

JBs to Penarth 4th April 2019

Penarth is situated on a headland jutting out into the Bristol Channel just to the South of the Cardiff Bay barrage in a somewhat exposed location (for this reason, I suggested to Brian that it was best visited in the summer.....so he moved the date from June to April!). It lies on the erstwhile Taff Vale Railway route from Cardiff to Barry, now singled and truncated at Penarth Town station, and is a town of contrasts. On the South side of the hill is a Victorian seaside resort, complete with pier from which the paddle steamer 'Waverley' operates cruises along the Bristol Channel on a limited number of dates in the summer. There is a very steep road down to the promenade from the town, so we won't be going down there. On the Cardiff side is the dock, developed by the Taff Vale as a coal exporting port to avoid the charges at Cardiff (owned by the Marquis of Bute) and Barry (owned by the Barry Railway). Today it's a marina surrounded with waterside apartments, wine and tapas bars and other trappings of yuppification, so we won't go down there either!

I have tried to put together an itinerary which ensures that the steepest slopes are all downhill, so we'll start at the Town station and finish at Dingle Road, which is located on the 1 in 40 gradient up from Cogan Junction to Penarth Town.

The Tour

From Penarth Town station, leave by the footpath on the right immediately after the exit, turn right over the railway bridge and right again to:-

1. **The Railway Hotel** (opens 09:00). Up to 4 mainly local real ales. Breakfast available if required, although any dyed-in-the-wool 'Spoons breakfast fans could skip this one and go straight to No 2. Leave at 11:20, turning left outside the pub back to the road junction and following Stanwell Road to the roundabout. Turn left into Windsor Road and a short distance along on the right will be found:-
2. **The Bears Head**. Wetherspoons, and the best place for any later arrivals to meet up. Leave at 11:55, turn left outside back to the roundabout and then left into Albert Road for a 10-12 minute walk past Belle Vue Park then down the steep and curving Stanwell Crescent with a panoramic view of Cardiff Bay to John Street where just around the corner is:-
3. **The Clive Arms** (opens 12:00). A small back-street pub, closed by the brewery owners then reopened by the local community and therefore worthy of JB's support. One hand pump serving local beer (usually, but not always, Vale of Glamorgan Brewery). Leave at 12:35 turning right and continuing on the level into Queen's Road for the short walk to:-
4. **The Pilot** (opens 12:00). Again a range of mainly local beers and a possible food stop although the lunchtime menu can be rather limited and not particularly cheap. Leave at 13:15, continue along Queen's Road then left into Glebe Street to:-
5. **The Golden Lion**. 4 hand pumps and the suggested food stop with the usual range of pub fare at reasonable prices. Allowing time for eating, we'll stay until 14:15 and then continue up Glebe Street, taking the second right turn into Plassey Street then second left down High Street to:-
6. **The Windsor**. Brain's pub – well you can't go to the Cardiff area without meeting at least one! Until finish.

On exit into Windsor Road, turn down the hill, cross the road at the pedestrian crossing and 12 yards or so further on there is an entrance to a footpath on the left. Following this path leads to a footbridge over the railway just at the Cardiff end of Dingle Road station. Less than 10 mins walk.

Penarth Map



Travel

Trains between Cardiff Central and Penarth run every 15 mins and take 15 mins up the hill and 12 down.

Cardiff is served by trains to and from Paddington via Bristol Parkway (current changeover point from electric to diesel on Class 80x units) every 30 mins, Bristol TM twice an hour (interval varies), Nottingham via Derby and Birmingham NS hourly and Manchester via Crewe and Shrewsbury also hourly with additional services from Shrewsbury on the 2-hourly Holyhead – Cardiff trains.

JM March 2019