

The Cantrybedd Incline

The **Cantrybedd Incline** brought slate wagons down from the Lower Mill level of the quarries. The winding drum building at the top of the incline has been demolished (along with the Lower Mill) and the Cantrybedd level is now heavily wooded.

The Alltwyllt Incline

The **Alltwyllt Incline** was the lowest of the long inclines that brought slate down from the quarries to be transported away along the Tallylyn Railway. The incline comprised two parallel sets of rails on which the loaded wagons were lowered attached to steel ropes and was unusual because the gradient becomes significantly steeper near the top, so that the steel ropes hung in the air over this section. The lower part of the incline is supported on stone walling, best seen from the path on the opposite side of the stream. The winding drum and its braking system remains intact at the top of the incline. The wagons were hauled along the next section of line by horses; part of the walls of a small stable remain.

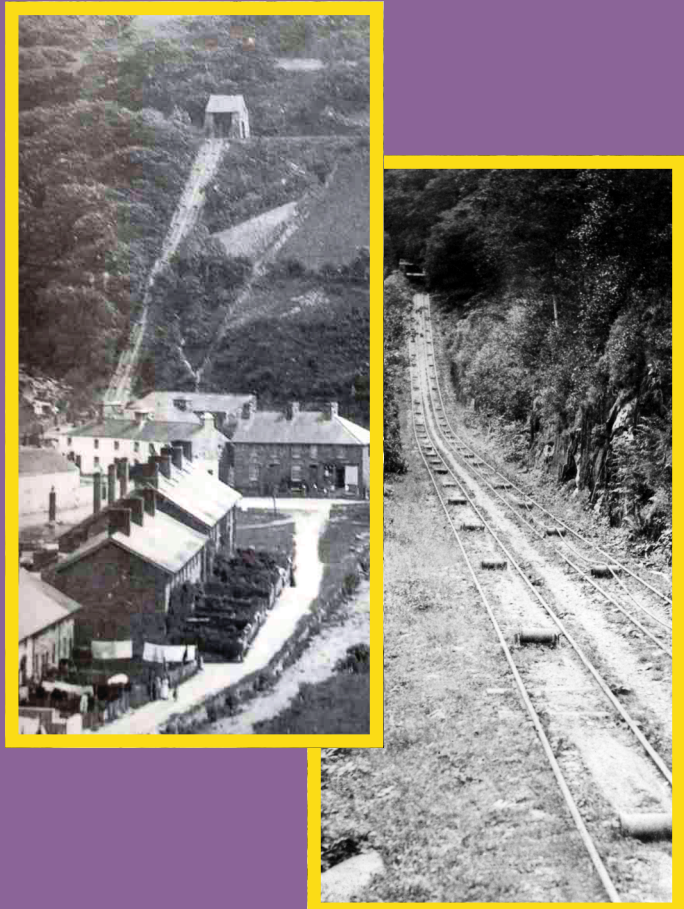
A view up the Village Incline. The Pandy building, with its distinctive pattern of dove holes in the gable end, is on the left, with the water wheel that drove the sawmill partly visible beyond. In the foreground is one of the wagons, with sides tapered so that loads did not tip out when the wagon was on an incline. Credit TR Collection.

The Village Incline

The **Village Incline**, a gravity operated inclined plane with two sets of rails, was probably unique in that it was built not to get minerals out of a quarry but to get goods (primarily coal and building materials) into the village and items made in the village out.

Treftadaeth Gymunedol
Abergynolwyn
Community Heritage

Heritage Trail: The Quarry Inclines History



A short guide to what can be seen around the remains of the inclined planes and Bryneglwys Quarry

There were three veins of slate at Bryneglwys quarries, running approximately west to east, and dipping at a steep angle. The Broad vein (the most northerly of the three) produced slate that was not easily split and was used principally for graveyard memorials and other slate slab products such as billiard tables.

Looking down the line of the Beudynywdd Incline to the Lower Mill on the Cantrybedd level. The Lower Mill was falling into decay, but the collapse of the roof of the far end of the Mill had started much earlier. A landslip from the hill above (which caused the notable dip in the hillside) caused the building to move, despite the heavy buttresses built to try to stop the movement. The flat grass area in front of the mill, with lines of slate to delineate areas, had been the slate stacking area. The Cantrybedd waste tips were on the far right of this picture. Credit Ann Hatherill



The Beudynywdd Incline

No buildings remain at the top of the Beudynywdd incline. From here a nearly level tramway ran to the buildings at the main level, alongside an open quarry which now forms a large and very deep lake. This quarry was the only substantial working in the Broad vein of slate.

The Quarry Inclines History

Safety Considerations

Walkers should be aware that there are open quarry workings across the quarry site, some with deep water. Check local weather conditions and wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

It is dangerous to attempt to go into any of the underground workings.

Follow the Countryside Code
www.gov.uk/countryside-code



Respect everyone

- Be considerate to those living in, working in and enjoying the countryside - be nice, say hello!
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Park considerately - do not block access
- Follow local signs and keep to marked paths unless wider access is available

Protect the environment

- Take your litter home – leave no trace of your visit
- Do not light fires and only have BBQs where signs say you can
- Dog poo – bag it and bin it – any public waste bin will do. Keep dogs under control
- Care for nature – do not damage or disturb

Enjoy the outdoors

- Check your route and local conditions
- Plan – know what to expect and what you can do
- Enjoy your visit, have fun, make happy memories!

Our Partners:



Youtube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCHeq3AlrqQY4HPgxZNDDu3g

The Cwm Cwm Incline

The **Cwm Cwm Incline** marked the western end of the quarry site. It provided a route down to the Old Mill/New Mill level west of those mills, providing a direct access to the tips for slate waste. There are limited remains of the winding drum house at the top of the incline, which is now just a grass slope.

The Short Incline

A few metres on from the top of the Boundary Incline was the **Short Incline**, notably shorter than the other inclines. From the top of this incline there was access directly to workings, and also an incline to yet higher levels. There was also another nearly level tramway that ran along the hillside to the top of Cwm Cwm incline.

Looking down the Boundary Incline, with a barracks in the left foreground, the New Mill partly in view on the left, the windless powder magazine in the centre and the Manager's house and offices to the right. The level route of the tramway leads off past the waste tips of the Broad Vein quarry in the distance. Credit Mike Christensen



The Boundary Incline

Some slate was brought to the Old and New Mills along tramways at the level of those mills but much had to be brought down from higher levels. On the western side of the river was the **Boundary Incline**: limited remains exist of the winding drum house at the top of this incline, from where sidings lead to underground access and also tips for slate waste.

The Bryneglwys Incline System

Within Bryneglwys quarries there were a number of inclines which brought raw slate slabs down to the mills where the stone was worked into finished products - roofing slates and slab slates. The slate was then brought out of the works in railway wagons down three inclines.

The **Beudynywdd Incline** took the wagons from the upper level to the lower (or Cantrybedd) level. The **Cantrybedd Incline** lowered the wagons to the 'Exit Tramway' along which the wagons were hauled by horse to the top of the **Alltwyllt Incline**, which lowered them to the sidings that were the upper limit of haulage by railway locomotives.

There was a fourth long incline, the **Village Incline**, possibly unique because it existed not to bring slate from the quarry, but to service the needs of Abergynolwyn village. Wagons lowered down this incline included loads such as coal, building materials and beer. Loads up the incline included writing slates made in the village and night-soil from the outside toilets of the many houses built to provide homes for the quarrymen who moved to the village. Sidings ran down Back Street and also along the north side of the gardens in Tan-y-Bryn Street to provide access to most of the back gardens.

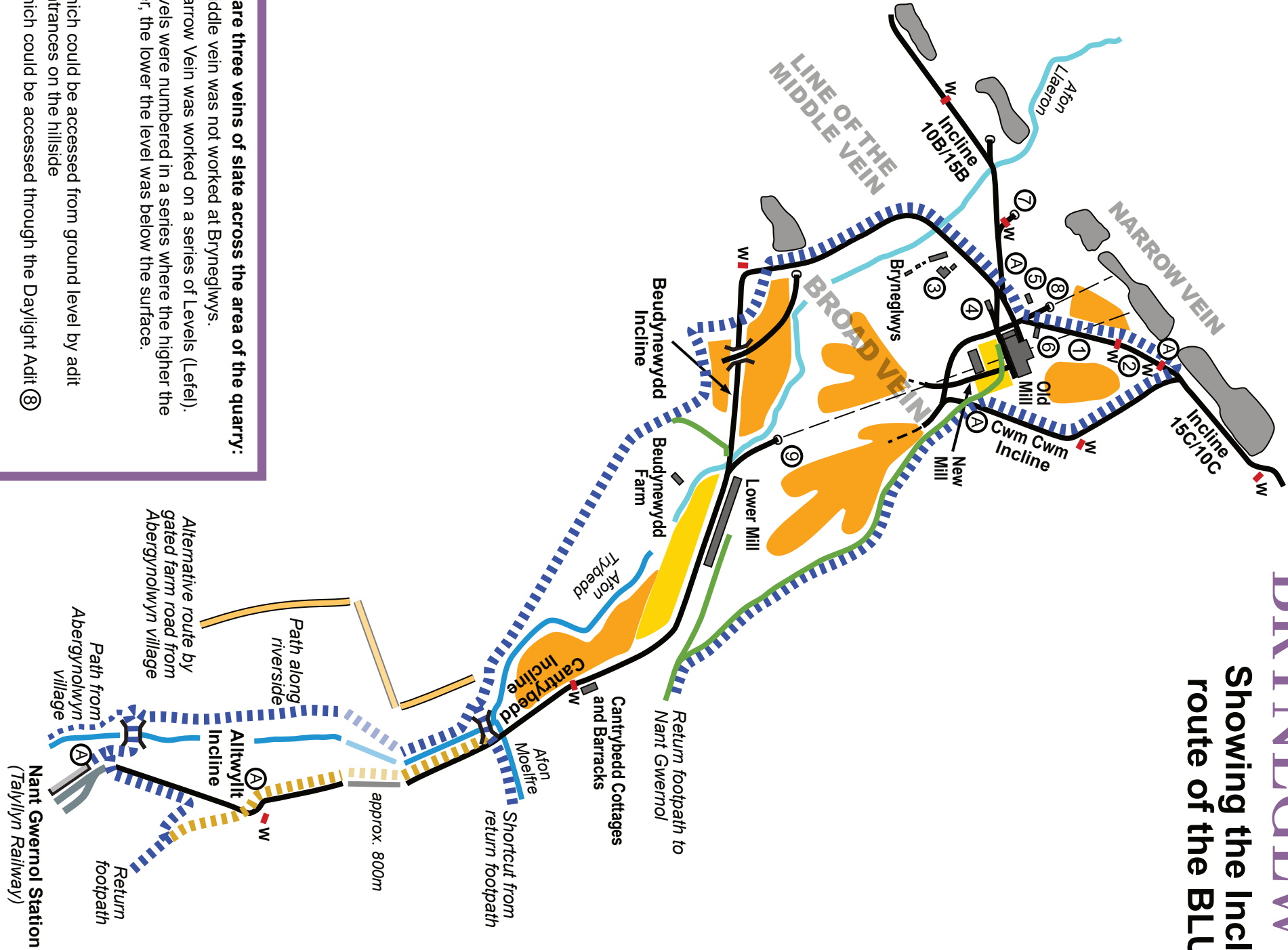


One of the upper level mills. Credit: Tom Chapman/Anthony Coulls.

Cover left photo: the Village Incline, seen from the north-west.
Cover right photo: the Alltwyllt Incline, showing the two lines of track, one of the two cables, the cable rollers and the drum house at the top of the incline.
Credit TR Collection.

BRYNEGLWYS QUARRIES

Showing the Inclined Planes and the route of the BLUE waymarked path



There are three veins of slate across the area of the quarry:

The Middle vein was not worked at Bryneglwys.

The Narrow Vein was worked on a series of Levels (Lefel). The levels were numbered in a series where the higher the number, the lower the level was below the surface.

5

10

15 which could be accessed from ground level by adit entrances on the hillside

20 which could be accessed through the Daylight Adit ③

25

50 which could be accessed by the adit leading through Lefel Fawr (a.k.a. the 'Long Tunnel') ⑨ from the Lower Mill level

75 Sinc Tywyll (the 'Black Sink')

The extensive slate waste tips were served by tramway track which could be moved as required. Details have been omitted for clarity.



Looking from the foot of the Village Incline through the small walled yard towards Pandy Square. Some of the last loads worked down the Village Incline were of timber destined for the sawmill. Credit TR Collection



One siding serving the village (an northwards, past the buildings of Pandy Square (on the left) before crossing the main road and curving right to pass down Back Street. Credit TR Collection



The road to Bryneglwys - beneath the the winding drum at the summit of the Cantybedd Incline, about 900 ft. up, May 1956. Credit Russell Coffin/Ann Hatherill.



The Lower Mill, looking east with the Beudynewydd Incline in the left background and the slate stacking area prominent in the foreground. The bridge carrying the tramway for the waste stone across the Incline is visible. The waste tips would eventually grow to be very much larger. The roof just visible above the workmen is that of Beudybach (The Little Cowshead), a building that would eventually be swamped by the growing waste tip. It was replaced by Beudynewydd (New Cowshead) Farm. Credit TR Collection.

KEY:

- Blue waymarked path
- Rivers and streams
- Modern forest roads
- Tramway track, now removed (details of sidings omitted for clarity)
- Talylyn Railway
- Audio information point (a 'Talking Post')
- Winding Drum House
- Boundary Incline
- Short Incline
- Manager's House
- Powder (explosives) magazine
- Carpenter's Shop
- Barracks
- Shaft 8B
- Entrance to the Daylight Adit
- Entrance to Lefel Fawr a.k.a. the 'Long Tunnel'
- Entrance to an adit, an underground working
- Bridge
- Stacking area for cut slate
- Tip for waste stone (only the main tips shown)