Bridgend County for legendary family adventures

Dare to Discover

www.BridgendBites.com

Welcome to Bridgend County

Stroll among some of Europe's tallest sand dunes
Surf some of the UK's best waves
Delve deep into Wales' fascinating history
Play a round of world-class, yet unstuffy golf
All to the stunning backdrop of the all-Wales Coast Path
The perfect spot for a fun-packed family holiday

Dare to Discover

Dare to Discover a part of Wales you may not know much about. Easy to get to, the County of Bridgend lies between Cardiff, Swansea and the Brecon Beacons National park. This area is also part of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast – an area of spectacular cliffs, coves, sand dunes and miles of sandy beaches. This brochure will help you discover things to DO, places to STAY and events to SEE in Bridgend County.

www.bridgendbites.com

Bridgend–Bites @bridgendbites

"What could be more perfect, this is my perfect day in Bridgend, I'm home and I love it". David Emanuel

Horse riding at Ogmore Castle
#perfectday Bridgend

'A LEGENDARY FAMILY ADVENTURE'

TOP FAMILY-FRIENDLY ADVENTURES: 5

Climb the mighty **'Big Dipper'**, one of Europe's tallest sand dunes. Feel the rush as you sled to the bottom!

Skip across stepping stones in the shadow of the mighty **Ogmore Castle** before wandering the ancient ruins.

Pedal through rugged valleys as you wind your way from **peaks to beach** by mountain bike.

Explore the **golden sands of Rest Bay**, a haven for surfing, body boarding and countless other watersports. Just one of 7 beautiful sandy beaches.

Seek out the **amazing keepers of Bridgend County**. Bring them to life with poems and videos using the dare to Discover App. From the mighty Merthyr Mawr dunes to the rugged Welsh valleys.
Can you find all 14?

BACK TO NATURE

Awaken the Keepers of Bryngarw

In this Year of Legends, walk among the legends residing in Bryngarw. The Keepers of Bryngarw are mythical guardians who protect the park. Take an interactive quest with a magical Star Talisman to bring the Keepers to life and listen to their tales. If you awaken all of them, you can become a Keeper of the Story yourself! Bryngarw Country Park offers over 113 acres of diverse parkland with everything from native woodlands to formal gardens and ornamental lakes to a much loved children's play area. Also on site is Bryngarw House, a beautiful wedding venue, Bryngarw House, as well as a visitor centre and cafe.

Meet the wildlife at Parc Slip Nature Reserve

Discover the creatures that inhabit Parc Slip Nature Reserve. With 300 acres of diverse habitats, you are sure to find something that crawls, flies, swims or prowls. There are plenty of trails on the reserve, giving you a number of options for areas to explore. Why not take a leisurely stroll and finish off your walk with afternoon tea at the Wildlife Trust coffee shop.

Explore Kenfig National Nature Reserve

Kenfig Nature Reserve is one of the UK's most important wildlife conservation sites and it's a great place for walkers, birdwatchers, photographers and families to explore. As you explore, look out for the Keeper of the Dunes. To find out more about her story, and the plants and wildlife she protects, download the Dare to Discover App.

WALK THIS WAY

Bridgend County is home to just 11½ of the **870-mile Wales Coastal Path** but, boy, do we make the most of it!

That's 11 ½ miles of dramatic dunes, award–winning beaches, eye–catching castles and National Nature Reserves.

Explore the dunes at Kenfig National Nature Reserve just beyond the Porthcawl. Kenfig is a mysterious place. Time Team came to dig here and found a wealthy town built within the castle's defences.

Part of a Norman port buried beneath the shifting sands. Round off your day out at The Prince of Wales, a pub steeped in tradition and perched on the edge of Kenfig Nature Reserve.

IN AN AFTERNOON:

Ogmore and Merthyr Mawr (9 km / 3 hours) A circular walk starting at Bridgend railway station. Enjoy the thatched cottages and meadows of Merthyr Mawr village before crossing the iconic stepping stones to the dramatic ruins of Ogmore Castle.

Garw Valley (11km / 4 hours) Taking in both sides of the valley, experience the wooded west and the open expanses of the east. The dramatic route follows a combination of footpaths and bridleways.

'DRIVE TIME'

Discover the UK's hidden golf gem. **Six courses, one incredible**, unstuffy golfing location.

Follow in the footsteps of **Tom Watson**, **Bernhard Langer**, **Colin Montgomerie** and countless other golfing greats.

Plan your own golf itinerary, visit **bridgendbites.com**

Bridgend Golf - Family friendly Golf practice driving range and 9 hole golf course with coffee shop and seating area open to all. TFB @bridgendgolf

Coed-y-Mwstwr - A scenic Parkland course overlooking the Vale of Glamorgan and twinned with the luxury hotel of the same name. *coed-y-mwstwr.com*

Maesteg - The warmest of golfing welcomes hidden high amongst the rugged Welsh Valleys with breath-taking views. *maesteg-golf.com*

Pyle and Kenfig - a course dramatically cut into the majestic dunes that line the Porthcawl coast. Recognised with Golf Union of Wales Golf Club of the Year Award 2017. The Dormy House is a self–contained property in the grounds of the Golf Club. Enabling you to immerse yourself fully in the experience of links golf. *Pandkgolfclub.co.uk*

Royal Porthcawl - One of Europe's finest links courses and host of the Senior Open in 2014 and 2017. The on–site Dormy offers accommodation for twelve and with a Clubhouse so close to the high tide mark, the 40ft tide means that the view is stunning and ever–changing. *Royalporthcawl.com*

The Grove - Porthcawl's parkland course is a fantastic challenge for golfers of all ages and abilities. *Grovegolf.com*

"IT'S ONE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM'S HIDDEN GOLF GEMS"

Sky Sports

@Getty Images

Life's a beach

Did you know we're home to some of the closest surfing beaches to London, with consistent year-round waves.

Rest Bay Beach is the most popular spot - surfers of all ages and abilities share the waves with avid kite surfers, paddle boarders and kayakers. **Trecco Bay** is another popular option, making the most of the swells rolling in from the Atlantic.

If you're looking to ride the Welsh waves for the first time, our local instructors will have you 'hanging ten' in no time!

"The unpretentious Porthcawl surf scene is what surfing should be all about"

The Independent

Your beaches await...

Sker Beach (at Kenfig)

This hidden gem is remote, sandy and naturally unspoilt, backing on to Kenfig National Nature Reserve. Great for: nature. Sker Beach is home to wild orchids, insects and wildlife.

Pink Bay

A quieter sand and pebble beach, the rocks have an eye-catching pink-marble effect, hence the name. Walk here from Rest Bay. Great for: chilling out and getting away from it all.

Rest Bay

Golden sands that sweep up to a rocky shoreline, backed by acres of common ground. Great for: water sports, particularly surfing. There's also plenty of space to sunbathe and relax.

Sandy Bay

A beautiful flat, sandy bay sheltered by Porthcawl's marina. Great for: sunbathing, sandcastles, donkey rides and the Coney Beach Amusement Park. Porthcawl town centre and promenade are nearby.

Trecco Bay

This well sheltered sandy and rocky beach is close to excellent facilities for the family. Great for: families, as it is close to Trecco Bay Holiday Park, which is also open to the public.

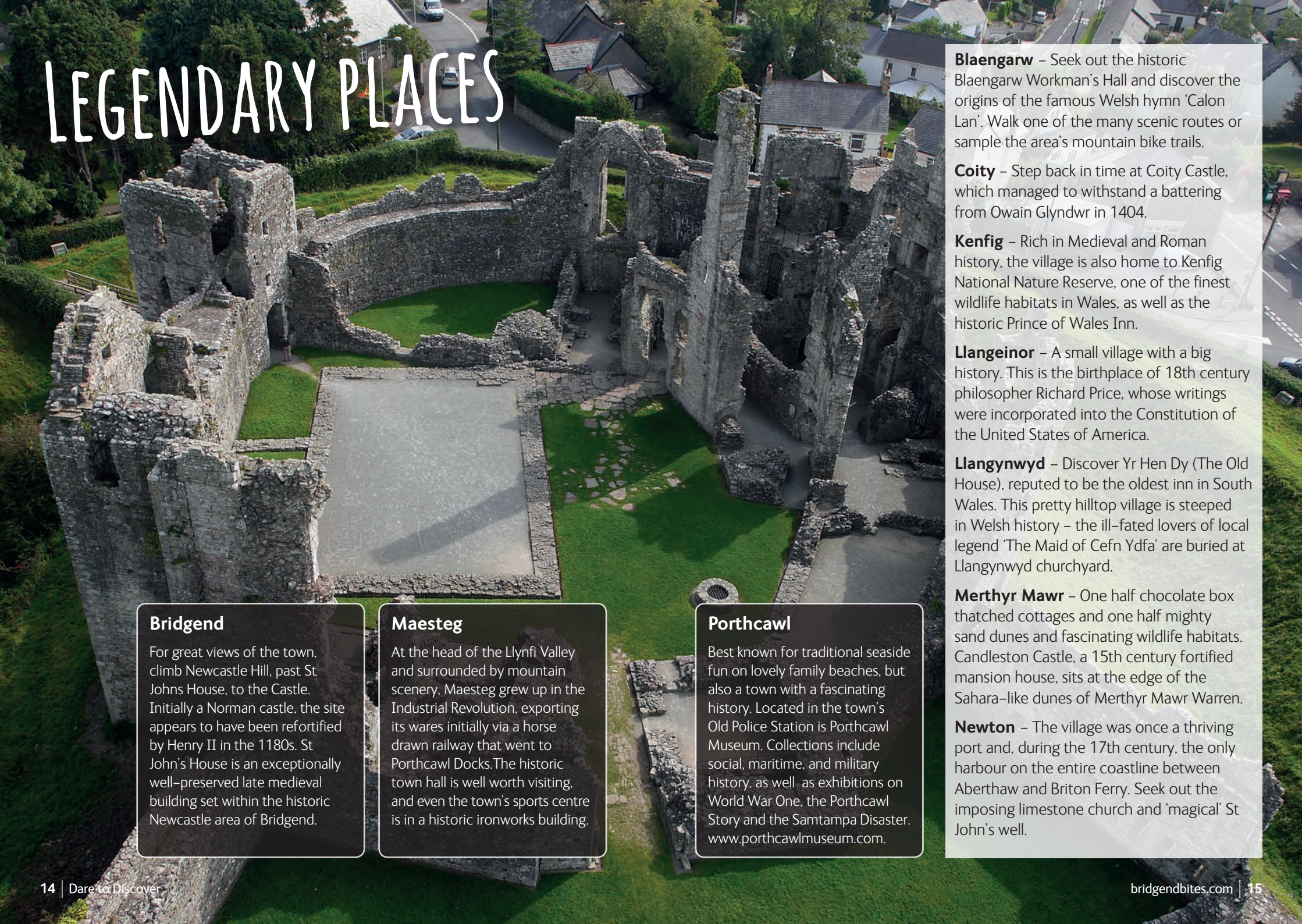
Newton Bay

A lovely sheltered sandy bay stretching round to Ogmore by Sea. Great for: dogs! They are allowed on the beach year-round. The Beachcombers café allows dogs outside and even provides them with water.

Key:

- Car Park
- Toilets
- Snacks available
- Dogs welcome all year round
- Dogs banned between 1 May and 30 September
- Lifeguards on duty (during summer season only)
- Blue flag beach
- Disabled facilities available (Toilets accessed by RADAR key)

Legendary places



Bridgend

For great views of the town, climb Newcastle Hill, past St Johns House, to the Castle. Initially a Norman castle, the site appears to have been refortified by Henry II in the 1180s. St John's House is an exceptionally well-preserved late medieval building set within the historic Newcastle area of Bridgend.

Maesteg

At the head of the Llynfi Valley and surrounded by mountain scenery, Maesteg grew up in the Industrial Revolution, exporting its wares initially via a horse drawn railway that went to Porthcawl Docks.The historic town hall is well worth visiting, and even the town's sports centre is in a historic ironworks building.

Porthcawl

Best known for traditional seaside fun on lovely family beaches, but also a town with a fascinating history. Located in the town's Old Police Station is Porthcawl Museum. Collections include social, maritime, and military history, as well as exhibitions on World War One, the Porthcawl Story and the Samtampa Disaster. www.porthcawlmuseum.com.

Blaengarw – Seek out the historic Blaengarw Workman's Hall and discover the origins of the famous Welsh hymn 'Calon Lan'. Walk one of the many scenic routes or sample the area's mountain bike trails.

Coity – Step back in time at Coity Castle, which managed to withstand a battering from Owain Glyndwr in 1404.

Kenfig – Rich in Medieval and Roman history, the village is also home to Kenfig National Nature Reserve, one of the finest wildlife habitats in Wales, as well as the historic Prince of Wales Inn.

Llangeinor – A small village with a big history. This is the birthplace of 18th century philosopher Richard Price, whose writings were incorporated into the Constitution of the United States of America.

Llangynwyd – Discover Yr Hen Dy (The Old House), reputed to be the oldest inn in South Wales. This pretty hilltop village is steeped in Welsh history – the ill-fated lovers of local legend 'The Maid of Cefn Ydfa' are buried at Llangynwyd churchyard.

Merthyr Mawr – One half chocolate box thatched cottages and one half mighty sand dunes and fascinating wildlife habitats. Candleston Castle, a 15th century fortified mansion house, sits at the edge of the Sahara-like dunes of Merthyr Mawr Warren.

Newton – The village was once a thriving port and, during the 17th century, the only harbour on the entire coastline between Aberthaw and Briton Ferry. Seek out the imposing limestone church and 'magical' St John's well.

RELAXED SHOPPING

Bridgend has long since enjoyed a reputation as a bustling shoppers' paradise – its history as a market town dates back to the early 16th century.

Today, the 18th century Market Bell still hangs in **Rhiw Shopping Centre**, home not only to many high street shops but also more than thirty stalls selling local produce and gifts.

Porthcawl. Closer to the coast, Porthcawl town is home to everything from diamonds and designer dresses to delicious pastries. The main shopping area is centred around John Street, just a pebble's throw from the Esplanade.

Maesteg. Talbot St and Commercial St are the main shopping streets in Maesteg town centre. Known for its historic architecture, Maesteg offers a charming indoor market, household names and even a reptile shop!

Just south of Bridgend you will find Ewenny Pottery. Visitors to the workshop can watch the pots being made and are able to view the finished wares in the showroom. The pottery industry has existed in the area from medieval times due to the materials being readily available.

For truly relaxed shopping, visit Pyle Garden Centre or Ewenny Garden Centre, not forgetting to stop off for a treat in the café.

If you head just north of Bridgend you'll find the mighty **McArthur Glen Designer Outlet**, which is home to over 90 designer brands including Levis, Ted Baker, Calvin Klein, French Connection and Kurt Geiger. Surfers and outdoor adventurers are equally well catered for, plus a wide selection of cafés, restaurants and the Odeon Entertainment Complex.

EVENTS!

We like to think we've made a name for ourselves by hosting a calendar of events you're unlikely to find anywhere else. From Elvis to Cwlwm Celtaidd and Porthcawl Carnival to the Christmas Day Swim, dare to discover our festivals and events.

Porthcawl Elvis Festival

Every September thousands of Elvis fans descend on the Welsh seaside town of Porthcawl for a unique celebration of The King. Where else could you find thousands of Elvis aficionados getting all shook up over a weekend dedicated to the king of Rock and Roll? **www.elvies.co.uk**

For a full calendar of events, visit **bridgendbites.com/events**

Venues

The Grand Pavilion is situated on Porthcawl seafront. A beautiful Grade II listed building offering a diverse programme of cultural events and activities, the pavilion offers something for everyone – with a beautiful view to boot! **www.grandpavilion.co.uk**

Maesteg Town Hall is an imposing Grade II listed building positioned in the heart of the town centre. It presents a mixed programme of professional and community events including childrens events, community cinema, live music and theatre. **www.maestegtownhall.com**

ACCOMMODATION

Here is a taster of the accommodation on offer in Bridgend County. From cosy cottages to quirky camping and luxury hotels to modern bunk houses, we have something for everyone. Visit **www.bridgendbites.com/staying** for full listings.

Miners Cottage
Once part of the Margam Estate and in the family for almost 200 years, Miners Cottage has been lovingly restored to a very high standard. In an elevated position overlooking Margam Valley and mountains and with views across Swansea Bay.

Ty Gwynneth Romany caravan
Ty Gwynneth Romany caravan is cosy for a couple. Close to nature, watch the sunset, listen to the sounds of nature and let the world go by...

Our Welsh Caravan and Camping
A peaceful campsite with quality facilities set in the South Wales Valleys in Bridgend. Nestled at the river's edge on a working sheep farm surrounded by native trees.

Coed y Mwstwr Hotel
A 4–star luxury hotel complete with its own golf course and surrounded by over 17 acres of woodland, this Victorian mansion boasts plush rooms and the two AA Rosette –winning Eliot Restaurant.

Olivia Guest House
Offering exclusive and stylish accommodation in a unique recently refurbished Edwardian townhouse, Olivia House Bed & Breakfast in Porthcawl sits just 50 metres from the picturesque Porthcawl promenade, and within a stones throw from the many bars and restaurants the seafront has to offer.

Cwm Tawel Yurts
Whether you are looking for activity and adventure, or a relaxing break, Cwm Tawel offers a unique and unforgettable experience. Each of the beautiful, authentic Nomad yurts from Mongolia has been furnished with an eclectic blend of rustic and ethnic furniture. and has its own private deck with a BBQ and seating.

Trecco Bay Holiday Park
The ultimate family–friendly holiday complex – 'Splashpool' indoor pool and amusements complex and adventure play area, not to mention a Blue Flag beach on your doorstep!

Ty Tanglwyst Farm Cottages
Four snug holiday cottages converted from the old stone buildings of a 120–acre working dairy farm. Kids can help feed calves, while the 25–acre woodland just south of the farm is packed with beautiful walking routes.

ADVENTURE AWAITS!

"You might not think that Bridgend County would be one of the best places for mountain biking in Wales, but it's true! Head up into the Garw valley and you will find the brand new (and excellent!) Darren Fawr mountain biking trails" **Karl Luxford**

Adventure awaits at every turn in **Bridgend County**, from the exhilarating mountain biking trails high in the **valleys near Blaengarw** to the swells and breaks of **Rest Bay**.

Where will your adventure take you?

The Darren Fawr mountain biking trails
Two trails that wind through the rugged Welsh Valleys – the blue *'Glengarw'* trail for intermediate riders, and the black *'Gellideg'* trail for experienced riders. Both trails are around 3km in length and, when combined, offer a fantastic 6km ride to challenge even pro mountain bikers.

Ride from peak to beach
Cycle all the way from the Darren Fawr mountain biking trails to the golden sands of Ogmore Beach! Follow the Garw Valley Community Route, then down via Aberkenfig and Bridgend (and a spot of lunch!) before reaching the ruins of Ogmore Castle and, finally, Ogmore by Sea – downhill almost all the way!

Ride the Welsh waves
You'll find our beaches are populated by much more than your average surfers. The waves are equally ideal for wind surfing, paddle boarding, wake boarding and kite surfing. Need some tuition? There are many local water sports operators to assist you!

Adventures Wales
From quad biking to zip sliding, Adventures Wales' activity centre is the perfect spot for adrenaline–filled fun. Whether on land or on water, expert coaches provide safe sessions for families, groups of friends and individuals. Try surfing, white water rafting, canyoning, gorge walking or rock climbing.

"THE PERFECT PLACE TO INDULGE YOUR INNER RAY MEARS". ROUGH GUIDES

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Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
BRIDGEND County Borough Council

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