

Key Information

Llyn Padarn is part of Padarn Country Park and is one of the largest natural lakes in Wales, with spectacular views of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon), Dolbadarn Castle and the Llanberis Pass. This is a truly diverse paddle trail, taking you past the village of Llanberis, the ancient woodland of Coed Dinorwig and the National Slate Museum.

Start and finish:

Gilfach Ddu,
Padarn Park,
LL55 4TY

Portages: 0

Time: 1–2 hours

Distance: 3.7 miles (circular)

OS Map: Explorer OL17
Snowdon/Yr Wyddfa



For more

information

scan the QR code
or visit:

bit.ly/3i3dhqt



This route can be paddled in either direction and from 3 main access points. The anticlockwise direction is described here, starting and finishing at the Gilfach Ddu lagoons.

The majority of the bank is privately owned – please only use the access points, picnic areas etc. detailed here.

Llyn Padarn is an open stretch of water and the wind can have a real bearing on time and ability to paddle. The route can be adapted or shortened. There is no lifeguard or safety cover on site.

1. Park in the Gilfach Ddu car park (pay and display, accessible bays). There is a café, picnic area, watersports centre and toilets (accessible) at the site. Follow the sign for the Snowdon Star lake cruise. This will take you to the lake shore and pontoon (accessible) (100m, level, hard path). Launch from the pontoon or shore (level, slate waste). Paddle around the jetty for the Snowdon Star and head north, keeping the shore on your right. Or, depending on your craft (and flexibility!) you can paddle through the lagoons. Immediately after the jetty follow the shore to a small slate footbridge. Paddle under this into the lagoon beyond. Exit this via a second small bridge into the next lagoon. Exit this via the large arched bridge, into the lake and paddle north (shore on your right).

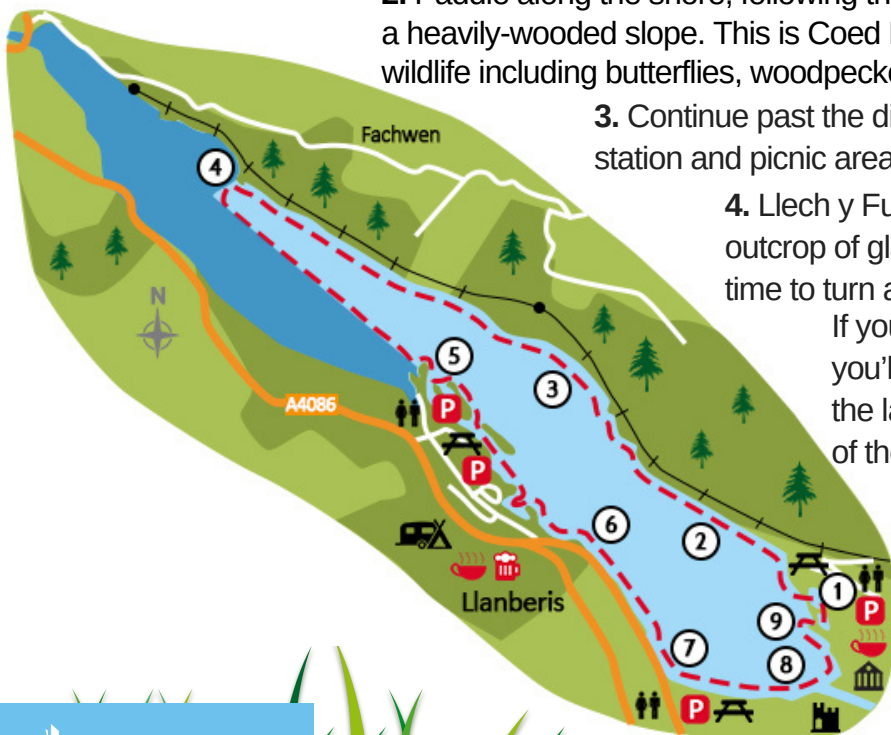
2. Paddle along the shore, following the Llanberis Lake Railway, which runs beneath a heavily-wooded slope. This is Coed Dinorwig: an ancient woodland site rich in wildlife including butterflies, woodpeckers and redstarts.

3. Continue past the disused quarry buildings and on to Cei Llydan station and picnic area (private).

4. Llech y Fulfran is an obvious waypoint: it's an impressive outcrop of glacially smoothed rock. When you reach this it's time to turn and head back down the lake.

If you turnaround and look down the opposite shore you'll see a small wooded headland jutting out into the lake. Aim for this and enjoy the stunning views of the Llanberis Pass and Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon).

There is a protected habitat beyond Llech y Fulfran, so please don't paddle beyond it.



5. The convoluted stretch of wooded shore forms the lagoons; it's worth staying close to shore and exploring these hidden waterways. There are benches dotted along the banks, accessed by a level, slate waste shoreline. The final lagoon is home to the much-photographed 'lone tree'. If you follow the shore to the end of the lagoons you'll find the floating pontoon, for alternative access. There are public toilets here (100m, accessible, seasonal), and Snowdonia Watersports and café (100m). This is an alternative access point (Y Glyn), with parking (currently free) about 10m from the water.
6. From the lagoons continue paddling south, towards Llanberis. Keep an eye out for Llafn y Cewri – the Blade of the Giants. It's hard to miss! There is a car park here (pay and display) which is the closest access point to the village, however, access to/from the water is tricky. There is an easier option further along. On a clear day you can see Dolbadarn Castle rising above the trees at the far end of the lake, framed by the Llanberis Pass.
7. A concrete slipway marks an easier access point for the village. There is a large picnic area with benches if you fancy a break, or there are plenty of cafés, pubs and shops, and public toilets (accessible) in the village (100m, pavement/road). This is an alternative access point (pay and display, accessible bays).
8. Paddle past the pretty Cae'r Ddol water meadows and across Afon y Bala, which leads to Llyn Peris (reservoir). Afon y Bala is a protected habitat so please don't paddle into it.
9. The pontoon and jetty mark the end of your trip – exit via either the pontoon or the adjacent shoreline.



Looking towards the Llanberis Pass



Gilfach Ddu lagoon © Robin Drayton (cc-by-sa-2.0)

Llyn Padarn is a glacially formed, moraine-dammed lake. It is approximately 2 miles long, ¼ mile wide, with a maximum depth of 29m, making it one of the largest natural lakes in Wales. At its south-eastern end it is linked to the neighbouring Llyn Peris (the lower reservoir of the Dinorwig power station).

The lake sits within Padarn Country Park – an 800-acre site owned by Gwynedd Council with walking trails, wildlife, adventure activities, industrial heritage and the Llanberis Lake Railway. The Gilfach Ddu site, where the trail starts, has a café, craft workshops, and the National Slate Museum. It's well worth taking the time to explore the site and take in some of the history, scenery and activities.

The large village of Llanberis lies on the southern bank of the lake. Known as 'the gateway to Snowdon' it is a popular start for the walk to the summit of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon) and is the departure point for the Snowdon Mountain Railway.

The local angling association has fishing rights around all of the lake. If you see people fishing please give them a plenty of space.

Boat/equipment hire/sales are available at Boulder Adventures (Gilfach Ddu) and Snowdonia Watersports (Y Glyn). To check conditions Snowdonia Watersports have a live webcam: www.snowdoniawatersports.com

Please follow the Llyn Padarn water safety guidelines when paddling on the lake. All organised groups or commercial activities on the lake require a licence. For details visit: www.bit.ly/3i2I72z

Llyn Padarn is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) please follow the Waterside Code and Check, Clean and Dry to prevent the spread of invasive species www.bit.ly/3AMCMX7

Further information can be found at the following websites:

www.canoewales.com

www.britishcanoeing.org.uk

www.gopaddling.info

Padarn Country Park: www.bit.ly/3i2I72z

www.snowdoniawatersports.com

www.boulderadventures.co.uk



Safety and Licences

We want you to enjoy a safe trip, so here are a few tips for staying safe and paddling responsibly.

Paddle Safe. Be prepared and take the right kit:

- Wear a correctly sized buoyancy aid
- Mobile phone – in a waterproof case
- Whistle – to attract attention in case of emergency
- Map and/or route description
- Appropriate clothing for the weather conditions + spares in a dry bag
- Food, drink & suncream!

Paddle Responsibly. Respect the natural environment and other users:

- Respect other waterway users #sharethespace
- Be environmentally aware, minimise your impact
- Ensure you have the correct licence if required
- Observe navigational rules – keep right and give other users space
- Check, Clean, Dry after every trip!

Licences: The waterway on this trail doesn't require you to have a licence to paddle on it. However if you paddle regularly you should consider becoming a member of Canoe Wales (or British Canoeing if you live in England). Membership gives you a whole range of benefits including a licence to paddle on 4500km of Britain's waterways and Civil Liability Insurance, worth up to £10 million. Not only will membership help save you money, it will give you peace of mind when out on the waterways. For more information on Canoe Wales membership please click [here](#).