

VALE OF GLAMORGAN
AMBASSADOR



LLYSGENNAD
BRO MORGANNWG

Naturally; The Vale of Glamorgan

'The Vale of Glamorgan & Glamorganshire'

Not surprisingly, historical records about the Vale of Glamorgan, often refer to just 'Glamorgan' or Glamorganshire' and each will be mentioned in this account.

Glamorgan or, sometimes, *Glamorganshire* was one of the thirteen historic counties of Wales. It was originally an early medieval petty kingdom of varying boundaries known as Glywysing until taken over by the Normans as a lordship. In later years, Glamorganshire was represented by the three counties of Mid Glamorgan, South Glamorgan and West Glamorgan. The name now survives in Vale of Glamorgan, the most southerly county in Wales, neighbouring those of Cardiff, Bridgend and Rhondda Cynon Taff.

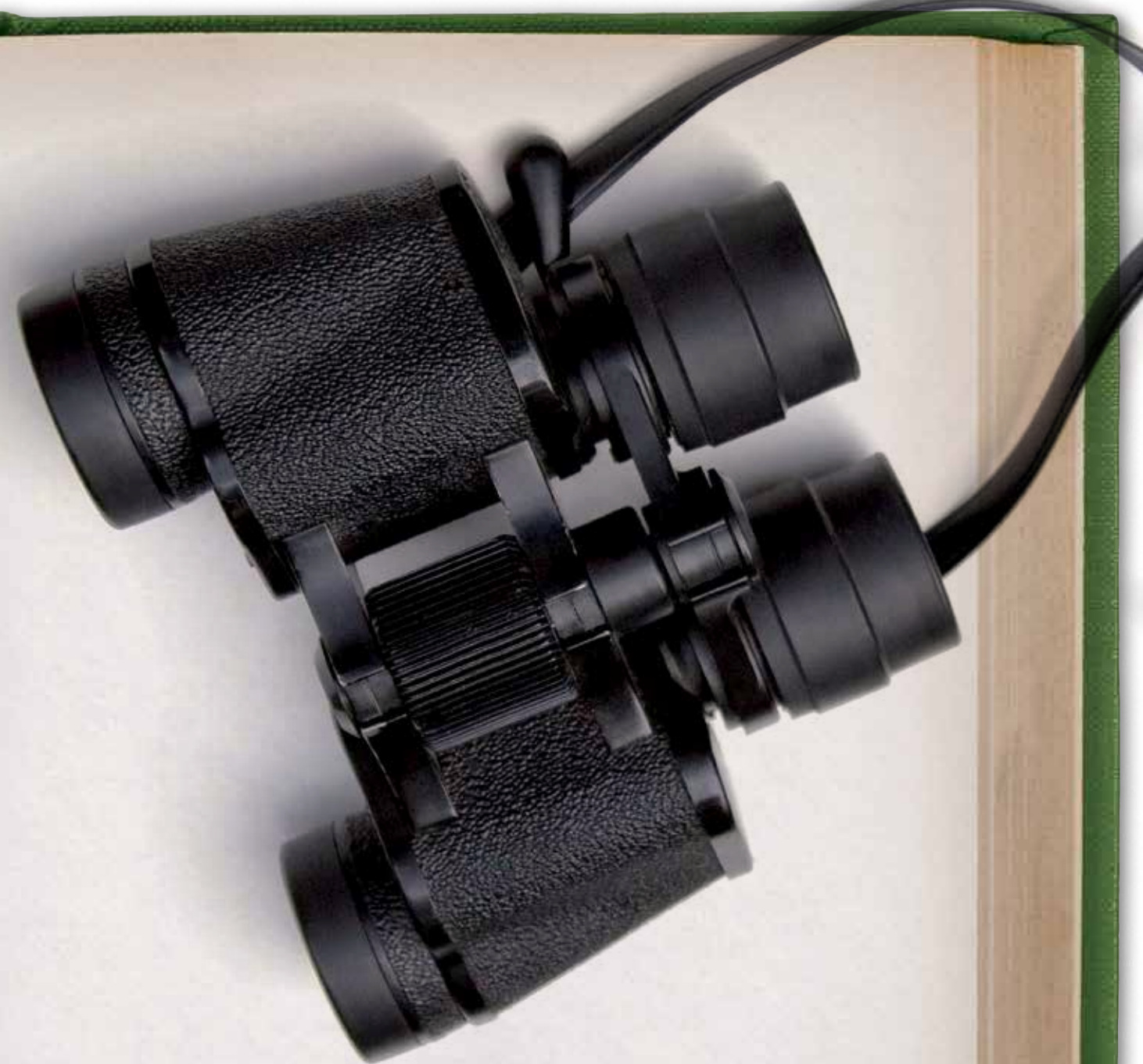
Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan is home to rich and varied array of wildlife species that find their habitats in the area's range of coastal, moorland and agricultural habitats. Its fascinating geology make it a mecca for geologists, fossil hunters and dinosaur enthusiasts alike. This geological foundation along with its coastal dynamics - lying as it does along one of the highest tidal ranges in the world - make it a precious haven for many of our most endangered flora and fauna.

Our coastline is full of fossilized treasures. The rocks are rich in ammonites with their distinctive coiled shells as well as cockle-like bivalves, and occasional bones of marine reptiles such as the dolphin-like ichthyosaurs. The yellow and blue Liassic limestone cliffs form a distinctive backdrop for some of our most spectacular beaches, rich in rock pools and perfect for children to explore.

Wildlife and conservation agencies have been working successfully with the agricultural community in the region for decades to conserve and improve habitat management.

Ours is a gentle landscape full of natural wonders, and with an increasing lattice of footpaths and walking routes, it is joy for walking and wildlife enthusiasts young and old.



NATURE'S *Vocabulary*

ENGLISH	WELSH	PHONETICALLY
Cliff	Clogwyn	<i>Clogg-ooeen</i>
Sea	Môr	<i>Moar</i>
Coastline	Arfordir	<i>Arr-voor-dirr</i>
Fish	Pysgodyn	<i>Puss-god-inn</i>
Aderyn	Bird	<i>Add-err-inn</i>
Flower	Blodyn	<i>Blohd-inn</i>
Seaweed	Gwymon	<i>Gwimm-onn</i>
Shell	Cragen	<i>Cragg-enn</i>

A Closer Look at the Wildlife of The Vale Of Glamorgan

Yellowhammer

Unmistakable with their bright yellow heads and breast. Enjoys the open countryside and seen all year across the UK.



Choughs

Part of the crow family but with distinctive red bills and feet. Can be found diving and swooping spectacularly along our rocky coastline.



Peregrine Falcons

A large and powerful bird of prey with blue-grey back plumage and a moustache! Despite a decline in the UK, populations are starting to recover in the Vale.



Skylarks

Found in the open countryside of the Vale, these small birds have streaked brown plumage with white fringed edges, soaring vertically in the sky the skylark often 'sings' as it soars.



Bulfinch

Unmistakeable with their bright orange-pink breast and cheeks; these cheeky birds can be found in the woodlands and hedgerows, or helping themselves to the fruit crops in the various orchards in the Vale.

Linnet

The melodious song of the linnet can be heard along the glorious Glamorgan Heritage Coast, despite a steady decline in its population since the 1970s, it is now a returning and welcome sight along our coastline.



Greater Crested Newt

The Vale is committed to the conservation of the great crested newt and considers it a priority species, with much work done across the county to re-instate habitats such as ponds, including at Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park.

High Brown Fritillary Butterfly

The Alun Valley in The Glamorgan Heritage Coast supports what is thought to be the last population in Wales of the high brown fritillary. Two other species of fritillary are also found there: dark green and small pearl-bordered.



Otters

Otters are inquisitive, playful, intelligent and fast swimmers they tend to hunt at night, spending most of the day resting in their holt, a number of holts can be found at Cosmeston Lakes and Country Park.



Bluebell

Vast carpets of bluebells can be enjoyed right across the Vale, with none more spectacular than the Viaduct Woods at Porthkerry Country Park.



Herb Paris

This unusual flower can be seen at Wenvoe Community Orchard along with other rare plants such as the spikes star of Bethlehem, from late Spring to early Autumn you can see seven different species of Orchid but the best time is June when the field is covered in several thousand Common Spotted Orchids.

Find out more!

For more about wildlife in the Vale of Glamorgan, and species spotting, why not download one of these family fun packs? from www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/familyfun



Maritime Wildlife & Flora

The Vale of Glamorgan's coastline has the second highest tidal range in the world, lying as it does alongside the Severn estuary, with its tidal range of 15 metres (49ft)

While the Heritage Coast isn't usually defined as being a part of the Severn Estuary, definitions of its limits vary. A definition adopted by some maps is that the river becomes the Severn Estuary after the Second Severn Crossing near Severn Beach, South Gloucestershire and stretches to a line from Lavernock Point (south of Cardiff) to Sand Point near Weston-super-Mare.

The estuary's funnel shape, its tidal range, and the underlying geology of rock, gravel and sand, produce strong tidal streams, giving the water a notably brown coloration.

The funnel like shape of the Bristol Channel as it approaches the Severn Estuary is funnel like, which means that debris of all sorts, from far and wide are washed up along our shores – helped by southerly winds – making it a great area for beach-combing.

West of the line between Lavernock Point and Sand Point is the Bristol Channel, which in turn discharges into the Celtic Sea and the wider Atlantic Ocean. The islands of Steep Holm and Flat Holm are located close to that line, in the middle of the estuary.





Rock Pools

The high tidal range and interesting geology make the Glamorgan Heritage coast among the best areas for children in particular to begin to develop an interest in marine life by exploring the many rock-pools, teeming with life, which abound along the coast - particularly at Southerndown beach. The coastal rangers organise regular rock pooling sessions to help identify the wealth of marine wildlife that abound in these rock-pools.



Available to download



Honeycomb worm

The Honeycomb worm is a reef-forming *polychaete*, or bristle worm. They are brightly coloured and range in size from between 1 mm and 3 m long, and form deep burrows in sand and coastal mud, that reach to the depths of the ocean. Coral-like structures of tubes, which are their burrows are known as Honeycombwork rock can be seen along the Vale of Glamorgan coastline, particularly to the east of Trwyn y Witch near Southerndown and on Cwm Nash beach.



Sand Smelt

The Sand Smelt is a common species of marine fish in the north-eastern Atlantic. They live in shoals near the water surface, but move into deeper waters during the winter.

Slim-bodies with small heads but large eyes, they are common in the English Channel. Their back and upper sides are a translucent green with black specks of the scale edges. Along their sides is an intense broad silvery band that passes into the white of their belly.

They are often found in the shallows along the Vale Heritage Coast, darting around paddlers ankles, sometimes individually, but more often in small groups and in deeper waters in larger shoals. They are also sometimes found trapped in deeper rock-pools until the tide washes them out to sea again.



Coastal Flowers

In spring and summer, the coastal path along the cliff edges of the Vale are awash with wild coastal flora including thrift, sea campion and sea holly.

The grasslands and glacial valleys along the Heritage coast are also the perfect habitat for the increasingly rare Cowslip. This extremely well known and popular wild flower has declined dramatically between the 1950s and the 1980s. The Cowslip grows to a height of 20-30 cm when in full flower, with leaves that go up to 10-15cm. It produces delicate yellow flowers 1-2cm, usually between March and May. Its preferred habitat is open grassland either slightly alkali or neutral in nature. It also requires a generous amount of light in order to flower and is not successful in woodlands or under tall plants. The grasslands in the glacial valleys along the Heritage Coast are a perfect habitat, and swathes of deep yellow flowers can be found in the coastal valleys in spring.



Nature and Wildlife Reserves and SSI Sites In The Vale

Wildlife Trust Reserves in the Vale:

COED GARNLLWYD near Bonvilston (ST 057 711)

Coed Garnllwyd forms part of a woodland complex that occupies the southern and eastern sides of the small Nant Whitton and Nant Llancarfan valleys. It is a great example of an ancient broadleaved woodland and the site includes some scrub and meadow.

COED Y BWL near St Bride's Major (SS 909 749)

This ancient ash woodland is situated on the northwest side of the Alun Valley adjacent to St Brides. It is renowned as a wild daffodil wood, turning field layer on the southern part of the wood into a blaze of yellow gold during the early spring together with Wood Anemone, whilst on the northern slopes, bluebells make a fragrant carpet in April – May.



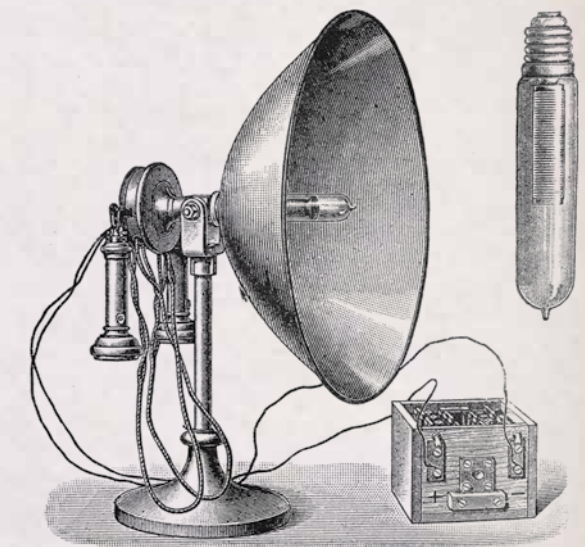
LAVERNOCK POINT near Penarth (ST 181 681)

Lavernock Point has a number of different habitats, principally coastal Jurassic limestone grassland and scrub. Importantly, the Oak Copse north of Fort Road is home to the elusive Purple Hairstreak butterfly

The Old Hayfield south of Fort Road was last cut for hay in 1984. Since then, meadow species have recolonized there, forming an important habitat for a number of important meadow species.

The North and South Meadows are separated by a belt of scrub containing a World War II Battery. This is now a listed Ancient Monument.

Interestingly, it was from Lavernock point that Marconi transmitted and received the first wireless signals over open sea between the mainland and Flat Holm Island in the Channel on 13 May 1897.



CWM COLHUW near Llantwit Major (SS 960 674)

This reserve is situated on the southern slope along the river Colhuw. It is important as an example of coastal calcareous grassland and ash woodland and scrub. It also contains part of the boundary bank and ditches of an Iron Age Promontory Fort.

For further information see: <http://www.welshwildlife.org/nature-reserves/glamorgan/>

Woodland Trust Reserves in the Vale:

CWM GEORGE AND CASEHILL WOODS near Dinas Powys (ST 153 723)

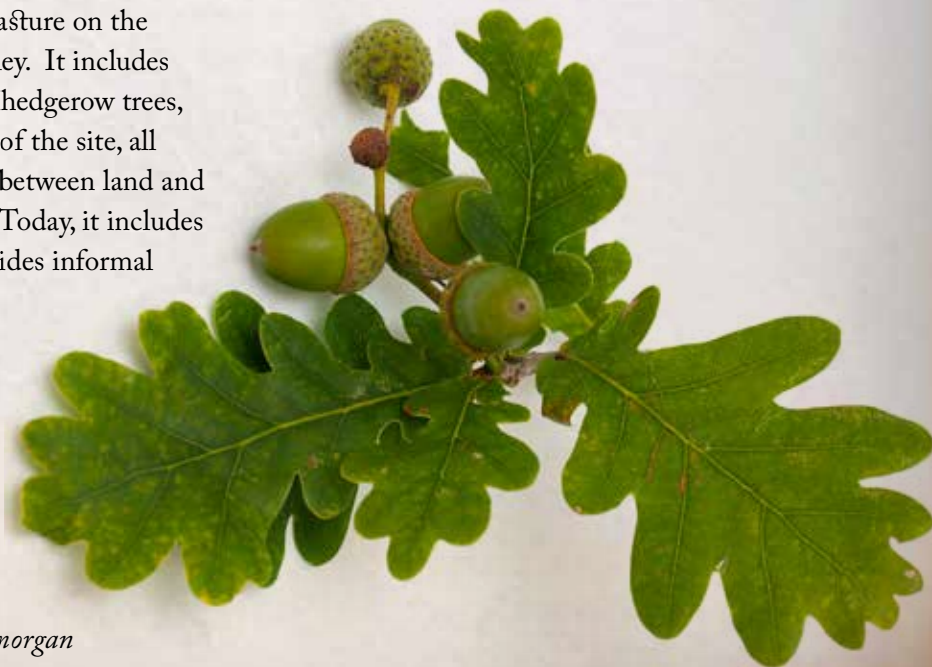
This Woodland Trust reserve is part of a concentration of ancient woodlands west of Cardiff. Due to land acquisitions over time, the site has developed varied habitats, and part of the important work of the Trust at this reserve is to restore this ancient woodland through appropriate planting and the development of new native woodland. These two woodland reserves are now linked by a lattice of footpaths.

The main restoration phase has been completed with the removal of larch from the site. It now consists of mixed broadleaved woodland dominated by oak and ash.

Dinas Powys Hillfort is hidden amongst the woods here.

WORNEY WOOD near Llysworney (SS 963 745)

This woodland reserve sits on a gently sloping, west facing area of improved pasture on the northern outskirts of Llysworney. It includes an ancient tree and several old hedgerow trees, with a duck pond to the south of the site, all which point to the interaction between land and landowners over the centuries. Today, it includes new native woodland and provides informal access for the public to enjoy.



MONKS WOOD near Wick (SS 914 717)

This is a relatively small and relatively new site that was planted by the Woodland Trust and members of the nearby community of Wick in November 2000. It is located in a mostly unwooded landscape sloping towards the sea, and consists of native broadleaved trees and shrubs.

At the wetter northern end of the reserve is a pond, adjacent to an area of willow planting that both contributes to the site's increasing ecological diversity as well as creating a beautiful spot to sit and wonder or enjoy a picnic.

For further information about the Woodland Trust and its activities in the area see www.woodlandtrust.org.uk



Local Nature Reserves:

WENVOE ORCHID FIELD near Wenvoe (ST 119 735)

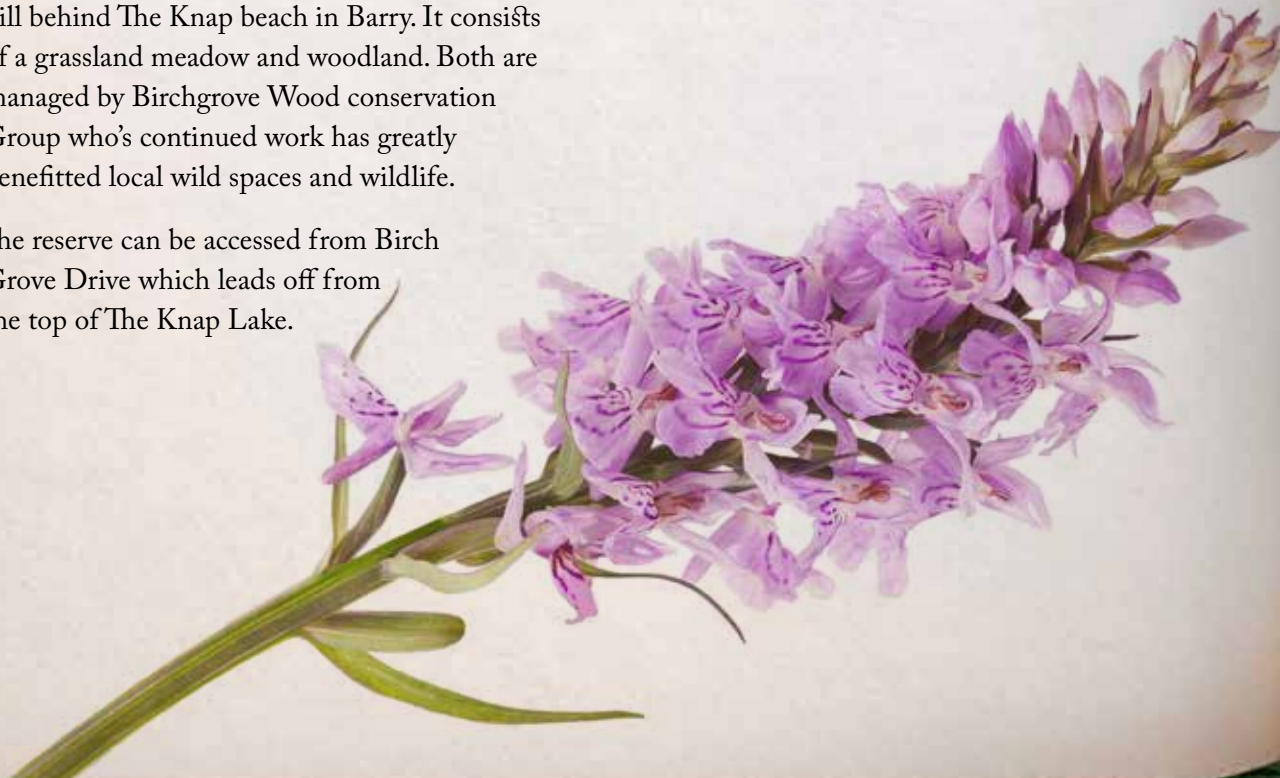
The beautiful display of thousands of common spotted orchids that flower in this site each year in June have quite understandably, led to its name. This community nature reserve is managed by Wenvoe Wildlife Group and boasts over 300 species of grasses, flowers, birds and insects. Between late spring to early autumn, seven different orchid species flower on the site, making for wondrous splashes of delicate colour right throughout the summer months.

The orchid field can be accessed by walking from Walston Road at the northern end of Wenvoe. For more information see:
www.wenvoe.org.uk/orchid.php

BIRCHGROVE WOOD in Barry (ST 098 668)

This small 4 acre nature reserve is nestled on the hill behind The Knap beach in Barry. It consists of a grassland meadow and woodland. Both are managed by Birchgrove Wood conservation Group who's continued work has greatly benefitted local wild spaces and wildlife.

The reserve can be accessed from Birch Grove Drive which leads off from the top of The Knap Lake.



CLIFF WOOD in Barry (ST 091 670)

This reserve is part of Porthkerry Country Park in Barry. It holds a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation due to the rare species of flora such as the purple gromwell and the true service tree that grow here and are of national importance. They grow alongside other endangered species that enjoy the mild climate of Barry's south-facing cliffs.

CWM TALWG NATURE RESERVE near Barry (ST104 686)

While the land here is owned by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, it is managed by the Cwm Talwg Woodlands Residents' Group for the benefit of locals and wildlife.

Its 2.85 hectares of mature deciduous woods can be accessed opposite the Cwm Talwg pub on Severn Avenue on the edge of Barry. For further information about this reserve, please contact Anne Bryan by email: a.bryan7@ntleworld.com



Country Parks and Gardens

In addition to the above, the Vale also has a number of great gardens and country parks. Here's a taste of them:

COSMESTON LAKES COUNTRY PARK near Penarth

This nature reserve boasts more than 200 acres of lakes, woodlands, meadows and nature trails to explore and enjoy. The rangers here organise a year round programme of nature spotting, watching and interactive activities for all ages. It sits alongside Cosmeston Medieval Village. For more information see: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/enjoying/visit_the_vale/penarth/cosmeston_lakes_country_park/cosmeston_lakes_country_park.aspx



PORTHKERRY COUNTRY PARK, Barry

This Country Park combines seashore, parkland, meadows and forestry and has great visitor amenities to help enjoy a day out. A network of nature trails connects the interesting habitats of the park and there are plenty of picnic and barbecue areas, a great café and even mini golf! For more information see: www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/enjoying/visit_the_vale/barry_and_barry_island/porthkerry_country_park/porthkerry_country_park.aspx



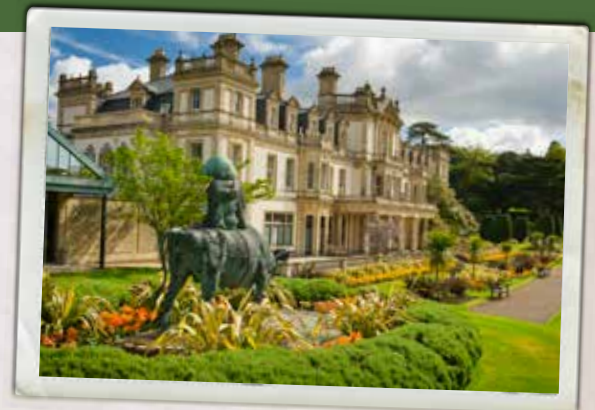
COWBRIDGE PHYSIC GARDEN

It does what it says on the bottle, and the ingredients that were traditionally in the bottle are probably in this enchanting walled garden. Tucked away just behind the main road through Cowbridge, it offers a fascinating, colourful and fragrant insight into the curative properties of plants. To find out more see: www.cowbridgephysicgarden.org.uk



DYFFRYN GARDENS, St Nicholas.

These magnificent, Grade 1 listed Edwardian Gardens are a constant wonder. Part of the gardens are set out almost as a set of formal garden rooms each with its own distinctive architectural and planting style. That, along with woodland areas, great sweeps of formal lawns, parkland landscaping and water features and an evocative kitchen garden make for a delightful visit for old and young alike. Dyffryn House is now also open to the public and managed by the National Trust. For more information see: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dyffryn-gardens/visitor-information



The Vale boasts a number of important historic gardens now in private hands. Some of these are opened to the public through the RHS scheme during the summer months. A book published by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust, South and Mid Glamorgan Branch details many of these and is well worth a look.

Home & away

Swap your **everyday** life for a **break in the Vale**. We'll help you feel right at home.

At home

This is run of the mill.
This can wait. Be put on hold.
It will still be there when you get back.

Your watch

Your sofa, the Discovery channel
and the same four walls

Hair straighteners

The morning commute

Company car

In the Vale

This is out of the ordinary.
It's an opportunity not to be missed.
This is for you. Right now.

Revert to your natural clock. Get up when you fancy. Look out the window to see what the weather's doing and take it from there.

Our great outdoors, especially when viewed from the back of a horse and you still get to sit down! **Liege Manor Equestrian Centre**, **Ogmore Farm Riding Centre** and **St Brides Major Riding & Trekking Centre** will be able to help you.

Go 'au naturel' for a change. Best 'wind in the hair' activities are **cliff-top walks** and **surfing** (if you don't mind your hair getting windy AND wet). **Southerndown Surf School** will help – all you need is a towel.

It's easy to slow down in the Vale. On a **horse-drawn carriage ride** or **bespoke chauffeur driven car tour** you'll have time to appreciate things.

Indulge your need for speed safely at the **South Wales Karting Centre** near **Llantwit Major**. Believe us, 45 mph feels very fast when you're only inches from the tarmac.

At home

Games consoles

Your hectic lifestyle and how to deal with it

Sessions on that exercise bike in the gym

50 inch plasma TV

The good old internet

A tight budget

In the Vale

Do some real (not virtual) running around for a change—It's far more exhilarating. Outdoors try **Taskforce Paintball** or **Laser Tag**, and indoors there's **Quasar**.

Get a grip on your golf clubs instead. At the **Vale Resort golfers** will be in the lap of luxury with two championship golf courses and a state-of-the-art golf coaching academy. Our nine other golf courses should keep you occupied but if you fancy playing **St Andrews** or **Pebble Beach**, head for the golf simulators at **Cottrell Park Golf Resort**.
www.valegolfbreaks.com

On a mountain bike it's not just your legs that are moving, it's the scenery. Ask **Capital Adventure Wales** and they'll show you the best views, or the shortest climbs, or even the mainly downhill bits.

No multiplex cinemas here, just distinctive venues from art centres, to village halls, cinemas by the sea and an open air cinema. Some with popcorn. All with a genuine welcome.

May we suggest some other types of nets for you to try: landing nets come in very handy at **Dyffryn Springs Fishery**, **Hazel Court Ponds**, **Seven Oaks Fishery**, **Warren Mill Farm Fishery**. **Barry Island** has volleyball nets on the beach throughout the summer, and they're free to use!

Walkings free. Try our spectacular section of the **Wales Coast Path** or download walking routes from www.valeways.org.uk. Even the annual walking festival offers free guided walks.



Getting into the Outdoors

Accessing the great outdoors and interacting with it is easy here in the Vale of Glamorgan with a plethora of organized activities and companies ready to help you do just that.

For up to date information on how to walk, surf, fish or ride in the Vale of Glamorgan, visit www.visitthevale.com or pick up a Vale of Glamorgan Guide from one of the fifty Tourism Information Points across the county.



Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

The Vale's team of Ambassadors are there to help facilitate your visit, and share their knowledge and passion for the Vale with our visitors. If you would like to know more about this dedicated team of volunteers and how they might be able to help enrich your visit, have a look at:

www.moretothevale.com or

www.lovethevale.com or

www.visitthevale.com

and check out the Ambassadors section of the site.

creative 
RURAL COMMUNITIES

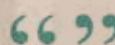



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu
Gwledig; Ewrop yn Buddsoddi
mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for
Rural Development: Europe Investing in
Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Produced by Angharad Wynne

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