

# The Harford Trail



## Trail 3 The Harford Trail

Easy Walk, 1.5 Miles/2.5 Km (1 Hour)

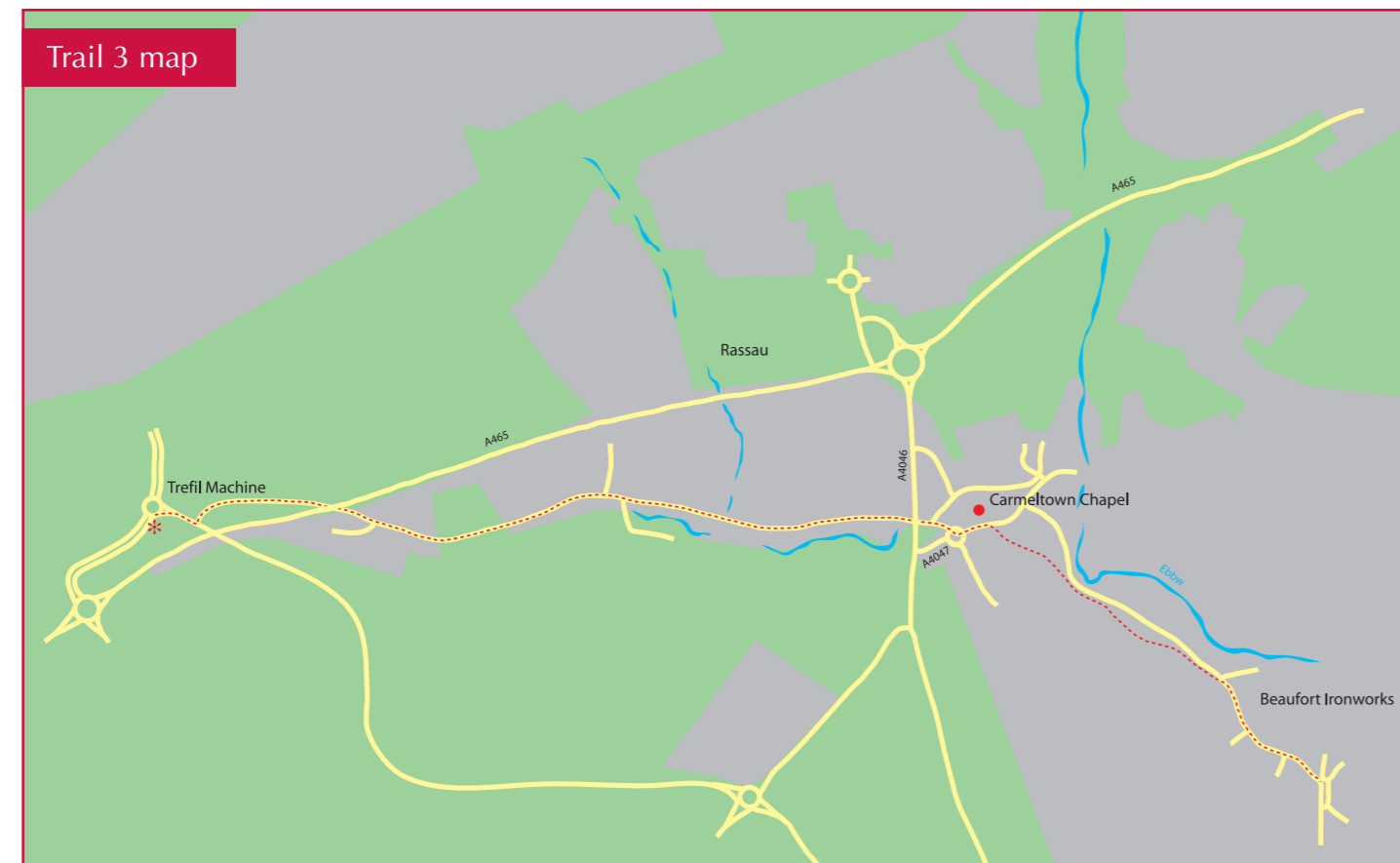
**Start at Trefil Machine (SO 147 116).**

**Turn right down Nant y Crofft lane.** This follows the route of the Rassa Railroad built in 1796 to link the Trefil Quarries with Beaufort Ironworks. **After 100m you will pass Trefil Station on the right (now Station House) with the Castle Inn opposite. After a further 200m pass under the A465 – the line of the Merthyr, Tredegar and Abergavenny Railway of 1859.**

**Continue straight on down the Rassa Railroad for just over 1km.**



Rassa Railroad



Rolling Mill

In the early 19th century the small stream to your right was the border between the old counties of Breconshire and Monmouthshire. Where you are walking would have been in the parish of Llangynidr in Breconshire and the other side of the stream lay in the parish of Bedwellty in Momouthshire. Just before the junction with Alandale Road, you will see a sign marked “Tramroad Side”, a reminder of the industrial archaeology of this stretch of road!



Rassa Railroad

**Just before you join the A4046 the railroad crossed the Nant Rassa by a small bridge that can be found by some railings near “Tai Bach” just before the modern viaduct that carries the A4046.**

**From the small bridge continue to the A4047.** To your left, running behind the Rhyd y Blew Inn, was a branch of the Trefil Railroad that ran to Beaufort Ironworks.



Beaufort Truck Token

**Next to the Rhyd y Blew Inn is Carmel Chapel.**

The chapel's origins go back to 1800. At that time, Independent ministers used to preach occasionally at the *Rhyd y Blew Inn* kept by a Mrs. Miles. By 1808, services were being held in a room rented at the *Refiners' Arms* at five shillings a month. Carmel was built in 1821 at a cost of £140 on a spot formerly used for cock-fighting. The chapel was rebuilt in 1829 and, by 1851, attendance averaged 517 at morning services and 616 in the evenings. The current chapel building dates from 1865 and was designed by the important chapel architect, the Rev. Thomas Thomas of Landore.

During the Chartist Uprising of 1839, the Rassa contingent stopped outside Carmel Chapel and required the congregation to follow them to Newport. The congregation refused and so the Chartists broke into the *Beaufort Arms*, at Beaufort Rise, demanding ale and killing the landlord's dog.

**To follow the Rassa Railroad take the road in front of the Rhyd y Blew Inn. At the entrance to the pub car park, cross the road and follow the tarred footpath ahead of you. You are now back on the route of the Rassa Railroad. Follow this for just under 1km to ‘Shop Row’ (the Badminton Club). The footpath runs parallel to a road. Halfway along,**



Trefil Machine

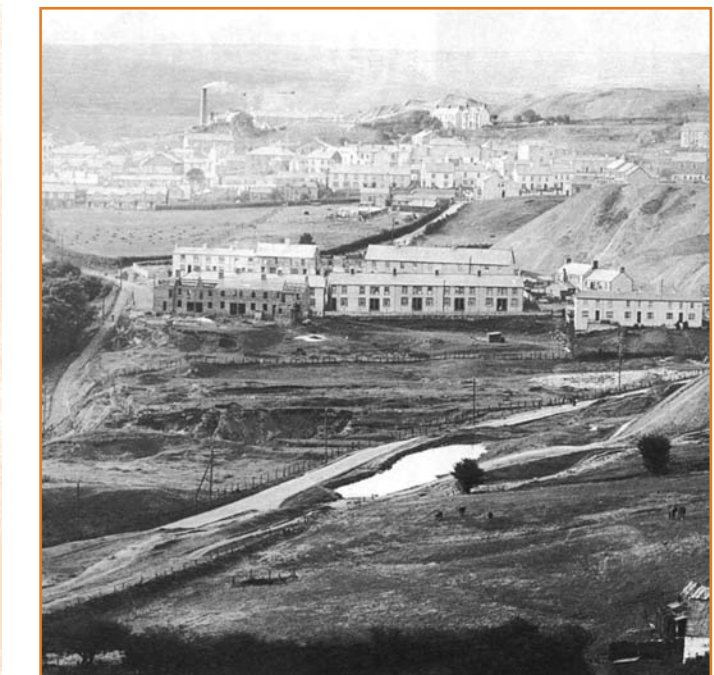
opposite the “Glan yr Afon” sheltered housing complex, you will find a small circular Great Western Railway marker dated 1900 stuck into the bank as a testament to the line having been taken over by the GWR.



GWR Marker

**At ‘Shop Row’** you meet a small roundabout where the Beaufort Ironworks Company Shop lay on the left. The road that crosses through the roundabout from left to right (Beaufort Terrace) was the Beaufort Tramroad. This was converted into a standard gauge railway in 1854 becoming known as the Beaufort Branch of the Monmouthshire

Railway. This was all taken over by GWR in 1880. This section of railway from Ebbw Vale to Beaufort may have been little used but the lower section was of major importance for Ebbw Vale Steelworks further down the valley and has now been reopened for passenger services.



Site of Beaufort Ironworks, 1900

This trail is one of seven “In the Footsteps of the Iron-makers” series that is part of the Green Mines/Atlanterra project to promote our mining heritage through tourism.

To let us know if you enjoyed the walk or for further information please contact us on 01495 355937 / 07968 472812 or at [alyson.tippings@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:alyson.tippings@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

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