

# Brecon Beacons NATIONAL PARK

## Pocket Guide

# Welcome...



On Cribyn, Brecon Beacons

...to the Brecon Beacons National Park, a unique landscape of Old Red Sandstone peaks, open moorland, green valleys, hidden waterfalls and fern-filled gorges. Explore caves and castles, vibrant villages and an array of events for a truly Welsh experience.

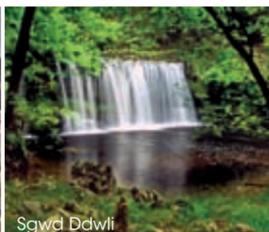
You can **see the past** wherever you go - from the mountains formed millions of years ago to the monuments left by early inhabitants - ancient standing stones, Bronze Age burial cairns, Iron Age hill forts and Roman ruins to medieval

castles and relics of the Industrial Age. You can also **glimpse into the future** - with local farmers supplying their produce to your plate and local communities embracing renewable energy and even selling electricity back to the National Grid!

Savour a taste of Wales, feel the freedom of the hills and the delights of each passing season. Discover Spring birdsong, spectacular Autumn colours and fresh clean air.



Carreg Cennen



Sgwd Ddwli



The Beacons Way



Wood Warbler



One of Britain's breathing spaces

# National Parks

## What are they?

National Parks are areas of exceptional natural beauty which benefit from special protection and management, with great opportunities for everyone to enjoy the outdoors.

## The National Park Authorities are here to:

Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Parks

Promote understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities, and;

Foster the social and economic well-being of the communities within their boundaries.

There are 14 National Parks in the UK, 3 of which are in Wales: the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia and the Pembrokeshire Coast.



## Brecon Beacons National Park Authority



We are a special purpose Local Authority operating within local government. With support from expert staff, 24 members are responsible for making decisions, setting policies and priorities and ensuring best use of resources.

Two thirds of members are appointed by unitary authorities within the Park's boundary and one third are appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government. Much of the Authority's work is carried out in partnership with other public bodies which also have a duty to take account of National Park purposes in their decisions.

Visit [www.breconbeacons.org](http://www.breconbeacons.org) for more information.

## Fforest Fawr Geopark

Wales' First European Geopark

Fforest Fawr Geopark coincides with the western half of Brecon Beacons National Park and is a great place to start your exploration of the Earth's remarkable history.

Fforest Fawr Geopark is Wales' first member of the European Geoparks Network and UNESCO Global Geoparks Network.

Visit [www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk](http://www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk) to find out more.



## Why is the Brecon Beacons National Park so special?



Sugar Loaf, near Abergavenny

### Ponies and Kites

The Park is one of the last outposts for **Welsh Mountain Ponies** to breed, live and run wild across the rugged and remote uplands.

The skies above are home to a once endangered but now thriving population of **Red Kites**.



Llangors Lake

### Protected for us all

Dedicated teams look after the countryside and built environment in partnership with many others.

We all have a part to play in shaping the landscape - choose to be actively involved in planning its future!

### Farmers' Markets, Food Fayres and Festivals

The National Park is home to two world renowned festivals - the **Hay-on-Wye Literature Festival** in May and the **Brecon Jazz Festival** in August, as well as hosting a dazzling array of opportunities to buy locally produced delicacies and specialities of the region.

Brecon



### Fforest Fawr Geopark

The National Park encompasses Wales' first European and UNESCO Global Geopark within its boundaries.

The story of our rocks reveal a land flooded by ancient seas, raised high by colliding continents, baked dry under tropical skies and sculpted by mighty glaciers.

### Green credentials

The area is fast becoming a green destination. Make yourself feel good by supporting eco-friendly accommodation and reducing your carbon footprint by taking public transport for a day.

You can download the **'Stay Somewhere Green!'** booklet from our website or pick up a copy from Information Centres.



Pen y Fan

## Come and visit!



### The National Park Visitor Centre

An ideal starting point for exploring the National Park and Forest Fawr Geopark with displays, publications and friendly staff to give information and advice.

There are tea rooms serving local produce, spacious grounds, superb mountain views and leisurely walks on the adjoining common.

### Craig-y-nos Country Park

Laid out in Victorian times by the famous opera singer Adelina Patti with 40 acres of woodland, meadows and riverside walks, the Country Park offers you a beautiful and peaceful retreat.

Both Eco-Centres make a great day out for school groups. Call 01874 620463 to find out more.

### The Waterfalls Centre

Housing an exhibition showing the formation of the waterfalls and uniqueness of the Forest Fawr Geopark, this Centre is an ideal place to start your exploration of Waterfall Country. Choose an audio trail to take on a walk, pick up our new guide to the Gunpowder Works or just breathe in the misty air at the magical Sgwd yr Eira waterfall - an experience never to be forgotten!



Sgwd yr Eira

## Contact us

**National Park Visitor Centre**  
Libanus, nr Brecon.  
Telephone: 01874 623366  
Email: [visitorcentre@breconbeacons.org](mailto:visitorcentre@breconbeacons.org)

**Craig-y-nos Country Park**  
Telephone: 01639 730935  
Email: [cynop@breconbeacons.org](mailto:cynop@breconbeacons.org)

**Abergavenny Tourist Information & National Park Centre**  
Tel: 01873 853254  
Email: [abergavennyic@breconbeacons.org](mailto:abergavennyic@breconbeacons.org)

**Llandovery Tourist Information & Heritage Centre**  
Tel: 01550 720693  
Email: [llandoveryic@breconbeacons.org](mailto:llandoveryic@breconbeacons.org)

**The Waterfalls Centre, Pontneddfechan**  
Tel: 01639 721795  
Email: [waterfallscentre@breconbeacons.org](mailto:waterfallscentre@breconbeacons.org)

**Websites:**  
[www.visitbreconbeacons.com](http://www.visitbreconbeacons.com)  
[www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk](http://www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk)  
[www.horseridingbreconbeacons.com](http://www.horseridingbreconbeacons.com)  
[www.cyclebreconbeacons.com](http://www.cyclebreconbeacons.com)  
[www.mbbreconbeacons.com](http://www.mbbreconbeacons.com)  
[www.travelbreconbeacons.info](http://www.travelbreconbeacons.info)

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# Did you know?....

The National Park covers **1,346 square kilometres or 520 square miles** covering four distinct mountain ranges. This is the same size as the London underground system.

There are **1,983 kilometres or 1,232 miles** of public rights of way - that's about the length of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia!

Around **33,000 people** live in the National Park which is equivalent to the population of Monaco.

The largest town is the cathedral town of **Brecon** with a population of 7,500.

Over **4.2 million visitor days** are spent in the Park each year, bringing £133 million into the local economy.

Four of the five longest **cave systems** in the UK are in the National Park.

The National Park has **268 scheduled ancient monuments** spanning 7000 years of human history.



Pen y Crug

There are about **5300 kilometres** of hedgerows - that's roughly the length of Denmark's coastline!

Britain's most southerly home for **Red Grouse** is right here in the National Park.

The Park is the main stronghold of **Welsh Mountain Ponies** and the societies which protect them.

Over **70% of Wales' limestone pavement** lies within the Park's boundaries.

The greatest collection of **waterfalls** in one small area in the UK is around Ystradfellite and Pontneddfechan - home to some of Wales' rarest **mosses and ferns**.

Britain's largest breeding population of **Lesser Horseshoe Bats** (*Rhinolophus hipposiderae*) live here.

Some of the rarest trees in the world are various species of **whitebeam** (*Sorbus species*) which survive only here.

Brecon Beacons

The National Park has the largest area of **open hill common** in Wales spanning about 20 miles.



Llandoverly



Beacons Reservoir



Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal



Llanthony Priory



Hay-on-Wye



Hay Bluff, Black Mountains



## Brecon Beacons National Park



	National Park Boundary		Plan Point
	Hedgerow Gapmark		Hillfort
	National Park Information Centre		Historic site
	Tourist Information Centre		Beacons Way
	Information Point		DR's Cycle Path
	Parking		Tall Trail (walkers only)
	Cave		Tall Trail (walkers and cyclists)
	Waterfall		Uk Valley Walk
	Youth Hostel (TNT)		Path
	Bus Station		Railway
	Woodland		Blanca Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site



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Henllys Vale near Brynaman



Craig-y-nos Country Park



Waterfall Country



Brecon Mountain Railway

### Before you go walking....

- Plan your route carefully - Centre staff can help.
- Check the weather and mountain area forecasts.
- For news on access closures and fire risks check [www.ccw.gov.uk](http://www.ccw.gov.uk).
- Tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back.
- Make sure you are properly equipped - maps, clothing, food and drink.
- Please note that many mobile phones do not work in mountain areas and gorges.
- River water is always cold and wading or swimming across can be extremely dangerous
- In an emergency dial 999 - ask for the Police and then Mountain Rescue.

### Caring for the Brecon Beacons

**You can play your part in helping us to care for the National Park, so future generations can continue to enjoy this special place.**

**Be safe**  
Please follow the Countryside Code, respect the mountain environment and drive safely as sheep, ponies and cattle gather near roadsides on open commons. Keep other people and wildlife safe by taking your litter home. Please be considerate of other users.

**Take action**  
Stay somewhere green, eat locally produced and sourced food whilst you're here and when you're at home. Leave the car behind and try public transport for a day.  
Share a journey of discovery on our guided walks. Become a volunteer within the National Park or make a donation. Come and learn from us - our Eco-Centres demonstrate actions we've taken to reduce our environmental impact - and try them in your home.

**Be inspired**  
Our National Park is a wonderful place - be inspired and find something from the landscape and its people that will stay with you for longer.  
**Share**  
Please share your experiences of the Brecon Beacons with your friends and family and bring them with you next time you spend the day with us.

**Enjoy**  
Please have fun in the Park and respect this special place. Take control of your dog and keep our wildlife and livestock safe. Please don't disturb or feed our wildlife or pick our flowers and plants. Please take plenty of photographs, make drawings and memories.



Llyn y Fan Fach