraid, Ceredigion

A circular walk of celebrated saints and stellar sea views.

"This is a great circular route steeped in history featuring a mixture of coast and countryside in a peaceful setting with very little traffic."

NIGEL NICHOLAS, WALES COAST PATH OFFICER

Start and Finish:

Llanrhystud village.

Distance:

6 miles or 9 km circular.



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St Ffraid's church, Llanon



© Janet Baxter

View over Llanon and south towards Aberaeron and New Quay

Along the way...

Leaving Llanrhystud and following the Wales Coast Path signs, head south westerly along a narrow road towards the coast. The route south is varied as it traces a long shingle bank before taking you along the edge of clay cliffs overlooking the sea and past the ruins of the Craiglas lime kilns, atmospheric remnants of Ceredigion's industrial past.

As well as the kilns and works buildings, you might also see the remains of old jetties which peek out of the water when the tide is low. Enjoy some fantastic views of Cardigan Bay with the rocky arm of Llŷn Peninsula jutting out into the sea on a clear day.

The path continues across fields and a green lane on to St Ffraid's church. After you've visited the church, cross the bridge and turn left to follow the footpath towards the A487 main road. Turn right and after crossing the road take the next footpath sign on your left. You'll walk down a well-defined track before joining a bridleway and a charming wooded green lane through Cwm Peris.

There are great views of coast and mountain as it climbs to the hilltops by the Iron Age hill forts of Castell Mawr and Castell Bach, leading you all the way back to your starting point in Llanrhystud.

About the Sacred Heritage Place:

The birthplace of St Non – mother of St David – St Ffraid's church occupies a special place in Wales' religious landscape. A church has stood here since the 12th century, though the only surviving reminder of its earliest days is the limestone font decorated with a band of rosette mouldings.

The tall square tower was erected in the 16th century and still retains its original windows and rare bell frame, while the rest of the church was rebuilt in the 19th century (look out for the detailed beam in the porch roof, repurposed from the medieval rood screen).

Inside you'll see stained-glass windows depicting both St Ffraid, an Irish missionary born around 450AD, and St Non herself. St David's mother is believed to have been born here (Llanon translates as 'the sacred place of Non') and her birthplace was once marked by a chapel nearby.

Though that building is lost to history you can see a mounted stoop stone in St Ffraid's porch, brought from the site of the chapel some 40 years ago.

The tragic harvest of the sea is commemorated on many gravestones in St Ffraid's churchyard. Seventy-four mariners who died away from home are remembered here, most of them drowned.

Need to know:

You'll find parking, pubs, cafés and shops in Llanrhystud, Llansanffraid and Llanon (there are also public toilets in Llanon).

If you prefer a shorter walk, there is the option to travel back to your start point via a regular local bus service.