



START

1 cross hands



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CROSS HANDS  
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Tumble

2 tumble

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WOODLAND RIDE



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HOREB

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CYNHEIDRE  
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6 SWISS VALLEY  
Reservoirs

6 upper lledi reservoir

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7 Park  
Howard

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SANDY WATER PARK

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9 MILLENNIUM  
COASTAL  
PARK &  
Discovery  
Centre



# SWISS VALLEY TRAIL

Tracing a languid S shape from the coast at Llanelli inland to Cross Hands, this gentle 13-mile car-free trail (part of National Cycle Network Route 47) follows the track of the old Carmarthenshire Tramway – opened in 1803, this was Britain's earliest operational public railway. Passing beautiful reservoirs and woodlands, and with dramatic views of the upland meadows and fringes of the Brecon Beacons, it's a rewarding day out for all ages. The southern half of the trail runs gently uphill from Llanelli, so for younger or less experienced riders is best pedalled north to south.

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/route/swiss-valley-cycle-route-llanelli>

## 1 CROSS HANDS

At the northern end of the trail, National Cycle Network Route 47 continues north-west towards Carmarthen. The busy town of Cross Hands has a popular biking hub in the form of County Cycles, a spacious bike shop and workshop with a buzzing café. Bean on a Bike has great coffee, hot and cold meals plus delectable home-made cakes – a bright, friendly spot to chat to other enthusiasts or just treat yourself to a snack or caffeine boost.

[www.county-cycles.com](http://www.county-cycles.com)

## 2 TUMBLE

If you get peckish en route, Tumble has a few shops and takeaways just down the main street from the trail. Pause to admire the Millennium Milepost at the roadside junction, installed as part of a nationwide celebration of the National Cycle Network in 1999. This black milepost, titled Tracks, carries a thought-provoking poem by Belfast artist David Dudgeon, beginning: "Down a wandering path I have travelled, where the setting sun lies upon the ground..."

## 3 WOODLAND RIDE

South of Tumble, the track traverses a dense patch of conifer woodland, all mossy branches and ivy-carpeted earth, before emerging onto a hillside balcony with far-reaching views north-west across the valley and south to the Loughor Estuary at Llanelli. Peer into the trees to the east and you'll spy old wooden railway sleepers and the remains of disused tracks.

## 4 CYNHEIDRE

The Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway, which succeeded the Carmarthenshire Tramway on the tracks north of Llanelli, closed in 1989 after the Cynheidre Colliery ceased production. Now the enthusiasts of the Llanelli & Mynydd Mawr Railway heritage

project are working to restore the line at Cynheidre. They've already coaxed vintage diesel locos back into action, along with a first class buffet coach and a 1950s 'bubble car'. Admire the locos from the bike track or ride the rails on one of the popular family open days on selected bank holidays.

[www.llanellirailway.co.uk](http://www.llanellirailway.co.uk)

## 5 HOREB

Just 150m west of the cycle trail, the Waun Wylt is a stylishly refurbished 18th-century inn in the hamlet of Horeb. With comfortable B&B accommodation, caravan pitches, bike racks and seasonal menus of freshly cooked fare, it's particularly tempting for cyclists at lunch and breakfast (open to non-residents). The name means 'wild moor', and there are tremendous views across to high hills to the east from this stretch of the cycle track. Just to the south rises a lofty square brick chimney, a reminder of the brickworks that thrived in Horeb in the 19th century.

## 6 SWISS VALLEY RESERVOIRS

Between Horeb and Llanelli, two picturesque reservoirs glint in the valley below the cycle trail; the first, the Lower Cwm Lliedi reservoir, was completed in 1878, and the upper reservoir in 1905. Take a break at picnic tables above the reservoirs, where birdfeeders attract woodland species, or follow one of the footpaths down from the bike trail to loop around the pretty, tree-lined artificial meres. The trail then descends through an atmospheric artificial gorge – a cutting through the rock, dripping with moss and ferns.

## 7 PARC HOWARD

As the trail approaches the outskirts of Llanelli, to the east stands the famed Felinfoel Brewery, producing fine ales since 1878; it was reputedly the first brewery in the world to sell craft ale in a can, as long ago as 1935 ([www.felinfoel.com](http://www.felinfoel.com)). A mile to

the south, paths leading off the cycle trail climb south to Parc Howard, its Italianate Edwardian mansion now housing a museum of local heritage. The surrounding park is a great place for a family picnic, with a duckpond, children's play area, regular events and views of the bay.

[www.parchoward.org.uk](http://www.parchoward.org.uk)

## 8 SANDY WATER PARK

The large rectangular lake that forms the centrepiece of this appealing park was originally connected with the Llanelli (later Duport) Steelworks that closed in 1981. Today the reed-fringed lake is home to ducks, swans and other waterbirds, and in summer you can spot orchids and other wildflowers while pedalling around the verdant parkland.

## 9 MILLENNIUM COASTAL PARK & DISCOVERY CENTRE

The imaginatively landscaped park opened by the Queen in 2002 includes a wide, snaking path winding between picnic areas and benches, with access to golden sands from where kitesurfers venture into the waves. At the heart of the park, alongside the North Dock car parks, is the striking, glass-fronting Llanelli Discovery Centre, providing tourist information and toilets. Upstairs, Flanagans Coastline Café offers terrific coffees, cakes, hot and cold meals and floor-to-ceiling windows providing a vast panorama of the Loughor Estuary – a fine place to celebrate the end (or fuel for the beginning) of your ride.

