

Walk **WOC 02**
Location: Usk Reservoir

Directions: Right out of castle, first left opposite Tafan y Garreg pub, over the mountain on single track roads for about 8 miles. At first T junction you come to, turn left, carry on for another three miles or so and turn right at the second right turning you come to (it is signposted Usk Reservoir). A mile or so along this road is the reservoir. You can use your sat nav 'find on map' facility to locate it but the place names 'Usk Reservoir and the nearby villages are not listed on my Tom Tom.

Distance (miles): 10.7
 Time (hours): 0.22
 Length of Walk: 2 hours to walk all the way around.
 Dates Walked: 07/04/2008, 30/06/2008, 10/08/2008, 30/07/2009, 02/03/2010

Parking: Free
 Pop in to: Trecastle for the antique shop – or eat in the pub in Trecastle.
 Description: A mostly level walk all around the reservoir. Go around it anti-clockwise. Either park up at the side of the Dam, and walk across the dam to join the path around the Reservoir. Or drive past the dam, around and under it, to park in the reservoir fishing boats area. Always do this walk anti-clockwise as it there are fewer choices of path to confuse you at the beginning.

There are a couple of streams to cross, both now with repaired footbridges (one bridge, now replaced, had recently got washed away so until recently you had to walk across the shallow stream). There are two slight inclines after the first bridge but mostly this walk does not go more than ten metres higher than the water level.

Very pleasant with some nice views. In particular there are excellent views looking east to the mountain tops – snow-covered in Winter. You are looking at the mountains north of the castle from here.

You do have to follow your nose to actually go around this reservoir. It is possible to get slightly lost as one or two tracks to the left which you might take in anticipation of circling around it, take you to the water's edge and are dead ends. The correct route takes you slightly away from the Reservoir after the first bridge, but you are always within a few hundred metres of the road by the time you get to the second bridge, so can't go too wrong.

Turn off to the right too soon and you will hit a road which you think is the road you came along to the reservoir, but is in fact the 'main' road – if you find yourself on this, turn left, walk along for a mile or so, and turn left at the turning of to the Reservoir (signposted to Usk Reservoir).

Common sense will get you going around it in a circular walk.

We often park up somewhere along the reservoir, just beyond the dam, then walk anti-clockwise around it. Initially you continue along the driveable road around the reservoir till the road stops. The footpath then leads off slightly to the right, before forking left to go around the reservoir.

After about half way (at the far end of the reservoir) you come to a small stream which now has a new bridge. After the stream, you will bear left following the line of the reservoir, though at some point you will be taken away from the reservoir round a few turns and over another bridge. There are a few places where the paths fork. If

you get a left turn wrong you will dead end at the reservoir itself – retrace your steps and carry on around, following your nose. If you get a right turn wrong you will eventually end up on the roads to the reservoir, in which case walk along the roads, bearing left all the time, and eventually you will come back on to the approach road you drove along to get to the reservoir.

Walk along the road with the reservoir to your left, crossing over the dam to car parking area.

This definitely one of the more pleasant and easy walks locally. It takes us 2 hours and ten minutes ambling along with the pram and including some photo stops.

There are also some woodland walks striking away from the Reservoir beyond the wooden clad Reservoir house, which we have not explored but which offer some interesting alternatives once you have circumnavigated the Reservoir a few times.

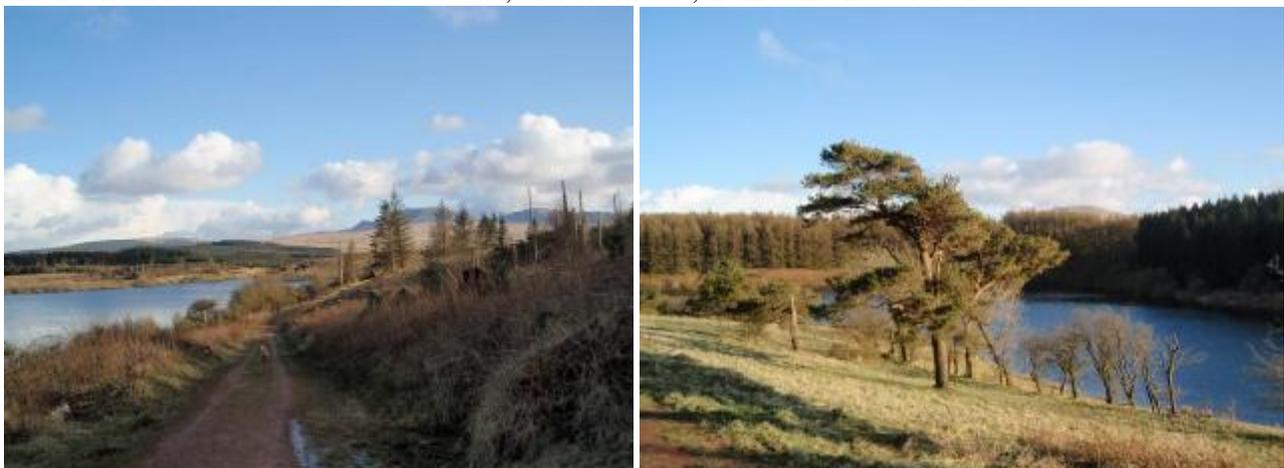
Would also be suitable for a mountain bike ride and possibly a segway.

Pictures taken on 07/04/2008:

Walk here is being done anti-clockwise keeping reservoir on your left. This is the first part of the walk.



Reservoir on left as one walks east to west, anti-clockwise, from dam end to far end.



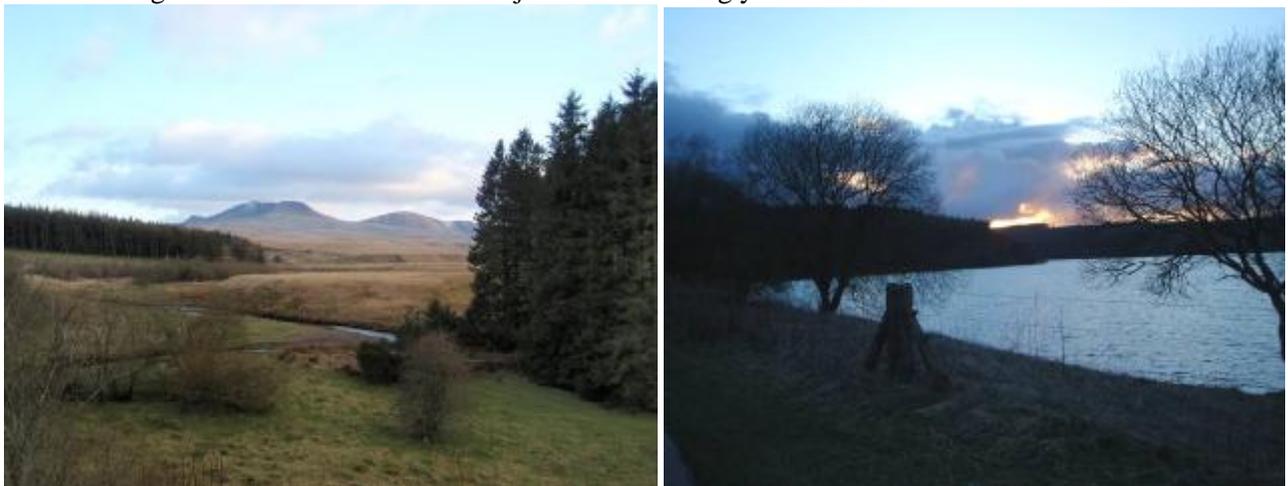
The bridge almost marks the half way point. You are at the bottom of the lake reservoir here, but the return half is little longer as the path veers away from the water for a while due to curving bays of the reservoir.



Pleasant woodland to walk through, one small section of hillwork but mostly you are on the same level all the way around the edge of the reservoir.



View looking West towards the mountains just north of Craig y Nos Castle.



Pictures taken on 30/06/2008:

Start of walk on left picture. The woodland part of walk in the right pic, a little while after the bridge.



Soon after this area, you turn left to continue the line of the lake.



Here we are crossing the dam at the car park end of the reservoir. You can park in front of this dam, rather than drive all around to the Reservoir land. Picture on right shows the view of the reservoir from the area where you can park your car within the grounds of the reservoir itself.



Pictures taken on 10/08/2008:

The old bridge (pic left) subsequently collapsed, but a new one has been built since. At one point one had to cross the stream on foot, which we did with a pram; we did not know the bridge had been washed away at the time. Not to be deterred, we carried the baby over first, then carried the pram, and we continued round.



Beginning of walk – you can park at this spot.



Some interesting, and interested, curious sheep. Normally there are no sheep on the reservoir walk so dogs can run loose. There are sheep in a fenced off area below the dam itself but this is not an area you walk along.

