

CLYDACH GORGE FROM GILWERN HILL.

GILWERN HILL – AROUND SO 237 127 -
ACCESSIBLE FROM B4246 BLAENAFON-LLANFOIST ROAD



Viewed from Gilwern Hill looking south towards Brynmawr, this natural cleft into the limestone coal basin provided a natural link between Usk Valley and coalfield, thus making the Brecon Canal commercially viable. Utilized by mule trains, tramroads, turnpike, railway and modern roads, the gorge became the most intensively-used industrial route in Wales. Small-scale charcoal-fired furnaces and forges were established here in the 17th century. In 1841 Sir Bartle Frere - South African High Commissioner - instrumental in starting the Zulu Wars - was born at Clydach House near his family's Clydach Iron Works. The valley's natural beech woods are now a "Site of Special Scientific Interest."