

Trip Report: Tal y Fan

Date: May 14th, 2022

Group: Steve (leader) & Sarah, Ann & Neil, Lesley & Mike, Chrissie, Colin, Ray (and Flora)

Route: A loop from Llanfairfechan along the Tal y Fan ridge

Total Distance: 10.4 miles

Total Ascent: 2400 ft

Photo links: Lesley's - <https://photos.app.goo.gl/KiQsYUuygRGB2oqg9>

Neil and Steve's - <https://photos.app.goo.gl/a44t22UUCWAZVMQE6>

So, where to start? Perhaps with the headline - ***A wonderful day in the Welsh hills !***

All nine of the group, and walking gear, were loaded comfortably into two vehicles and we made a timely departure from Bunbury. An hour and a quarter later we faced the first challenge, getting to the Three Streams car park in Llanfairfechan, which involved driving up through the village and then about 700m up a rough and very narrow lane - one of those where you pray not to meet anything!

We began the walk by returning down the lane, rather than through the intended small nature reserve which oddly had a Keep Out notice on the gate. Anyway, we soon picked up the North Wales Path leading up a road out of the village and after steadily gaining height the road ended at a farm and the Path continued off-road. A refreshment break was taken against a dry stone wall although it wasn't needed for shelter as the wind was very light. It was good to have Mike A back with us in walking action for the first time in 2022 and the canine company of Flora, behaving impeccably as usual even with sheep around.

As the group set off again Ann was in front and, in a short while, she spotted a phone on the ground beside the path. Unsurprisingly, this led to a close inspection of the lost item for any clues to the identity of its owner and a discussion about the best course of action! Expecting that the owner, or a friend, would be likely to make a call to the phone it was agreed that Ann should hold onto it.

At an ancient stone circle we turned off the North Wales Path to head south-east across an area of moorland that was a bit boggy in places until we reached a small disused reservoir. Just beyond the reservoir was a track leading up towards one end of the summit ridge and we followed this track first to an old quarry. On this climb we became rather spread out and (as I shamefully admit as the leader) this caused a 10min interlude while one member of the party was lost and then recovered from the depths of the quarry.

From the quarry it was only a short distance up to the ridge and along to the trig point at a height of 610m, where we had lunch. The views were impressive in all directions although rather hazy and the tops of the highest Carneddau peaks were obscured by cloud.

The route then led us down off the ridge and up over the more rounded summit of Foel Lwyd with a wall to follow down to Bwlch y Ddeufaen. After a short chat about which of 2 alternative ways to return to Llanfairfechan we opted for the longer but clearer one. By this time the clouds had dispersed a bit and we were enjoying some afternoon sunshine, as were a group of mountain ponies - some with foals - that we passed close

by. And, in further good news, Ann made contact with the owner of the phone and arranged to drop it off at a shop in the village. After another half hour or so we were back at the car park and - guess what - ours were still the only cars there!

A particular word of thanks to Ray for driving, to Les and Neil for taking photos (see links above) and to Colin for recording our grand day out on his phone (see <https://www.relive.cc/view/vdvmK7RxXN6>).