

Walk: WOC 04
Location: Elan Village and Reservoirs

- Directions: Below is a direct route however you may opt to take a scenic route (probably much the same distance as avoids Llandoverly) as follows: Right out of castle, left at Taffan y Garreg Pub, over mountain to Trecastle (one right hand turn at the only T Junction you come to before Trecastle, and down the lane until you end up at Trecastle).
- At T junction onto A40 in Trecastle (pub on left) turn left onto A40, and after a mile or so, second right at Llywell. Take the single tracks, scenic, over the flattish top of the mountain, via the military zone (assuming red flag not flying and road not closed – sometimes flag is flying but sign says road is open so you can then still go through). Pass by Tirabad (but not going into Tirabad – cross a stream and go right after bridge not left into Tirabad itself), then on to Beulah.
- At Beulah turn right onto A483, then left onto B4358 going to Newbridge on Wye where you again turn left, onto A470, to Rhayader. Turn left at Rhayader to go to Elan Village (sign posted Elan Valley or Elan Village). There are various reservoirs and roads and walks you can explore all around here.
- Distance (miles): 57.1
 Time (hours): 1.20 (Tom Tom) or 1.52 (RAC route finder).
- Length of Walk: Various options, long and short
 Dates Walked: 17/04/2008, 11/08/2008,
- Parking: Free near the reservoirs but a small charge at the Elan Village Visitor centre.
- Pop in to: Visitor Centre at Elan village; well worth an hour to review the history of building the dams. Elan village now is just a hamlet, but it became a large town during the building of the dam, due to all the labourers needed.
- Description: Claerwen Reservoir, Craig Goch Reservoir, Garreg ddu Reservoir.
- Loads of lanes and drives and walks around the reservoirs and dams. All very scenic, very wild, very remote.
- Stop and walk along the dams, beside the reservoirs, and in some cases, part way or all way around a reservoir.
- Would also be suitable for a mountain bike ride and possibly a segway. You can hire mountain bikes from the castle but will need some means of transporting them.
- Various stopping places on the drive to and from the reservoirs where you can stop and walk in woodland tracks or on reservoir tracks.

Pictures taken on 17/04/2008:

Elan village visitors centre, complete with good displays showing the history of the dam building and the creation of the reservoir, together with a generously stocked touristy shop, a coffee shop, and a nice outside sitting area if the weather is fine, all alongside the river running from the dam.



Visitor centre (above) is situated right in front of the imposing dam, which you can drive past on your left.



You can drive up one side of the reservoir; the road then takes you to a second large reservoir above this one.



Fabulous views and remote mountain scenery in this area. The Claerwen Dam (pic on right) is the second day, after the one at Elan village, with a huge reservoir behind it.



The Claerwen reservoir dam.

View from the Claerwen Reservoir dam.



Road terminates at this point, and you can walk around the upper of the two reservoirs – Claerwen Reservoir. We found it a bit windy up here.



This is yet another reservoir on our return journey. When the water is flowing over the top of the dam, it looks most impressive.





Pictures taken on 11/08/2008:

Here we are again at Elan Village visitors' centre, which has a river running alongside it and an exhibition about the building of the dams inside. This exhibition is well worth visiting.



The pictures here are of the second reservoir, Claerwen Reservoir, upstream from the visitors centre and the lower reservoir. At the time we were visiting, this reservoir was full and so the water was thundering over the top – very dramatic and not a sight one would see often, I guess.





In the above pictures we are at the bottom of the reservoir. In the below pictures we are at the top. You do not walk to the top but instead drive back along the road you came and take the first right, which almost doubles back on yourself, and brings you up a reasonably steep road which dead ends at the top of the dam.



Once at the top, there are impressive views down the valley.



If you cross over the reservoir on the footpath on top of the dam, you will come to a walkers' gate and stile, joining on to a path which takes you on a slight incline into the mountain fields, full of sheep.

Pic bottom right shows two dogs joined together. The white one would chase sheep if allowed, but the golden will never chase sheep, so joining them together, the white one is controlled. These pictures show us returning from the top of the mountain with, on the way down, excellent views of the dam.



This field is full of lumps of what look to be raw marble. Pic on right, you can see the field track we followed.



Follow the path up to top as far as you care to go, then enjoy the fabulous views on way down again.



Note how the rough track leads from the other side of the dam and up into the fields; here (bottom right) we are returning down the path we came up, with views of the dam in front of us.





This area in the right weather can be absolutely stunning, but do not bother on a cloudy or misty day.

