

### Key Information

This stretch of the River Teifi has it all: a beautiful gorge, abundant wildlife, historic castles, peaceful woodland and busy quays. And, if you time it right, tidal assistance from start to finish.

**Start:** Llechryd Bridge  
SA43 2QA

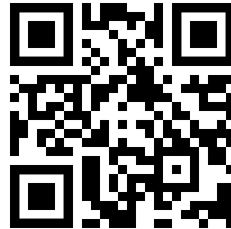
**Finish:** Patch Beach  
SA43 1PP

**Portages:** 0

**Time:** 2–3.5 hours

**Distance:** 7 miles (one-way)

**OS Map:** Explorer 198  
Cardigan & New Quay



For more  
information  
scan the QR code  
or visit:  
[bit.ly/3i8Bjk6](https://bit.ly/3i8Bjk6)



This section is tidal – if you leave Llechryd just before high tide (at Cardigan town) you'll be assisted by the outgoing tide and will avoid the worst of the mudflats. For tide times visit: [www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide](http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide)

1. Start at Llechryd Bridge. Drive over the bridge towards Castell Cilgerran. Immediately after the bridge turn left down a lane. On the right there is a layby with space for a few cars. To access the river walk back towards the bridge. On the left, between the hotel gatehouse and the river, is a gravel track. This is a public footpath and there is a small path down to the riverbank. (It is approx 100m from the layby to the river.) Alternatively, the footpath continues to a slipway (100m down the footpath). This is owned by Adventure Beyond – they are happy for paddlers to use the slipway or launch from the left bank between the bridge and the slipway; however, consider making a donation to the Save Our Rivers fund!

2. This tree-lined stretch is really pretty. There can be the occasional tree in the river, so keep an eye out.

3. After 2.5km you'll come to a grassy picnic area on the left bank, with benches, toilets (accessible) and parking (free). This is Cilgerran: it is a beautiful spot and is an excellent alternative access point. The flora, fauna and history of the area is described on information boards, and a riverside footpath leads to Cilgerran Castle. The village of Cilgerran can be accessed up a lane (300m, steep), and has shops, cafes and pubs.

4. The river continues to wind between the wooded banks, gaining a little more flow, with the twin towers of Cilgerran Castle (Cadw/National Trust) rising high above the trees.



- 5.** You're now deep into the Teifi Gorge. Lined with steep, densely wooded banks, it is a haven for wildlife. Dependent on the water levels and tide, there can be a grade 1 rapid at the bottom – and there can be the occasional tree in the river – so pay attention.
- 6.** The Welsh Wildlife Centre is on the left, with café and toilets (accessible), nature walks and hides. This is a great place for lunch and to see the resident wildlife. If you're lucky you might see otters and kingfishers. Paddle past the canoes/jetty (private launch) and there are a couple of spots where you can get out. The main centre and cafe are about 300m away along hard-packed paths.
- 7.** Beyond the centre, dependent on levels, there can be a grade 1 rapid. From here the river starts to widen out and becomes more tidal. This can be exposed to the wind with mudflats at low water.
- 8.** Cardigan Bridge is a very obvious landmark! This is the more modern bridge that carries the A487. The other is a more historic stone bridge about 300m further downstream. On the right bank are the imposing walls of Cardigan Castle, which dates back to 1176.
- There are a number of access options in Cardigan:
- Between the two bridges:
- RHS – Gloster Row car park and slipway. Pay and display (accessible bay). Small car park, awkward access for vans. Slipway is blocked by large flood defence sandbags.
  - LHS – Cattle Market slipway. Street-side parking (100m from water). Slipway cannot be driven onto.
- After second/stone bridge
- RHS – Quay car park and slipway. Pay and display (accessible bays). Slipway is gated and 20m from car park. Large car park but slipway can be muddy. Toilets 100m (not accessible).
- 9.** Continue along the estuary to St Dogmaels. As the river bends round to the right, there is a concrete slipway on the left (access option). You can drive to it; however, there is limited parking nearby. The nearest public car park is High Street (free, accessible bays) with toilets (accessible). There is a hard-surface path from the back of the car park to the slipway (200m).
- 10.** As the river straightens, The Ferry Inn is on the left. It has a pontoon and is a good place to stop for a drink.
- 11.** The next major landmark is the large floating pontoon on the left, 150m after The Ferry Inn. Behind this is the 'mermaid slipway' (alternative access point) – a concrete slipway which can be driven onto, with roadside parking alongside. There are benches and ... a large stone mermaid!
- 12.** From here the river really widens and you are now coming into the main estuary. There can be a big tidal flow from here down, and it can be exposed to the wind.
- 13.** There is a large bay on the right which can be a mudflat in low water. Patch Beach is at the back of this. There is a floating pontoon at the far end of the bay, at the point where the estuary narrows. It sits in a channel so is accessible at low water. It is possible to drive onto the beach to the floating pontoon or to the water's edge. It is also possible to park on the beach; however, it can flood in big tides.
- 14.** Poppit Sands is an alternative egress point; however, it can be 400m from the water to the car park. There is also a potentially dangerous sandbar at the end of the beach.

Cilgerran Castle dates back to 1108 – it is thought that the original castle was built by Gerald of Windsor, a Norman lord. Over the following 200 years, it was captured and retaken numerous times. During this period it was fortified with two round towers and a central keep, which are still standing. By 1400 it was abandoned, but in the 18th century it attracted new attention with visitors sailing up the river to view the romantic ruins, including JMW Turner, who painted several views of the castle.

The Teifi Gorge is one of the few tidal gorges in Wales. With steep, thickly wooded banks and tidal flows, it is a unique habitat for wildlife, such as otter, kingfisher and salmon. For hundreds of years it played a key role in coracle fishing and slate quarrying, but is now a central part of the Teifi Marshes Nature Reserve.

The Welsh Wildlife Centre is an award-winning wetland reserve, with nature walks, bird hides, café and resident water buffalo! The reserve is home to some of the most wonderful flora and fauna in Wales including otter, deer, kingfisher, warblers and dragonflies.

Cardigan (Aberteifi) is a busy market town with narrow streets, brightly painted shops, great food and a friendly vibe. It is steeped in history and is the birthplace of the National Eisteddfod of Wales, first held here in 1176. Today it still hosts a number of annual festivals and is home to the historic Cardigan Castle. There are a number of paddlesport hire and guiding companies based in and around Cardigan.

Further information can be found at the following websites:

[www.canoewales.com](http://www.canoewales.com)

[www.britishcanoeing.org.uk](http://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk)

[www.gopaddling.info](http://www.gopaddling.info)

[www.cadw.gov.wales](http://www.cadw.gov.wales)

[www.welshwildlife.org](http://www.welshwildlife.org)

[www.visitmidwales.co.uk](http://www.visitmidwales.co.uk)

[www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide](http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide)



## 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](#).