Cardiff Ramblers Cerddwyr Caerdydd

More Capital Walks 1: Cosmeston to Sully Circuit.



Distance: 8.2 km / 5.11mi

Description: A level, easy walk, but farm gateways will be very muddy after rain, boots definitely required.

Start Point: Cosmeston Lakes Country Park car park.
Grid. ref. ST 179 692. What3Words : ///cargo.useful.regard

Getting there from Cardiff:
by bus: from Wood Street; 94 service to Cosmeston Lakes Country Park.
by car: on the A4232 out of Cardiff, take the exit to the A4055 for Penarth/Barry; straight on past the Merrie Harrier on the right, then at the traffic lights in Lower Penarth take Sully Road, the B4267 which leads to Cosmeston Lakes Country Park.

Route Description:

First published 1997; revised and updated for 2022.

[1] Go from Cosmeston Car Park to nearest lakeside. Turn left and take the boardwalk (take care, this is slippery when wet), passing behind the café. When the boardwalk ends, continue ahead to reach the service road dividing the lake. Turn left and ignoring the first two cross paths, walk to two kissing gates facing each other, just beyond the road leading to the mediaeval village. Take righthand gate and walk half left uphill through a small gap in the facing hedge, into another inclined field. Then go through the gateway ahead at the field corner. Keep to left edge of field and go through the kissing gate just before the fence at end of the field.

[2] Now head diagonally right uphill towards small hillocks on skyline. Turn right in front of these and in 50m veer left to the field corner. Two gates are ahead. Go through the righthand gate. Then keeping to the left field edge, walk towards and then to right of barns and leave the farm at the kissing gate in the corner of the field. Walk down a short drive to the road.

[3] Cross to the road opposite, signposted "Sully-Barry". Walk this road for about 500m to Sully. There is no footpath so take care, especially on bends. Continue on this road, Cog Road, through the village for about 750m, ignoring side turns. Pass the Sully Inn on the left and 50m beyond follow the left-hand pavement as it curves left in front of the church. Walk past the bus shelter and, 50m beyond it, cross the road and take the signed footpath to the sea front.

[4] Go left over a shingle beach in front of houses, and along to join the coastal path. The scenic view ahead shows three islands, from the left, Flat Holm, Sully Island and Steep Holm. Keep to coast path for about 1km as, on the landward side, you pass houses, sports field, boatyard and more houses. A large sports field is now ahead. Keep to perimeter path of this above the beach. When you reach a fenced caravan park, go right and down to the beach. Keeping to the left, walk for 200m over fairly flat, but broken, and in some parts slippery rock, and then go up stone steps to cafés, The Captain's Wife Inn, and Swanbridge car park/promenade. Please note that if the tide is high and it is preferable to avoid this beach section, then keep to the sports field path, passing to left of the caravan park, and join a road where the fence ends. Go right and then, carefully as there are no pavements, down road to Swanbridge.

It is possible to walk over to Sully Island from here at low tide. There is a board advising safe times to cross (about 2 hours either side of low water).

[5] Walk east to the far edge of the car park to a small gateway which takes you onto the coastal road. Go up this road for about 1.5kms to the B4267 Penarth – Sully road. Cross this road and take the track opposite, through the gate. Walk on, and the recreated mediaeval village soon appears on the right. Take the lane on the right, signed to village, and then, unless you want to visit the village, go left opposite village entrance, over bridge and boardwalk to regain car park.

The walk could easily be extended by use of paths around both lakes. Refreshments are usually available at cafés at Cosmeston and Swanbridge, and inns at Sully and Swanbridge.

