



Lôn Eifion

Grade	Medium
Distance	20 km
Total ascent	10
Time required	4-5 hour
Start/Finish	Slate Key / Cei Llechi car park, Caernarfon / Bryncir
Grid reference	SH 481625 / SH 479446
Maps	Landranger 115 / Explorer series OL254

A very scenic excursion with great views into the Snowdonia mountains, down along the Lleyn Peninsula and across to Anglesey. The route runs south from the historic town of Caernarfon to the small village of Bryncir. Lon Eifion is part of Lon Las Cymru, route number 8 on the National Cycle Network, shown on OS maps.

A largely level cycleway that has recently been upgraded with an excellent hard surface all the way. A shorter version can be done by breaking the journey at the Inigo Jones museum and café and then returning – this gives a round trip of 16km. It is also possible to join the route at a number of places to give a route to suit the day.





Route

1 *Start from the Slate Key/Cei Llechi carpark on the harbour in front of Caernarfon Castle.* Beics Menai, a bike hire shop, is conveniently situated here. (www.beicsmenai.co.uk). As well Sparrow, Jackdaw and Chaffinch frequenting the townscape, Herring Gull, Mallard and Mute Swan are often to be seen at the mouth of the River Seint. **Cycle south eastwards along St Helen's Road for 300m until it is possible to join the cycleway.**

2 *For most of the first 5 km (3.1 mi) from Caernarfon, the line of Lôn Eifon runs alongside that of the Welsh Highland Railway. At Llanwnda the railway turns inland and heads off down the Cwellyn Valley.* The route is tree-lined, mostly with Sycamore, Ash and Oak, but with occasional Wych Elm, Hazel and Holly. The width of this track-side tree belt varies; sometimes offering glimpses of the neighbouring fields, sometimes amounting to small woodlands. Wood Pigeon, Song Thrush, Blackbird and Robin may be seen throughout the wooded sections of the route, with occasional glimpses of Wood Pigeon,

Jay and Long-tailed Tit. The distinctive song of summer visitors, such Willow Warbler and Chiff-chaff are very likely to be heard. Occasional bramble banks and Buddleia bushes in the more open areas attract butterflies such as Small Tortoiseshell, Peacock and Comma, while the Speckled Wood, characteristic of dappled shade, occurs all along the wooded track.

3 *8km south of Caernarfon and just south of Groeslon there is the Inigo Jones slate museum. (www.inigojones.co.uk/). There is a cafe here that is open all year, 10 am till 4 pm. The route is perhaps less consistently tree-lined from here.*

4 *The cycleway continues southward past Pen y Groes and Llanlyfni following a line close to the A487.* The trees are finally lost, offering excellent views both to Yr Eifl on the Llyn and east to Snowdonia. There is a more upland feel to the landscape here; the verges are less rich and the boundaries are often walls, rather than hedges. Occasional small trees of Ash,



Sycamore and Grey Willow and Blackthorn scrub provide cover. Birds to be seen include Carrion Crow, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Linnet with Buzzard and Raven likely overhead. Badger, Fox and Rabbit occur. To the east, there is strong archaeological interest in the historic landscape pattern of small fields.

5 *At Bryn y Gro the cycleway turns away from the road side and then heads through a wooded area close to the Cefn Graianog quarry. A further km to the south the cycleway swings back eastwards towards the*

A487 at Pant Glas. Birds include Meadow Pipit, Whitethroat and occasional Wheatear. Cuckoo may be heard in spring. Between Graianog and Pant Glas, the track runs alongside an extensive area of wetland – the upper catchment of the River Dwyfach. The vegetation includes patches of Heather and Grey Willow among reeds and sedges. Just before Pant Glas, impressive mounds of Greater Tussock Sedge dominate. These plants, when growing in ideal conditions can form tussocks 3 feet or more in height.

Those gasping for a refreshment break will be pleased to stop at Lynn's Nursery, an idyllic location for tea-garden refreshments.

6 *The cycleway shadows the A487 for the final stretch running into the small village of Bryncir. There is one pub here, the Bryncir Country Inn & Restaurant, plus a small parking area should you wish to do the route in reverse.*

Field Notes