

A465 Heads Of The Valleys Dualling

Deuoli'r A465 Ym Mlaenau'r Cymoedd

Welsh Government's decision to upgrade the A465 between Bryn-mawr (Blaenau Gwent) and Gilwern (Monmouthshire) provided an opportunity in 2015–19 for archaeologists from Wessex Archaeology, working for Costain, to find out more about the unique industrial landscape of the Clydach Gorge, which lies close to the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.

The new dual carriageway completes the penultimate link between Abergavenny and Hirwaun, all but Sections 5 and 6 having been opened some years earlier. Although only 8 km long, Section 2 is by far the most difficult for the road design and construction teams, as it was when the original road was built in the early 1960s. The steep slopes of the narrow Clydach Gorge, the variable geology, fast-flowing streams and inclement weather are amongst the many challenges the teams faced.

Section 2, which lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park, is also particularly environmentally sensitive, and includes the Usk Bat Sites SAC (Special Area of Conservation), the Mynydd Llangatwg SAC and SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and the Cwm Clydach Woodlands SAC.

Yn sgil penderfyniad Llywodraeth Cymru i uwchraddio'r A465 rhwng Bryn-mawr (Blaenau Gwent) a Gilwern (Sir Fynwy) yn 2015-19, roedd cyfle i archeolegwyr o Wessex Archaeology, sy'n gweithio i Costain, ddarganfod mwy am dirwedd unigryw Cwm Clydach, gerllaw Tirwedd Ddiwydiannol Blaenafon, Safle Treftadaeth y Byd.

Mae'r gerbyttffordd ddeuol newydd yn cwblhau'r cyswllt olaf ond un rhwng Y Fenni a Hirwaun, i gyd ar wahân i Adrannau 5 a 6 ar ôl cael ei hagor ychydig flynyddoedd yn gynharach. Er mai 8 km yn unig yw hi o ran hyd, Adran 2 yw'r anoddaf o bell ffordd i'r timau dylunio ac adeiladu ffyrdd, fel yr oedd pan adeiladwyd y ffordd wreiddiol ar ddechrau'r 1960au. Mae llethrau serth Cwm cul Clydach, y ddaeareg amrywiol a'r ffyrddau sy'n llifo'n gyflym ymhlith yr heriau niferus a oedd yn wynebu'r timau.

Mae Adran 2, sydd ym Mharc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog, yn sensitif yn amgylcheddol hefyd, ac mae'n cynnwys Ardal Cadwraeth Arbennig Safleoedd Ystumod Wysg, Ardal Cadwraeth Arbennig a Safle o Ddiddordeb Gwyddonol Arbennig Mynydd Llangatwg a Safle Cadwraeth Arbennig Coetiroedd Cwm Clydach.

New bridge over the A465 east of Bryn-mawr

Pont newydd dros yr A465 i'r dwyrain o Fryn-mawr (2018)



The Archaeological Programme

Y Rhaglen Archeolegol

Archaeological preparations connected with upgrading the A465 began in the late 1990s. In any development scheme of this size there is the possibility of impact on archaeological sites. The route of the A465 was known to pass through several sites of late 17th–19th-century date in the Clydach Gorge, including elements of an early iron works, tramroads, buildings of potential historic interest, and a Primitive Methodist Chapel and cemetery. Where there was uncertainty about the presence, nature and extent of other sites, archaeologists undertook geophysical survey and evaluation trenching.

The archaeological information known from earlier work formed part of Welsh Government's Environmental Statement in 2013. This summarised the state of knowledge and set out how the archaeological remains were to be avoided or investigated. Throughout this process, Cadw, archaeologists from the County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park, and specialists in industrial heritage were consulted and provided advice.

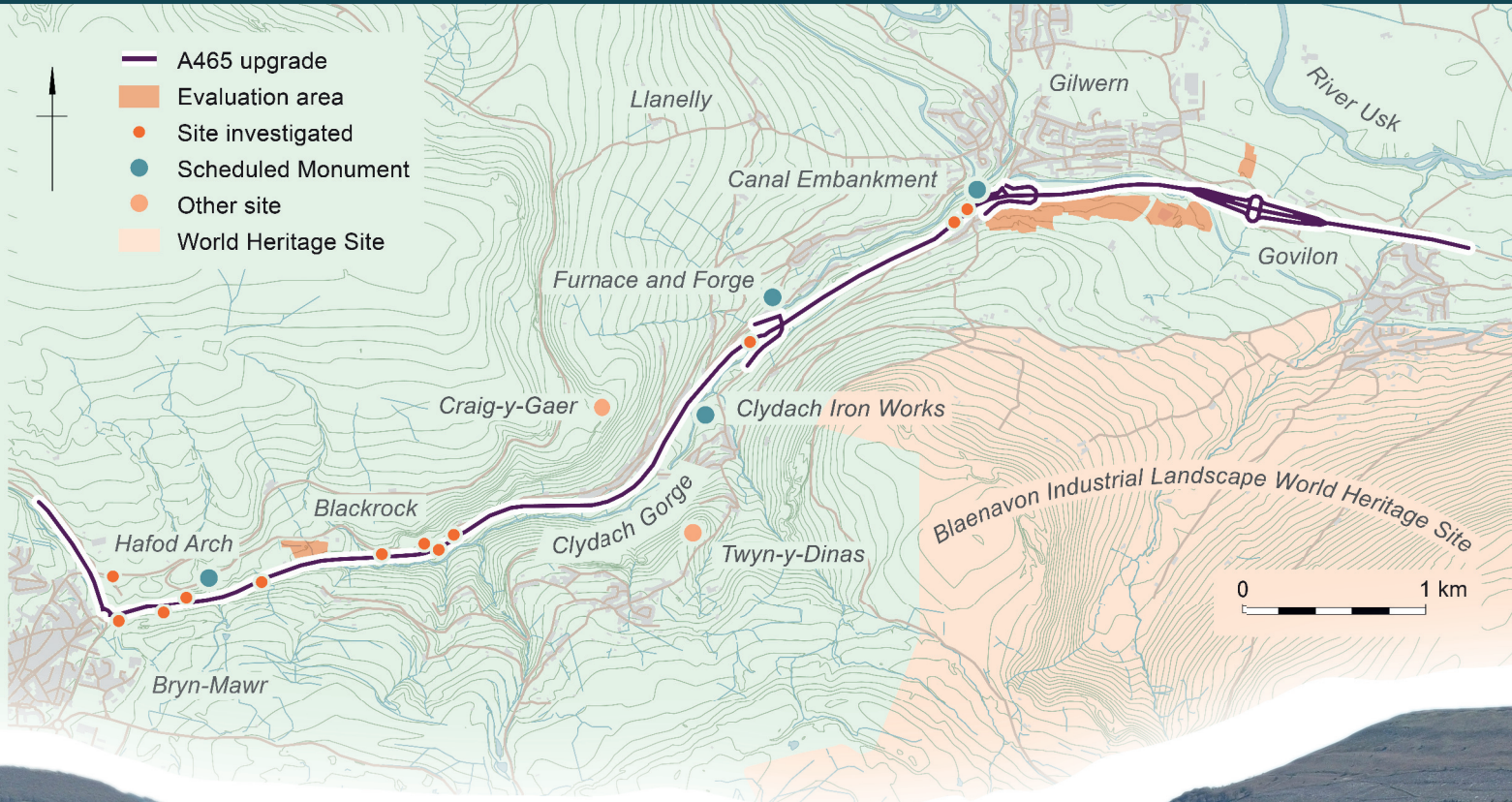
Dechreuodd paratoadau archeolegol yn gysylltiedig ag uwchraddio'r A465 ar ddiwedd y 1990au. Mewn unrhyw gynllun datblygu o'r maint hwn, mae posibilrwydd y bydd yn effeithio ar safleoedd archeolegol. Roedd yn hysbys fod llwybr yr A465 yn pasio trwy sawl safle o ddiwedd yr 17eg–19eg ganrif yng Nghwm Clydach, sy'n cynnwys elfennau o waith haearn, tramffyrdd, adeiladau o ddiddordeb hanesyddol posibl, a Chapel Methodistiaidd Cyntefig a mynwent. Pan oedd ansicrwydd ynglŷn â phresenoldeb, natur a graddau safleoedd eraill, cynhaliodd archeolegwyr arolwg geoffisegol a ffosydd gwerthuso.

Roedd y wybodaeth archeolegol, sy'n hysbys o waith cynharach, yn ffurfio rhan o Ddatganiad Amgylcheddol Llywodraeth Cymru yn 2013. Roedd hyn yn crynhoi cyflwr y wybodaeth ac yn amlinellu sut dylid osgoi neu archwilio'r gweddillion archeolegol. Trwy gydol y broses hon, ymgynghorwyd â Cadw, archeolegwyr o'r Cyngor Sir a Pharc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog, ac arbenigwyr mewn treftadaeth ddiwydiannol, a rhoesant gyngor.



The Clydach Gorge before the A465 (1950s)

Cwm Clydach cyn yr A465 (1950s)



The upgraded A465 at Gilwern (2018)

Yr A465 wedi'i huwchraddio yng Ngilwern (2018)

Industry In The Clydach Gorge

Diwydiant Yng Nghwm Clydach

The Clydach Gorge provides a natural route which has meant the area has been exploited from the prehistoric period, with possible Iron Age hillforts at Craig-y-Gaer on the north side of the valley and Twyn-y-Dinas to the south. However, its principal interest lies in the post-medieval period and the rapid rise of industry in the area, particularly after the turnpike road was established 1812–13. This provided the only road between Abergavenny and Merthyr Tydfil prior to the opening of the A465 Heads of the Valleys road in the 1960s.

The local geology and topography of the Gorge made it a favourable location for early industrial exploitation, particularly the production of iron. The surrounding woodland supplied timber for charcoal burning, water provided power, and local resources of iron ore, coal and limestone were readily available raw materials. The Clydach Ironworks constructed in the late 18th century had the greatest influence on the industrial development of the area, employing 1350 people in 1840, with production continuing at the works until the 1870s.

Mae Cwm Clydach yn darparu llwybr naturiol sydd wedi golygu bod yr ardal wedi cael ei datblygu o'r cyfnod cynhanesyddol, gyda chaerau posibl o'r Oes Haearn yng Nghraig-y-Gaer ar ochr ogleddol y dyffryn a Thwyn-y-Dinas i'r de. Fodd bynnag, mae'r prif ddiddordeb yng Nghwm Clydach yn y cyfnod ôl-ganoloesol a chynnydd cyflym diwydiant yn yr ardal, yn enwedig ar ôl sefydlu'r ffordd dyrpeg ym 1812–13. Hon oedd yr unig ffordd rhwng Y Fenni a Merthyr Tudful cyn agor ffordd yr A465 Blaenau'r Cymoedd yn y 1960au.

Roedd daeareg a thopograffi lleol y Cwm yn ei wneud yn lleoliad ffafriol ar gyfer datblygiadau diwydiannol cynnar, yn enwedig cynhyrchu haearn. Roedd y coetir cyfagos yn cyflenwi pren ar gyfer llosgi siarcol, roedd dŵr yn darparu pŵer, ac roedd adnoddau lleol, sef mwyn haearn, glo a chalchfaen ar gael yn rhwydd fel deunyddiau crai. Gwaith Haearn Clydach, a adeiladwyd ar ddiwedd y 18fed ganrif, a gafodd y dylanwad mwyaf ar ddatblygiad diwydiannol yr ardal, a oedd yn cyflogi 1,350 o bobl ym 1840, gyda chynhyrchu'n parhau yn y gweithfeydd tan y 1870au.



1824 tramroad bridge over the River Clydach (2019)

Pont tramffordd 1824 dros Afon Clydach (2019)



Clydach Ironworks Scheduled Monument (SM) (2019)

Heneb Gofrestredig Gwaith Haeearn Clydach (SM) (2019)

Llanelly Furnace, Forge And Leat

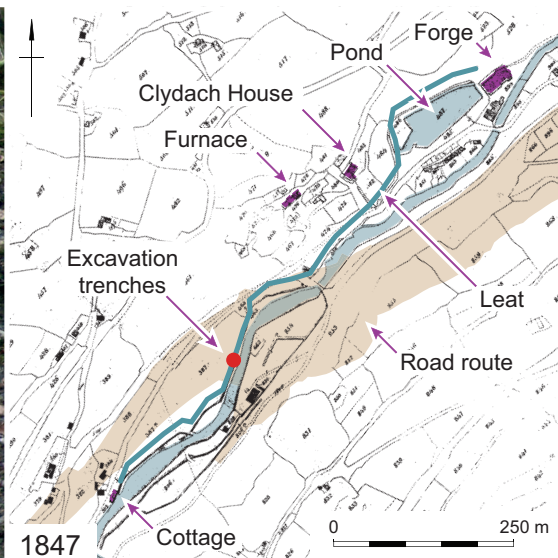
Ffwrnais, Gefail A Dyfrffos Llanelli

The Llanelly furnace is the earliest documented industrial activity with a definitive location in the Clydach Gorge and was probably established in the mid-17th century. Its importance is recognised by the remains now being designated a Scheduled Monument (SM). The industries at Llanelly continued to expand through the later 17th century and after to include a charcoal-fired furnace, forge and, finally, a tinplate works, which closed in 1884. Due to careful planning, Costain have avoided any damage to these structures.

Fragmentary remains of a leat (channel) system which carried water from the River Clydach to the Llanelly forge at Saleyard were investigated. Here it filled a pond, part of the stone dam still standing, which supplied water to one or more waterwheels that provided power to the forge. The leat may have been built in the mid-17th century when a deed of 1663 granted Capel Hanbury the liberty to build a weir to divert water from the River Clydach to his ironworks at Llanelly. An associated weir keepers' cottage stood on the north bank of the river.

Ffwrnais Llanelli yw'r gweithgarwch diwydiannol cynharaf sydd wedi'i ddogfennu, ac mae iddo leoliad pendant yng Nghwm Clydach. Mae'n debyg iddo gael ei sefydlu yng nghanol yr 17eg ganrif. Cydnabyddir ei phwysigrwydd gan y gweddillion sydd bellach wedi'u dynodi yn Heneb Gofrestredig. Parhaodd y diwydiannau yn Llanelli i ehangu trwy ddiwedd yr 17eg ganrif, ac ar ôl hynny i gynnwys ffwrnais a oedd yn cael ei thanio â siarcol, gefail, ac yn olaf, gwaith tunplat, a gaewyd ym 1884. O ganlyniad i gynllunio gofalus, mae Costain wedi osgoi unrhyw ddifrod i'r strwythurau hyn.

Archwiliwyd gweddillion tameidiog o system ddyfrffos (sianel) a oedd yn cludo dŵr o Afon Clydach i efail Llanelli yn Saleyard. Yma, roedd yn llenwi pwll, rhan o'r argae cerrig sy'n sefyll o hyd, a oedd yn cyflenwi dŵr i un olwyn ddŵr neu fwy a oedd yn darparu pŵer i'r efail. Gallai'r ddyfrffos fod wedi cael ei hadeiladu yng nghanol yr 17eg ganrif, pan ganiataodd gweithred o 1663 i Capel Hanbury adeiladu cored i ddargyfeirio dŵr o Afon Clydach i'w waith haearn yn Llanelli. Safai bwthyn coredwr cysylltiedig ar lan ogleddol yr afon.



*Excavating the Leat (2015)
Cloddio'r ddyfrffos (2015)*

Tramroads And Canals

Tramffyrdd A Chamlesi

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries four tramroads or railroads were constructed through the Clydach Gorge. The early horse-worked tramroads that traversed the steep valley sides represent significant feats of engineering and were used to transport raw materials to the various ironworks in the Gorge. They also linked these industries to the Brecknock and Abergavenny Canal at Gilwern, Govilon and, beyond this, to the wider world via the docks at Newport.

The Clydach Railroad represents the first significant east–west transport route in the Gorge and was constructed in 1793–95, opening a few years before the canal. The embankment which carries the canal over the river and railroad at Gilwern was another major engineering achievement and remains an important feature in the valley today. Subsequent routes included the turnpike road of 1812–13 and the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway opened half a century later in 1860–62, this surviving in use until 1958, shortly before the opening of the A465 in 1962.

Yn ystod diwedd y 18fed ganrif a dechrau'r 19eg ganrif, adeiladwyd pedair tramffordd neu reilffyrdd trwy Gwm Clydach. Mae'r tramffyrdd cynnar lle roedd ceffylau'n gweithio, a oedd yn croesi ochrau serth y dyffryn, yn nodweddion arwyddocaol o beirianeg, ac roeddent yn cael eu defnyddio i gludo deunyddiau crai i'r gweithfeydd haearn amrywiol yn y Cwm. Roeddent hefyd yn cysylltu'r diwydiannau hyn â Chamlas Brycheiniog a'r Fenni yng Ngilwern, Gofilon, ac â'r byd ehangach trwy'r dociau yng Nghasnewydd.

Rheilffordd Clydach yw'r llwybr arwyddocaol cyntaf o'r dwyrain i'r gorllewin yn y Cwm, ac fe'i hadeiladwyd ym 1793–95, gan agor ychydig flynyddoedd cyn y gamlas. Roedd yr arglawdd sy'n cario'r gamlas dros yr afon a'r rheilffordd yng Ngilwern yn gyflawniad mawr arall o ran peirianeg, ac mae'n parhau i fod yn nodwedd bwysig yn y dyffryn heddiw. Roedd llwybrau dilynol yn cynnwys ffordd dyrpeg 1812–13 ac agorwyd Rheilffordd Merthyr, Tredegar a'r Fenni hanner canrif yn ddiweddarach ym 1860–62, ac roedd yn cael ei defnyddio tan 1958, ychydig cyn agor yr A465 ym 1962.



Canal embankment (SM) at Gilwern (2019)
Arglawdd y gamlas (SM) yng Ngilwern (2019)



Clydach Railroad tunnel (2019)
Twnnel Rheilffordd Clydach (2019)

Bailey's Govilon Tramroad

Tramffordd Bailey Yng Ngofilon

In 1821 Crawshay Bailey built a tramroad from his ironworks at Nantyglo to Govilon Wharf on the Brecknock and Abergavenny canal. The 1820s were a period of expansion at the Nantyglo ironworks, which had seven blast furnaces and employed up to 3500 people. Bailey's Govilon Tramroad, a twin track tramway, was constructed along the southern side of the Clydach Gorge and took just seven months to build.

Groundworks in advance of bridge construction in 2017, just to the east of Bryn-mawr, exposed two lengths of the tramroad, including iron plates and sills and several stone blocks – which supported the sills. The survival of these is very unusual as the iron in particular was generally recycled. The L-section plates would have guided the flat-wheeled wagons, whereas the later Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway, which followed much the same route, had wooden sleepers supporting rails that carried trains with flanged wheels, similar to those in use today.

Ym 1821, adeiladodd Crawshay Bailey dramffordd o'i waith haearn yn Nant-y-glo i Lanfa Gofilon ar Gamlas Brycheiniog a'r Fenni. Roedd y 1820au yn gyfnod o ehangu yng ngwaith haearn Nant-y-glo, oedd â saith ffwrnais chwyth ac a oedd yn cyflogi hyd at 3,500 o bobl. Adeiladwyd Tramffordd Bailey yng Ngofilon, sef tramffordd â thrac dwbl, ar hyd ochr ddeheuol Cwm Clydach, a chymerodd saith mis yn unig i'w hadeiladu.

Wrth wneud gwaith ar sylfeini cyn adeiladu pont yn 2017, ychydig i'r dwyrain o Fryn-mawr, amlygwyd dau hyd o'r dramffordd, gan gynnwys platiau haearn a siliau a sawl bloc carreg – a oedd yn cynnal y siliau. Mae'n anarferol iawn fod y rhain wedi goroesi, gan fod yr haearn yn benodol yn arfer cael ei ailgylchu yn gyffredinol. Byddai'r platiau adran-L wedi arwain y wagenni ag olwynion fflat, ond trawstiau pren yn cynnal cledrau a oedd yn cario trenau ag olwynion cantellog, yn debyg i'r rheiny a ddefnyddir heddiw, oedd gan Reilffordd ddiweddarach Merthyr, Tredegar a'r Fenni, a oedd yn dilyn llawer o'r un llwybr.



Tramroad plates and sill (2017)
Platiau a siliau'r dramffordd (2017)



Early wagon wheel (2017)
Olwyn wagen gynnar (2017)

Homesteads, Coal Mines And Quarries

Ffermdai, Pyllau Glo A Chwareli

Two small homesteads are shown on the Llanelly Tithe map of 1847 between the Nant-y-Hafod and the Nant Gwyn, a small stream that runs down the northern side of the Clydach Gorge to the west of Blackrock. These homesteads are listed on the accompanying apportionment as 'house and garden'. Their location, close to water, iron ore, coal and limestone, suggested that they may have had a function other than one simply associated with farming.

Excavation revealed a series of walls and floors, the building on the western side of the stream comprising three probable rooms, two with floor surfaces of squared limestone flagstones, and a yard surface of limestone cobbles and larger flagstones. To the east of the stream a revetment wall and several floor surfaces were exposed. No clear evidence for the use of the building complex could be established, but the pottery and glass vessels found in the ruins indicate that it was not abandoned until the mid-20th century.

Dangosir dau ffermdy bach ar fap y Degwm yn Llanelli ym 1847, rhwng Nant-yr-Hafod a Nant Gwyn, ffrwd fach sy'n rhedeg i lawr ochr ogleddol Cwm Clydach i'r gorllewin o Blackrock. Mae'r ffermdai hyn wedi eu rhestru ar y dosbarthiad ategol fel 'tŷ a gardd'. Roedd eu lleoliad, yn agos at ddŵr, mwyn haearn, glo a chalcfaen, yn awgrymu efallai y bu ganddynt swyddogaeth ar wahân i swyddogaeth yn gysylltiedig â ffermio yn unig.

Wrth gloddio, darganfuwyd cyfres o waliau a lloriau, yr adeilad ar ochr orllewinol y nant a oedd yn cynnwys tair ystafell debygol, dwy ag arwynebau llawr wedi'u gwneud o lechfeini calchfaen sgwâr, ac arwyneb iard o gobls calchfaen a llechfeini mwy. I'r dwyrain o'r nant, amlygwyd wal gynnal a sawl arwyneb llawr. Ni ellid sefydlu unrhyw dystiolaeth glir ar gyfer defnyddio'r cyfadeilad, ond mae'r crochenwaith a'r llestri gwydr y daethpwyd o hyd iddynt yn yr adfeilion yn dangos na chafodd yr adeilad ei adael tan ganol yr 20fed ganrif.



Nant Gwyn homestead (2015)
Ffermdy Nant Gwyn (2015)



Coal workings near Bryn-Mawr (2017)
Gweithiau glo ger Bryn-mawr (2017)



Limestone quarry, Blackrock (2019)
Chwarel galchfaen, Blackrock (2019)

Workers' Cottages

Bythynnod Gweithwyr

As the pace of industrial development increased towards the end of the 18th century, several workers' settlements grew up in the Clydach Gorge. Ironworkers' terraces are preserved in Clydach South, with other small groups of cottages and associated buildings surviving in places such as Blackrock and Cheltenham along the north side of the Gorge. Extensive investigation and building recording prior to demolition has provided details of two of these cottages, Rose Cottage and Vale View, their modern exteriors concealing similar earlier histories.

Alongside the old turnpike road in Blackrock, Rose Cottage started out as part of a terrace of cottages built to house workers in the nearby limestone quarry. Map evidence suggests that it stayed largely unchanged until the mid-20th century when it was extended, altered on the inside, re-roofed and rendered on the outside. A study of the layout and construction of Rose Cottage shows that it was originally two narrow two-storey cottages, each heated by a single fireplace, the upper storey perhaps no more than a loft for sleeping.

Wrth i gyflymdra datblygiad diwydiannol gynyddu tuag at ddiwedd y 18fed ganrif, tyfodd aneddiadau sawl gweithiwr yng Nghwm Clydach. Caiff terasau gweithwyr haearn eu gwarchod yn Ne Cwm Clydach, ac mae grwpiau bach eraill o fythynnod ac adeiladau cysylltiedig wedi goroesi mewn lleoedd fel Blackrock a Cheltenham ar hyd ochr ogleddol y Cwm. Mae gwaith ymchwil helaeth a chofnodion adeiladu cyn dymchwel wedi darparu manylion am ddau o'r bythynnod hyn, sef Rose Cottage a Vale View, y mae eu hymddangosiadau modern yn cuddio hanesion cynharach tebyg.

Ar hyd yr hen ffordd dyrpeg yn Blackrock, rhan o deras o fythynnod a adeiladwyd i letya gweithwyr yn y chwarel galchfaen gyfagos oedd Rose Cottage i ddechrau. Mae tystiolaeth map yn awgrymu i'r bwthyn aros yr un fath ar y cyfan nes canol yr 20fed ganrif, pan gafodd ei ymestyn, ei addasu ar y tu mewn, gosodwyd to newydd a'i adfer ar y tu allan. Mae astudiaeth o gynllun ac adeiladwaith Rose Cottage yn dangos mai dau fwthyn cul deulawr ydoedd yn wreiddiol, a'r naill a'r llall yn cael ei wresogi gan un lle tân, ac efallai nad oedd y llawr uchaf yn fwy na llofft ar gyfer cysgu.



Rose Cottage (2015)

The Lion Hotel

Gwesty'r Lion

Like Rose Cottage and Vale View in Blackrock, the Lion Hotel on Lion Terrace, Gilwern also had humble origins. Detailed recording and investigation have shown it probably originated in the late 18th century and was built either as two single-storey cottages or as a longhouse, the fireplace at the western end providing the source of heat and the adjacent winding stair leading to a sleeping platform in the roof space.

The building was subsequently extended, initially to the north in the early 19th century and then to the east around the middle of the 19th century. It was later called the Lion Inn, with map evidence indicating that the change in use occurred sometime between 1847 and 1880. Map evidence also suggests that the mid-19th century eastern extension initially served as an Independent Chapel, a common arrangement of inn and Chapel in this part of Wales. Subsequent additions and alterations were made between 1880 and 1920, and it was probably early in the 20th century that the Independent Chapel went out of use.

Fel Rose Cottage a Vale View yn Blackrock, gwreiddiau di-nod oedd gan Westy'r Lion ar Lion Terrace, Gilwern hefyd. Mae cofnodion ac ymchwiliadau manwl wedi dangos ei fod yn tarddu o ddiwedd y 18fed ganrif, ac fe'i adeiladwyd naill ai fel dau fwthyn ag un llawr neu fel tŷ hir, gyda'r lle tân ar yr ochr orllewinol yn darparu'r ffynhonnell wres, a'r grisiau troellog cyfagos yn arwain at blatfform cysgu yn y to.

Estynnwyd yr adeilad yn ddiweddarach, i'r gogledd yn gyntaf ar ddechrau'r 19eg ganrif, ac wedyn i'r dwyrain o amgylch canol y 19eg ganrif. Yn ddiweddarach, fe'i galwyd yn Lion Inn, gyda thystiolaeth map yn dangos bod y newid yn y defnydd a wnaed o'r adeilad wedi digwydd rhywbryd rhwng 1847 a 1880. Mae tystiolaeth map hefyd yn awgrymu mai Capel Annibynnol i ddechrau oedd yr estyniad dwyreiniol yng nghanol y 19eg ganrif, a oedd yn drefniant cyffredin o ran tafarn a Chapel yn y rhan hon o Gymru. Gwnaed ychwanegiadau ac addasiadau dilynol rhwng 1880 a 1920, ac mae'n siŵr mai ar ddechrau'r 20fed ganrif y rhoddwyd y gorau i ddefnyddio'r Capel Annibynnol.



The Drum And Monkey Inn

Tafarn The Drum And Monkey Inn

The Drum and Monkey Inn at Blackrock appears to have started out as a two-storey domestic property and was probably built after construction of the Clydach Railroad in 1793–94. The name given to the later inn is not uncommon, associated with itinerant traders and travelling musicians who were often accompanied by a drum and monkey. It is possible that this and a small outbuilding were in some way related to the Clydach Railroad that passed between them, perhaps controlling the transport of stone from the nearby quarries.

Decorative bead moulding on the ground floor ceiling joists indicate that the building was of a somewhat higher status than the others recorded, and in one wall of the sub-basement was a brick-built bread oven. On another wall was a mural, painted when the basement was used as a bar. This shows an open-hearth foundry at the Ebbw Vale Iron Works, providing a poignant reminder of the life of this building at the end of the industrial heyday of South Wales.

Mae'n ymddangos mai eiddo domestig â dau lawr oedd The Drum and Monkey Inn yn Blackrock i ddechrau, ac mae'n siŵr iddo gael ei adeiladu ar ôl adeiladu Rheilffordd Clydach ym 1793–94. Nid yw'r enw a roddwyd i'r dafarn ddiweddarach yn un anghyffredin; mae'n gysylltiedig â masnachwyr crwydrol a cherddorion teithiol a oedd yn aml yn dod yno gyda drwm a mwnci. Mae'n bosibl y bu'r adeilad hwn ac adeilad allanol bach yn gysylltiedig â Rheilffordd Clydach a oedd yn pasio trwyddynt, efallai'n rheoli cludo cerrig o'r chwareli cyfagos.

Mae mowldin mwclis addurnol ar drawstiau nenfwd y llawr gwaelod yn dangos bod yr adeilad o statws ychydig yn uwch na'r adeiladau eraill sydd wedi'u cofnodi, ac yn un o waliau'r islawr, roedd popty bara wedi'i adeiladu â brics. Ar wal arall, roedd murlun, a baentiwyd pan oedd yr islawr yn cael ei ddefnyddio fel bar. Mae hyn yn dangos ffoundri aelwyd agored yng Ngwaith Haearn Glynebwy, sy'n rhywbeth pwerus i'n hatgoffa am fywyd yr adeilad ar ddiwedd yr anterth diwydiannol yn Ne Cymru.





Mural by Dennis Elon Bryant (1970s)

Murlun gan Dennis Elon Bryant (1970s)

Primitive Methodists Methodistiaid Cyntefig



Lion Chapel and gravestones (2015)

Capel Lion a cherrig beddau (2015)

Chapel Excavation

Cloddio Ar Safleoedd Capeli

Methodism originally began in the mid-18th century as a challenge to the established Church of England, and grew rapidly with the Industrial Revolution. It offered spiritual support for the mass of poor workers who were attracted to the jobs available in various areas of South Wales. However, after the death of John Wesley the Church began to fragment with many breakaway groups forming their own particular brand of Methodist worship.

Methodist Chapels can be found extensively throughout Wales and England, and the Clydach Valley is no exception, with a number of Chapels in the settlements along its length. One branch known as Primitive Methodists were formed in about 1810, this group characterised by the relatively plain design of their Chapels and their simple worship. The redundant former Primitive Methodist Chapel at Lion Terrace, Gilwern had to be demolished in advance of the A465 road scheme, its cemetery excavated and the human remains carefully removed and reburied.

Dechreuodd Methodistiaeth yn wreiddiol yng nghanol y 18fed ganrif i herio Eglwys sefydledig Loegr, a thyfodd yn gyflym yn sgil y Chwyldro Diwydiannol. Roedd yn cynnig cynhaliath ysbrydol i'r llu o weithwyr tlawd a oedd yn cael eu denu i'r swyddi a oedd ar gael yn ardaloedd amrywiol De Cymru. Fodd bynnag, ar ôl marwolaeth John Wesley, dechreuodd yr Eglwys ymrannu, a ffurfiodd llawer o grwpiau ymwahanu eu brand penodol eu hunain o addoli Methodistaidd.

Mae llawer o Gapeli Methodistaidd i'w gweld ledled Cymru a Lloegr, ac nid yw Cwm Clydach yn eithriad. Mae nifer o Gapeli yn yr aneddiadau yn yr ardal. Ffurfiwyd un gangen, sy'n cael ei hadnabod fel Methodistiaid Cyntefig, oddeutu 1810; roedd y grŵp hwn wedi'i nodweddu gan ddyluniad cymharol blaen eu Capeli a'u haddoli syml. Bu'n rhaid dymchwel yr hen Gapel Methodistaidd nad oedd ei angen mwyach yn Lion Terrace, Gilwern, cyn cynllun ffordd yr A465. Cloddiwyd mynwent y Capel, ac fe gafodd y gweddillion dynol eu tynnu oddi yno'n ofalus, a'u hailgladdu.



Graves in the cemetery (2015)

Beddau yn y fynwent (2015)

Epilogue

Diwedd glo

The six gravestones removed from the cemetery in 2015 record the burial of 10 individuals: six males and four females, including four children under four years old and another two under the age of 20. However, most of the 63 graves identified during the excavation would only have been marked by simple wooden crosses. Surprisingly perhaps, no living relatives of those buried there have come forward, though the names of most remain unknown and the families may have moved away from the area over the past century.

The graves were arranged in seven rows, all of the graves aligned north-east to south-west, the layout reflecting the constraints of the site. Coffin fittings included the largely illegible fragments of name plates, decorative bands and handles. These and the human remains were not further examined and have been reburied at the Monmouthshire County Council cemetery adjacent to St Elli's Church, Llanelly. Costain ensured that the remains were accorded the utmost respect during their removal and reburial, employing a local Funeral Director to support this and arranging for an appropriate service at the church.

Mae'r chwe charreg fedd a dynnwyd o'r fynwent yn 2015 yn cofnodi claddedigaeth 10 unigolyn: chwe gwryw a phedair benyw, yn cynnwys pedwar o blant o dan bedair oed, a dau arall o dan 20 oed. Fodd bynnag, byddai'r rhan fwyaf o'r 63 bedd a nodwyd yn ystod y cloddio dim ond wedi cael eu marcio â chroesau pren syml. Efallai ei bod yn syndod nad oes unrhyw berthnasau sy'n fyw o hyd i'r rheiny sydd wedi'u claddu wedi dod ymlaen, er bod enwau'r rhan fwyaf ohonynt yn parhau i fod yn anhysbys, a gallai'r teuluoedd fod wedi symud i ffwrdd o'r ardal dros y ganrif ddiwethaf.

Trefnwyd y beddau yn saith rhes, wedi'u gosod o'r gogledd-ddwyrain i'r de-orllewin; mae'r cynllun yn adlewyrchu cyfyngiadau'r safle. Roedd gosodiadau arch yn cynnwys darnau o blatiau enwau a oedd yn aneglur i raddau helaeth, bandiau addurnol a dolenni. Ni chafodd y rhain a'r gweddillion dynol eu harchwilio ymhellach, ac maent wedi cael eu hailgladdu ym mynwent Cyngor Sir Fynwy ger Eglwys Sant Elli, Llanelli. Sicrhodd Costain fod y gweddillion yn cael y parch mwyaf wrth eu symud a'u hailgladdu, a chyflogwyd Trefnwr Angladdau lleol i gynorthwyo â hyn. Trefnwyd gwasanaeth priodol yn yr eglwys hefyd.

