

Bwlch Nant yr Arian

Ponterwyd, Aberystwyth, SY23 3AB

Seeking long-term partner to lease
part of the Bwlch Nant yr Arian site



NEWMARK

Overview

We work for the people of Wales driven by the vision of nature and people thriving together.

We are the biggest Welsh Government Sponsored Body and our work to protect and enhance Wales' natural environment impacts everything that matters most - our communities, our wildlife, and our future.

We are custodians of 7% of Wales' land, including the Welsh Government Woodland Estate, flood defenses, and National Nature Reserves. It is our duty to pursue the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) as laid out in the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.



A flagship and versatile outdoor destination

We are seeking a long-term, sustainable partner to lease part of the Bwlch Nant yr Arian site, benefiting local communities, enhancing tourism at this prime recreational destination and protecting and enhancing our natural environment.

While renowned for its red kite feeding station, the centre offers a diverse range of other activities for nature enthusiasts, families, and outdoor adventurers.

The Visitor Centre (VC) is perched on a dramatic hilltop, straddling the boundary between the lowlands and uplands, and has commanding views of Cardigan Bay and the Cambrian Mountains. It is a leading mountain biking destination in Wales and features a total combined length of approximately 80km of promoted trails.



Location

Bwlch Nant yr Arian is located in the **Cambrian Mountains** of Ceredigion, near **Aberystwyth**, and is easily accessible from the **A44**.



Core investment

The primary scope is the non-negotiable land, assets, and activity elements that should be part of any bid. At the heart of the centre they are:

- Main VC building
- Car park and ANPR
- Events space building
- Bird hide
- Corral
- Play areas
- Skills park
- Pathways around the lake
- Red kite feeding



Main VC building

The VC is a two-floor timber-frame and block structure with timber-clad walls and a roof combining concrete tiles and sedum. Totalling approximately 330 m² across both floors, you will find:

- Ground Floor: Main visitor space with café, retail outlet, commercial kitchen, prep and dry store areas, and customer WCs.
- First Floor: Office, store, staff room, and WC. Connected to the centre is a timber building housing the biomass heating system and pellet hopper, with a pitched roof clad in profiled metal.
- A separate timber shower unit.

Car park

The Car park has capacity for 100 cars, including three disabled bays. It is managed by First Parking via a barrierless ANPR system, with payment through RingGo or IPS machines. Season tickets and free parking for local residents are offered. Contracts with First Parking, IPS, and RingGo, plus management of season tickets and free parking, will continue under the lease and be managed by the new partner. Full rollout of the system is expected in early 2026.



Events space building

Completed in 2025, this single-storey timber-framed structure sits on a reinforced concrete raft foundation. It features timber cladding, a timber roof, and mains electricity. Approximate size: 4m x 4m.



Bird hide

Completed in 2025, this single-storey open timber structure is supported by steel columns on reinforced concrete pads. Approximate size: 7m x 3m.



Corral

A corral is located near the parking area for safely securing horses. The approximate area is 500m².

Play areas

There are two timber-themed play areas that cater to toddlers and older children.

Skills park

This provides a purpose-built area for novice mountain bikers to practice techniques such as rollers, step ups, berms, tabletops, hips and bowls.

Pathways around the lake

The majority of the perimeter footpaths are laid in tarmacadam or concrete pavers. The trail around the lake (the Barcud Trail) is an approximately 1.3km circular, wheelchair- and pushchair-accessible route.

Red kite feeding

Red kite supplementary feeding commenced at Bwlch Nant yr Arian in 1999 and continues via a NRW-managed contract. Approximately 10kg of supplementary food, comprising offal and meat off-cuts, is provided daily. This attracts in the region of 150-180 red kites daily.



The former office building

This building was the original visitor centre, with change of use to offices granted in 1997. The building, has an approximate total area of 254 m² across two-stories constructed of timber clad block elevations under a slate roof. It comprises meeting and communal space on the ground floor, and there is a small first floor area.

It has been out of use since 2009 and has fallen into a state of disrepair and will benefit from major investment if it is to be brought back into use. The water supply to the building has been turned off and toilets drained down.

External office building / staff room

This building is of a similar age to the main visitor centre and comprises a lobby, staff room, store room and accessible toilet. Internal refurbishment was undertaken in 2019. The main structure of the building is timber construction, with the external wall finishes being timber clad. The roof to the building is a timber structure overclad with slate. The approximate dimensions of the building are 7m x 6m.



Secondary scope development potential

The Secondary Scope includes optional assets bidders may wish to include, providing significant upside potential for revenue and development. They are:

- The former office building;
- External office building / staff room;
- Recreation trails (outside of the Primary Scope Area)
- The lake.

Ride. Run. Explore.

Recreation trails

(outside of the primary scope area)

The centre features several waymarked walking trails, suitable for various fitness levels, that extend beyond the area immediately around the main visitor centre.

Walking trails comprise:

- **Miners' Trail (2.3 km):** Follows a historic leat once used in lead mining, leading to the Giant's Chair viewpoint, offering panoramic views of the valley
- **Ridgetop Trail (4.1 km):** Ascends to a heather-clad ridge, providing sweeping vistas of Cardigan Bay and the Cambrian Mountains before descending through woodlands.

Mountain biking trails include:

- **Arian Trail (7.9 km):** A family-friendly route around Blaenmelindwr lake, suitable for all skill levels
- **Melindwr Trail (5km):** This is designed as a progression for riders who are competent riding blue grade trails, to improve their skills before progressing to the next grade up
- **Pendam Trail (10.2km):** The Pendam Trail strings together some of the best flowing sections in Nant yr Arian with short climbs
- **Summit Trail (18.5 km):** A more challenging trail that traverses forest paths and moorlands
- **Syfydrin Trail (36 km):** A black-graded trail offering a rigorous ride across open hills and remote countryside.



For running enthusiasts there are two designated running trails that offer varied terrains and elevations:

- **Y Fuwch (10 km):** this longer trail features a variety of surfaces, including forest roads and singletrack paths, with several steep ascents
- **Y Llo (5km):** this shorter route begins with a flat section before ascending onto a ridge and returning to the centre.

For equestrian enthusiasts, the Mynydd March Trail is a circular route designed for horse riders, that offers views over Cardigan Bay and Pumlumon Fawr. The trail follows forest roads, public roads, and trails with some short steep sections.



The lake

The lake covers approximately 2.6 hectares and is shallow, with a maximum depth of around one metre.

It was created in the late 1990s by clearing an area previously used for forestry to enhance the landscape surrounding the new visitor centre. Remnants of the former forest remain, with tree stumps still visible in some areas.

The lake has a dam, which is located in the northeast. It is therefore within the scope of the Reservoir Act 1975. NRW would continue to manage compliance requirements.



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NEWMARK

Enquiries

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