

THE RUTHIN CASTLE HOTEL

Castle Street, Ruthin, North Wales LL15 2NU

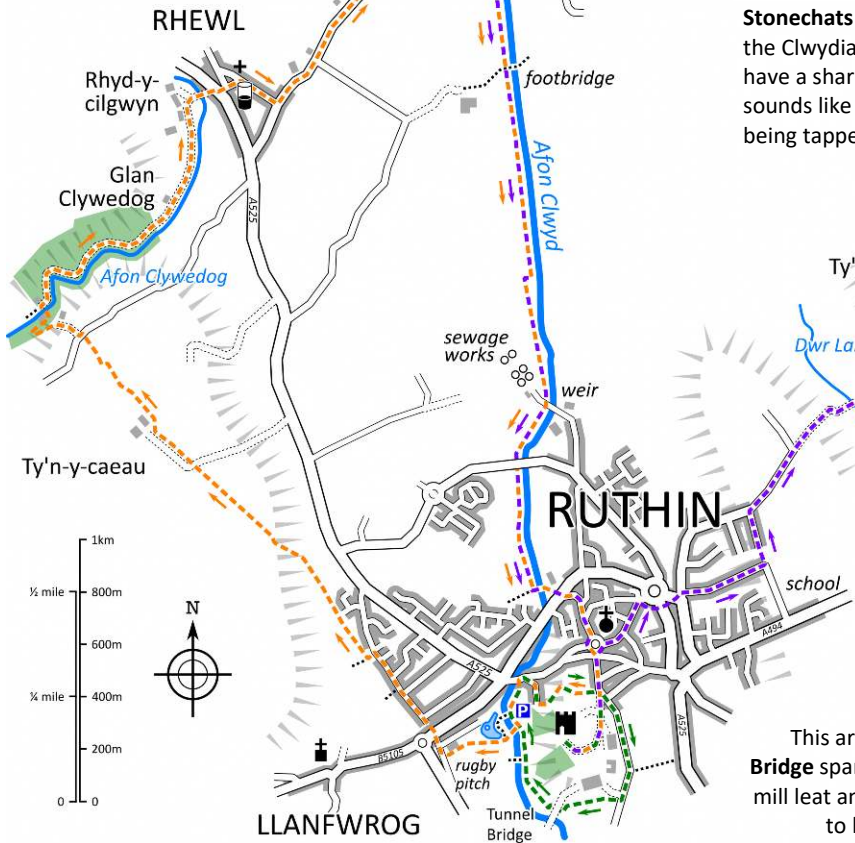
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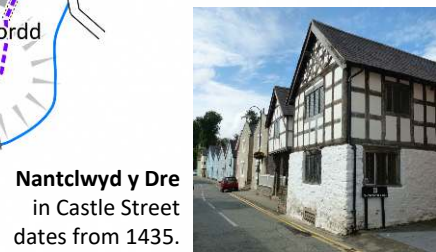
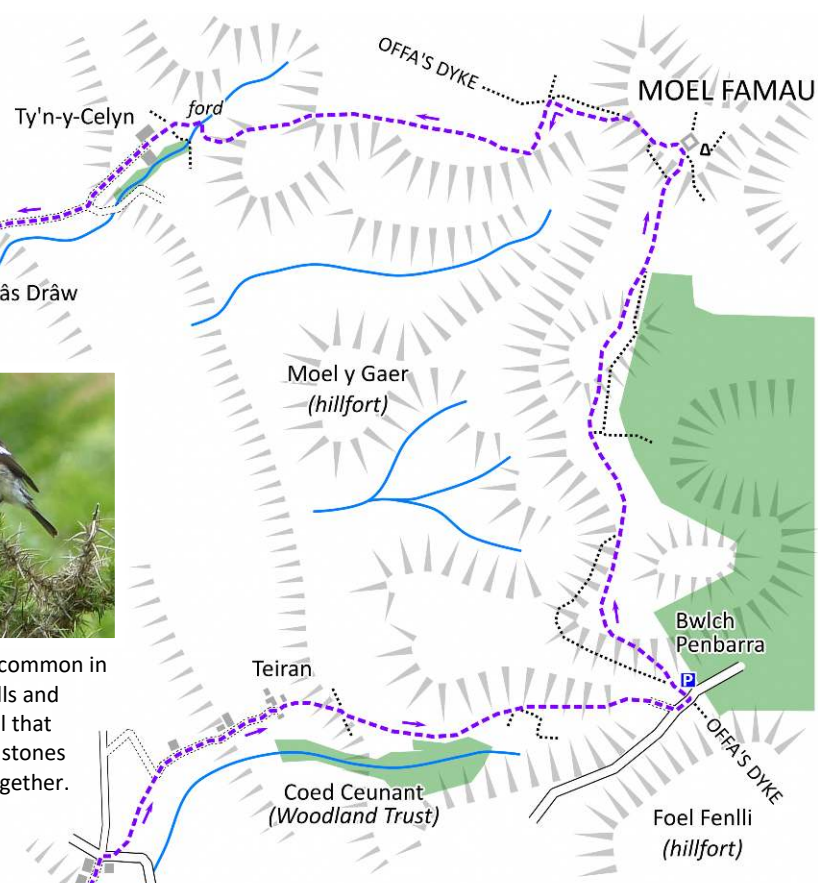
The beautiful, wooded valley of the **Afon Clywedog** is followed by a track known as Lady Bagot's Drive. The Bagots were local landowners, and Rhyd-y-cilgwyn was part of their estate.



Ty'n-y-caeau



Stonechats are common in the Clwydian Hills and have a sharp call that sounds like two stones being tapped together.



Nantclwyd y Dre in Castle Street dates from 1435.



This arch of **Tunnel Bridge** spanned the old mill leat and is thought to be medieval.



Moel Famau is the highest point of the Clwydian Hills and lies on the route of the **Offa's Dyke** path. The **Jubilee Tower** on the summit was built to celebrate the golden jubilee of George III, though it was never completed.

The **Afon Clwyd** rises in Clocaenog Forest and runs for 35 miles to the sea at Rhyl. Sand Martins nest in the banks below Ruthin.



three circular walks from the



River Clwyd

1½ miles: Easy

A relaxing stroll to a historic bridge, returning along the river and beneath the castle walls.

Two Rivers Walk

5¾ miles: Moderate

Over the fields to the beautiful wooded valley of the Afon Clywedog, returning via Rhowl and the Afon Clwyd.

Moel Famau

10¾ miles: Strenuous

An all-day expedition to the highest point in the Clwydian Hills, with magnificent views in all directions.

River Clwyd

1 ½ miles: Easy

Allow 1 hour. No stiles. Wet grass and muddy spots after rain.

1 Walk down the drive from the hotel, and out through the gateway. **2** Cross the road and turn right along the pavement, away from town, passing the entrance to a lane on the left. **3** Follow the larger road for 450 m, disregarding a footpath on the left after 300 m. **4** Cross the road opposite Scott House, and go through the kissing gate to the left of the driveway. **5** Follow the footpath along the field edge below the house, a former nursing home built in 1933 in the Arts & Crafts style. **6** At the bottom of the field, turn right through another kissing gate, through a short tunnel and through another kissing gate into the field. The bridge over the River Clwyd is 19th-century, but the near section with the low arch over the former mill race is earlier. **7** Follow the field edge away from the bridge, parallel to the river on your left. **8** At the end of the field, go through a kissing gate into a park. **9** Stay on the right-hand side of the river; at the end of the park, cross the car park out to the main road. **10** Turn right, away from the bridge over the river, then immediately right into Stryd y Felin/Mill Street. **11** Pass the old mill building then turn right along a narrow lane between houses. **12** After 85 m, turn left onto a tarmac path. **13** Follow this path along the castle wall, bearing right by a grassy triangle after a stone arch onto the narrow, walled continuation that emerges by the castle gatehouse. **14** Turn right under the gateway and walk up the drive through the grounds back to the castle and hotel.

Two Rivers Walk

5¾ miles: Moderate

Allow 3 hours. Field and riverside paths may be overgrown or muddy in places.

1 Walk down the drive from the hotel, and out through the gateway. **2** Turn immediately left through the smaller arch (Cwningar y Castell/Cunning Green). Follow the walled alleyway, bearing left under an arch after a triangular green space. **3** Follow the castle wall to the end of this path, then turn right along a narrow lane between houses. **4** Turn left past the Old Mill building and bear right, out to the main road. **5** Turn left and cross the car park into Cae Ddôl park. Bear right and cross the second footbridge over the River Clwyd. **6** Walk to the left of the lake ahead and continue across the park, exiting between the rugby pitch and clubhouse. **7** Turn right to the main road and cross at the island. **8** Take a couple of steps right then turn left into a walled alleyway, which emerges into modern housing. **9** Follow the road ahead for 330 m then turn left by a children's playground and go through a gate into a field. **10** Ignoring the obvious path ahead, turn right through another gate and follow the field-edge with the play-

ground and then houses on your right. Bear slightly left to a gate, to the left of some red-brick houses facing you, and follow a narrow and potentially overgrown path behind the gardens and past the end of a cul-de-sac. **11** At the end, a kissing gate leads into fields. Cross to another gate then follow the right-hand field edge uphill. **12** In the top corner, go through a gate on the right and turn left along the top of the field, with fine views over Ruthin to Moel Famau and the rest of the Clwydian ridge. **13** Three fields later, pass through another gate into a farm lane. Don't follow the lane, but take a footpath over a footbridge to a gate in the hedge opposite. **14** Follow the left-hand field edge ahead, passing the old farmhouse at Ty'n-y-caeau. **15** At the end of the field, bear left of the field gate through a hand gate and along a narrow, hedged path and into another field. Continue along the top of the field as before. **16** In the second field, switch to the other side of the hedge via a kissing gate on the left and follow the field edge down to another gate into a narrow lane. **17** Turn left then immediately right into a descending track. Keep left past a house and then go through a gate into a track that winds left then right down to the valley bottom. Go through a gate behind a house then bear left over a footbridge over the Afon Clywedog. **18** On the other side, turn right past another house and continue along the track down the wooded valley with the river on your right. **19** After half a mile the track leaves the woods, becomes metalled and passes a house (Glan Clywedog) on the left. **20** At Rhyd-y-Cilgwyn farm, turn right over the old bridge and out to the main road. **21** Cross carefully and follow the road signposted to Llanynys opposite (ignoring the turning on the immediate left). **22** At a T-junction to the right of a chapel, turn right and follow the road through mostly modern housing. **23** At the next T-junction, turn left past the tennis courts and playing fields on the left. Continue past the delimit signs and the entrance to the Sugar Plum Tearoom on the left. **24** Pass a turning on the right and continue along the road for a further 300 metres. Bear right at a junction (following the sign for Gelfor), then keep right again at the next junction among a cluster of cottages. **25** After 200 metres you reach a bridge over the River Clwyd. Turn right onto the riverside footpath. **26** At the end of the second field, ignore a footbridge and continue through the kissing gate ahead, still on the right-hand bank. **27** After two fields the path crosses a footbridge over a side-stream and continues along the main river through two further fields (potentially under crops), leaving the Clwyd briefly to a kissing gate into pasture. **28** Beyond the next kissing gate the path runs between the river and a water treatment works to a weir and bridge. Continue alongside the river beyond the service road before returning to pastureland. **29** After a kissing gate, pass under a road bridge and continue through more meadows. **31** At the end, cross the river via a footbridge and cross a small field to the road by the entrance to a builders' merchant's yard. **32** Cross and follow Hafan Clwyd opposite, bearing right and uphill at a junction. This road runs below the churchyard and emerges in the main square in Ruthin. **33** Pass to the right of the Old Court House into Stryd y Castell/Castle Street and walk past Nantclwyd y Dre back to the castle gatehouse. **34** Follow the driveway through the arch and back to the hotel.

Moel Famau

10¾ miles: Strenuous

Allow at least 5 hours. Significant ascents and descents. The paths on the open moorland around Moel Famau are rocky in places and should not be attempted in poor visibility. Strong footwear required.

1 Walk down the drive from the hotel and out through the castle gateway. **2** Walk down Stryd y Castell/Castle Street and follow it past Nantclwyd y Dre to the town square. Turn right down Stryd-y-Farchnad/Market Street and walk downhill past the Market Hall and County Offices. **3** Continue down the road until you reach a large roundabout; bear right to the crossing and cross over. **4** Follow the road ahead of you, then cross over at the junction with Ffordd Cae Glas/Greenfield Road. **5** Follow the unadopted no-through road (Bryn Goodman) uphill. **6** At the top of the road at the rear of the school, turn left along a tarmac path, which leads shortly to another road (Wern Uchaf). **7** Follow the road ahead to a T-junction, where you turn right onto a narrow lane. **8** At a left-hand bend after 300 metres, go through the gate ahead into a hedged green lane. Follow this as it winds down to the valley bottom and up the other side. Look out for a kissing gate on the left-hand side where the signposted footpath leaves the track. **9** Go through the gate and turn right up the field to a hand gate (next to a field gate) and then cross the next field into another hedged trackway. **10** Cross straight over through a kissing gate and continue uphill along the field edge, to a kissing gate in the corner. **11** Turn left along a narrow, hedged path that joins a track and then passes between houses to a road junction. **12** Take a few steps to the right then cross to a gate into a field, which you cross and then join the left-hand hedge. At the end of the field, go through two kissing gates into a farm track. **13** Follow the track uphill past a cottage and a farm and then up the concrete drive to Teiran Farm. **14** Go through the first gate then bear right before the farmhouse to another gate and between some farm buildings. **15** Climb a grassy area then go through the gate on the right into the corner of a field. **16** Follow the left-hand edge of the field then cross to a stile in the top fence that leads finally into open country. **17** Follow the path to the right, with fenced woodland on your right, then continue along the fence beyond the end of the wood. **18** Pass a stile by an interpretation board, and continue ahead and uphill, ignoring a path that snakes across the valley to the right. **19** After a steady climb, cross a stile by a gate and continue up the track until you finally reach the road at Bwlch Penbarra. **20** Walk up the lane and turn left into the car park, exiting along the signposted Offa's Dyke path. **21** At a fork, take the higher, right-hand path, which climbs round a shoulder of land then levels off before rejoining the National Trail. **22** Follow the obvious path as it winds gradually upwards with level sections before the final steep pull up to the remains of the Jubilee Tower on the summit of Moel Famau. **23** Once you've rested and admired the view, continue along the Offa's Dyke path (which now heads roughly west). **24** At the

foot of a steep rocky slope you come to a meeting of five paths (with a gate in the wall to the right). **Turn left** here (off the main path) onto a less prominent descending path that heads towards the distant hillfort of Moel y Gaer, before swinging right. **25** The path descends gradually at first then steepens as it bears left, with a stream valley away to the right. Towards the bottom of the open land it swings right to ford the stream, passing a three-way fingerpost. **26** Climb the other side then, by a waymark post, turn left to a wooden gate beneath a tree at the foot of the open land. **27** A fenced path leads downhill past a farmhouse and joins a concrete drive. Follow the driveway for a little over half a mile, bearing right when another drive joins from the left. **28** When the driveway reaches a road, cross straight over through a gate onto a footpath and bear half-right across the field towards a farm. Climb a stile and continue across a second field in the same direction to another stile. **29** In the third field, keep left of the farm buildings to a gap in the hedge, beyond which turn left and follow the field edge down to a stile in the corner. **30** The path continues down the left-hand side of a long field then joins a farm track that may be muddy. Follow it through a farmyard and past the farmhouse to a road. **31** Turn left and follow the road round an S-bend, then take a footpath on the right, through a sheep pen. Follow the right-hand edge of the field, alongside a small stream. **32** Continue alongside the stream until you reach the driveway to the half-timbered Plas Llanychan. **33** Cross the drive and go through the gate opposite (unsignposted at the time of writing). Turn half-left and walk diagonally across the field to a clump of trees, then follow the fence to the far bottom corner (the path on the ground does not appear to follow the official right of way as shown on OS maps). **34** In the corner are a stile and a gate. Use either, and (ignoring another stile into the next field on the left) walk down the fence to a second stile, nearer to the river. **35** Cross this field to a gate into the road by a bridge over the River Clwyd. **36** Cross the bridge and turn immediately left onto the riverside footpath.

Now jump to step **26** of the **Two Rivers Walk** for directions back to Ruthin and the hotel.



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