



First
transforming travel

top tourism attractions by bus in Vale of Neath & Afan Valley



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Scenery & heritage to explore & enjoy

Summer 2007

further information **mwyo**
wybodaeth

timetable ENQUIRIES **ymholiadau** AMSERLEN



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www.traveline.info
txt **84268**

For general travel information nationwide

Am wybodaeth theithio cyffredinaol ledled y wlad

customer SERVICES
Monday - Friday 0800 - 1700
01792 572255

gwasaethau CWSMERIAID
Dydd Llun i dydd Gwener 0800 - 1700
01792 572255

www.firstgroup.com
For local bus and rail information

www.firstgroup.com
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national rail ENQUIRIES
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For rail timetable and fares information

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Bus Users UK exists to help you get the best from your bus services. If you need advice or help or if you have complained about a bus service and have not had a satisfactory response, contact us on 02920 221370 or wales@bususers.org.



Mae Bus Users UK yn bodoli i'ch helpu i gael y gorau o'ch gwasanaethau bus. Os oes angen cyngor neu gymorth amoch, neu os ydych wedi cwyno am wasanaeth bus a heb gael ymateb bodihaol, cysylltwch â ni ar 02920 221370 neu wales@bususers.org.

contact US **cysylltwch** Æ NI

We are keen to hear your views on issues affecting your travel with First. Please contact us by calling our customer service line on **01792 572255** - open from 0800 to 1700, Monday to Friday or by clicking the 'Contact Us' section of our website.

Rydym bob amser yn awyddus i glywed eich barn am faterion sy'n effeithio ar eich teithio gyda First. Cysylltwch â ni drwy alw'n llinell gwasanaethau cwsmeriaid ar **01792 572255** - ar agor o 0800 i 1700 dydd Llun i dydd Gwener neu drwy glicio ar yr adran 'Cysylltwch â Ni' ar ein gwefan.

All information is correct as of June 2007, but subject to change. Mae'r holl wybodaeth yn gywir ym Mehefin 2007, ond yn ddarostyngedig i newid

The freedom to go wherever you want by bus!

FirstDay ticket Swansea Bay **£3.20***
FirstDay Family Swansea Bay **£7.60** up to 4 people - max. 2 adults
FirstWeek ticket Swansea Bay **£15**

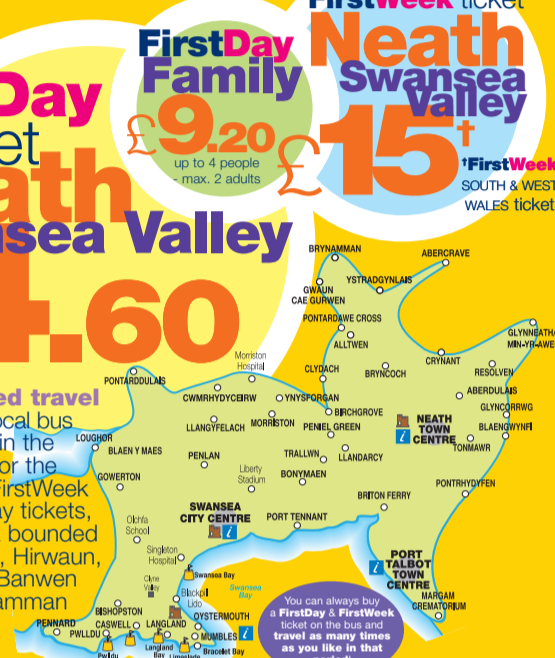
*after 10.00am Mon-Fri, all day, at weekends and Bank Holidays £3.80 before 10.00am

For unlimited travel on First local bus services in the Swansea Bay, and Neath area



FirstDay ticket Neath Swansea Valley **£4.60**
FirstDay Family Neath Swansea Valley **£9.20** up to 4 people - max. 2 adults
FirstWeek ticket Neath Swansea Valley **£15**

For unlimited travel on First local bus services in the area as for the FirstDay & FirstWeek Swansea Bay tickets, plus the area bounded by Abercrave, Hirwaun, Coelbren, Banwen and Brynamman



The more you travel - the greater the saving!!

fast direct frequent



Welcome!

Two easy walks to enjoy on your day out!

Explore the attractions and the countryside of the Vale of Neath, Dulais and Afan Valleys by bus.

The area boasts a number of important visitor attractions which give an insight into the area's history and landmarks. The forested, deep sided valleys are home to ancient oak and birch woodlands, providing a haven for a rich variety of wildlife. The attractions highlighted in this leaflet are situated close to regular bus services from Swansea and Neath - in many cases, even on a Sunday!

For more local bus information, contact Traveline on **0871 200 22 33**.

In the picturesque Afan Valley, the scars of the area's industrial past have now all but gone. Mature trees now line the sides of the valley which boasts fast-flowing streams and panoramic views. There is a network of walks and forestry tracks which make it easy to experience the pleasure of this miracle of land reclamation.

At the heart of the valley is Afan Forest Park, 15000 acres of forest set aside for quiet relaxation, walking, pony trekking or cycling. The park includes the South Wales Miners' Museum and cafe. From Swansea, take hourly (Monday to Saturday) **service 159**, changing at Pontrhydyfen (Oakwood) to **service 23** for the short ride to the park entrance.

We have included two comparatively easy walks in this leaflet for your enjoyment.

We're sure you'll enjoy your time out exploring the valleys around Neath and Port Talbot and we'd be pleased to hear of any new 'discoveries' you make!

Opposite are two, easy level linear walks in the Afan Valley and the Vale of Neath.

- so easy to do using First Cymru buses direct from Swansea and Neath!



The Afan Valley - Afan Forest Park to Cymmer

Distance: 5km (just over 3 miles). Time: allow 2 hours

Start at Afan Forest Park Visitor Centre, easily reached from Swansea and Neath on **service 159**; and from Port Talbot on **service 23**. Both run every hour on weekdays, daytime; the **159** also runs every hour on Sundays daytime.

The Visitor Centre provides a wonderful introduction to this magnificent 15000 acre Forest Park. Sometimes known as Little Switzerland because of its thickly forested hills, it offers a huge range of walks and cycle ways (bike hire available).

From the Visitor Centre follow the well-waymarked walking and cycling trail due east along the riverside. The trail uses the trackbed of the former Rhondda & Swansea Bay railway which linked the coalfields of the Rhondda with docks at Port Talbot and Swansea. Its level path, offering fine views along the narrow, thickly wooded, winding valley leads to the former mining village of Cymmer, in its picturesque setting. There are a couple of local pubs, including the well known Refreshment Rooms in former station buildings, toilets and a small interpretive area about the history of the village near the petrol station.

Bus **service 23** will take you back from Cymmer to the Visitor Centre (for return buses **23** & **159** to Neath and Swansea) and Port Talbot. On Sundays catch the **159** direct to Neath, changing there for Swansea.



Along the Neath Canal between Clyne and Aberdulais

Distance: 4km (2.5 miles). Time: 1 1/4 hours plus time to explore Aberdulais Falls - allow at least an hour

Start the walk at Clyne (Cyd Terrace stop), easily reached from Swansea and Neath on **service X5** which runs every 30 minutes on weekdays. On Sundays the bus operates every hour after 1300 from Neath (connections from Swansea on **service 158**).

Alight at the stop on the canal side at Cyd Terrace and walk on to the towpath of the Neath Canal, following the canal through a narrow section of the Vale which carries river, canal, roads and railway between thickly wooded hills.

The 13 mile Neath Canal between Glynneath and Giant's Grave near Briton Ferry was opened in 1799 and helped bring industrial development to the Vale of Neath until closure through railway and road competition in 1934. It is being re-opened in stages with occasional trip boats on navigable stretches in the summer months.

You will soon arrive at Aberdulais Basin, where the 8 mile long Tennant Canal branches off to Port Tennant in Swansea. Notable features include a skew bridge, an aqueduct and a 10-arched railway viaduct over the River Neath. Bear left, past the Railway Tavern, turning right onto the road and right again along a paved footpath, going under the railway and main road to emerge on the old main road almost opposite the entrance to Aberdulais Falls.

Your return bus (**158** through to Swansea and **154** & **158** to Neath - both services weekdays; Sundays **158** hourly only) departs from the bus stop near the Falls Entrance.

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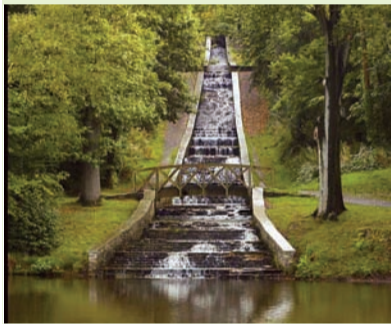
Afan Forest Park

Afan Forest Park is home to ten waymarked walks and is officially the venue of one of Britain's best mountain biking trails. Listen for the drumming of woodpeckers as you walk through mature woodlands. This visitor centre also houses the South Wales Miners Museum.

Contact: Afan Forest Park Visitor Centre on **01639 850564**, www.afanforestpark.co.uk

Getting there: **Service 159 hourly** from Swansea (from 0850 on Mon-Sat or from 0930 on Sun) or Neath, change to connecting service 23 at Pontrhydyfen. **Service 23 hourly** from Port Talbot on Mon-Sat. Bus stop adjacent to Visitor Centre

Gnoll Country Park



Many features still remain in this beautiful and historic garden where you can stroll around the lake or take a break in the visitor centre. Listen to the sound of cascading water as you walk the waymarked paths through the woods. Enjoy the view beside one of the 18th century ponds.

Contact: The Visitor Centre on **01639 635808**

Getting there: **Service X5 every half hour** from Swansea on Mon-Sat or service 158 hourly on Sundays; alight at Victoria Gardens, half a mile from main entrance.

Craig Gwladys

With spectacular views over the lower Vale of Neath, Craig Gwladys boasts a network of waymarked paths through splendid scenery.

Contact: The Tourist Information Centre **01639 636674**
Aberdulais@nationaltrust.org.uk
www.npt.gov.uk/discover

Getting there: **Service 158 hourly** from Swansea or Neath daily. **Service 154 hourly** from Neath - Mon-Sat. Alight at Cadoxton Green Dragon or Cilfrew (154)

Waterfall Country

Nowhere else in Wales is there the richness and diversity of waterfalls within such a small area as can be found in the Vale of Neath. In addition to the more accessible Melincourt and Aberdulais Falls, the deep gorges of the Rivers Mellte, Hepste and Nedd Fechan provide opportunities for the casual and more experienced walkers.

Note of caution - some of the walks require proper care and preparation before and during your walk.

A booklet on Waterfall Walks in Neath Port Talbot is available from the Tourist Information Centre.

Contact: The Tourist Information Centre **01639 636674**
Aberdulais@nationaltrust.org.uk
www.npt.gov.uk/waterfalls

Getting there: Hourly Sunday **Service 158** from Swansea, changing to **X5** at Neath. Alight at Min-yr-Awel.



Bus Routes to local attractions



Glyncoed Mountain Bike Centre & Ponds

Set amidst the beautiful mountain scenery of the Afan Forest Park, the ponds are perfect for camping, fishing and canoeing. The Glyncoed Ponds Mountain Bike Centre, which houses a café and biking facilities, is based at the start of two world class mountain bike trails.

Contact: The Glyncoed Ponds Co-operative on **01639 851900**, www.glyncoedponds.com
www.afanforestpark.co.uk
www.aswildasyouwantit.com

Getting there: **Service 159 hourly** from Swansea or Neath, change to **service 23** at Pontrhydyfen and **service 36** at Cymmer, hourly Mon-Sat. **Service 23 hourly** from Port Talbot, change to **connecting service 36** at Cymmer. Bus stop in Glyncoed Village.

Pant-Y-Sais Fen

A nature reserve and site of Special Scientific Interest and one of the few remaining wetlands in the region. The flora and fauna of the wetland can be viewed from environmentally friendly boardwalk paths.

Contact: The Tourist Information Centre **01639 636674**
Aberdulais@nationaltrust.org.uk
www.npt.gov.uk/discover

Getting there: **Service 158 hourly** from Swansea or Neath daily. Alight at Jersey Marine Village.

Neath & Tennant Canals

There are two sections of the canal for visitors to enjoy. Experience working lock gates, tree-lined routes and a quaint coffee shop as you navigate this romantic example of industrial revolution ingenuity, made famous by the novelist Alexander Cordell. The "Thomas Dadford" leaves Neath from Morrisons/B&Q daily during school summer holidays except Sundays. It will run on Saturdays until September.

Contact: For information on the Thomas Dadford **01792 772776**. For further information on the Enfys **01639 813757** or **01639 710576**
www.cordellcountry.org

Getting there: For Resolven Lock, **service X5 half hourly** from Swansea & Neath, Mon-Sat. Alight at Resolven Turn. Also bus stop at Rheola. For Aberdulais Basin see directions for Aberdulais Falls, Basin is 1/4 mile walk from Aberdulais.

Neath Abbey

Founded in 1130 by the Norman Baron Richard de Granville and described as the "Fairest Abbey in all Wales" by the Tudor historian John Leland. The Abbey enjoyed varying fortunes, even serving as an early copper works after the dissolution. Situated near an industrial area, the Abbey's location on the banks of the Tennant Canal makes it a tranquil and memorable site for the visitor.

Contact: CADW on **01443 336000**

Getting there: **Services 158, 159, two per hour**, from Swansea, Mon-Sat. **Services 140, 143, 158 and 159**, four per hour, from Neath, Mon-Sat. **Service 158 hourly**, from Swansea or Neath on Sunday. 1/4 mile from Neath Abbey bus stop.

Neath Museum & Art Gallery

Currently situated in Neath Leisure Centre, Dyfed Road. The Museum contains displays and artefacts portraying aspects of Neath's rich cultural heritage. The Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday to Saturday throughout the year.

Contact: **01639 645726**, www.npt.gov.uk/discover

Getting there: Within walking distance of Victoria Gardens Bus Station, Neath.



Cefn Coed Colliery Museum

A magnificent steam winding engine, simulated gallery and fascinating display of mining tools and equipment are the highlights of this famous museum, housed in the original buildings of the former Cefn Coed Colliery.

Contact: **01639 750556**, www.npt.gov.uk/discover

Getting there: **Service 158 hourly** from Swansea or Neath daily. Bus stop adjacent to Museum

National Trust Aberdulais Falls

Now home to the Tourist Information Centre, the industrial heritage of this area goes back to 1584, when copper was first manufactured. Iron smelting and corn milling followed, with a tinplate works being built around 1830. As well as powering industries for over 500 years, this magnificent waterfall inspired artist J M W Turner in 1795. Today the site houses Europe's largest electricity-generating water wheel.

Contact: **01639 636674**, www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Getting there: **Service 158 hourly** from Swansea and Neath, Daily. **Service 154 hourly** from Neath, Mon-Sat. Bus stop adjacent to Aberdulais Falls.

