Alwen Reservoir Trail

This is a mountain bike route of 7 miles that circles the Alwen reservoir in Mynydd Hiraethog, North Wales. It is an easy route suitable for families that could be tackled on a hybrid bike. There is a big hill at the halfway point, which is very exposed in bad conditions, but the rest of the route is sheltered in the trees of Clocaenog forest. While it’s an easy trail there is an accessibility issue with the route having two kissing gates on it, on the eastern side of the reservoir.

1.  Start from the car park directly next to the Alwen reservoir dam [(GR956529)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=295600&y=352980&z=120&sv=295600,352980&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=295600&ay=352980&lm=0). Climb out of the car park, past the dam on the left, to a gated junction on the following right hand bend [(GR955530)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=295580&y=353022&z=115&sv=295580,353022&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=295580&ay=353022&lm=0). Turn left and go through the gap to the right of the gate and follow the track in the direction of the cycle trail marker post. At the next junction follow the marker post right and climb the singletrack to where it ends at a junction with a wide forest track [(GR953531)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=295362&y=353182&z=115&sv=295362,353182&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=295362&ay=353182&lm=0).

2. Turn left and follow the forest track to the next junction. Take the right hand track and climb straight ahead to an open three-way junction at a derelict house and information board on the left [(GR944540)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=294477&y=354074&z=115&sv=294477,354074&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=294477&ay=354074&lm=0). Follow the cycle trail marker post left and descend the forest track that soon bears right. After the right hand bend the track climbs for a while before going through a long left hand bend. The track then descends to a junction at another marker post, on a right hand bend, with a thin track on the left that descends into the trees [(GR941546)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=294109&y=354601&z=115&sv=294109,354601&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=294109&ay=354601&lm=0).

3. Turn left and descend the track into the trees, which is the start of a fun section of singletrack. The track soon comes to the edge of the Alwen reservoir. After passing an information board for a derelict house in the trees the track continues along beside the reservoir for a while before turning right and climbing to a junction [(GR935549)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=293581&y=354893&z=115&sv=293581,354893&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=293581&ay=354893&lm=0). Turn left, again following a marker post, and cross the small bridge in the dip then climb to a kissing gate. Go through the gate then continue following the trail as it climbs gently through the trees. The trail eventually comes to another kissing gate. After going through the gate follow the trail to a junction a short distance later [(GR933554)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=293308&y=355478&z=115&sv=293308,355478&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=293308&ay=355478&lm=0). Follow the cycle trail marker post left and descend the along the edge of the trees. The track eventually ends at a junction. Turn left and descend the wide track to a gate just before the wooden bridge across the Alwen reservoir [(GR929555)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=292923&y=355490&z=115&sv=292923,355490&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=292923&ay=355490&lm=0).

4. Go through the gate then across the bridge to the next gate on the far side of the Alwen reservoir. Go through this gate then up the long climb to the top of the hill on the left. The climb starts out steep but flattens off after a while. The trail surface is good though, making it fairly easy to push your bike up if needed. Continue climbing the trail to a gate at the false summit. After the gate continue a short distance to the real summit [(GR926546)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=292643&y=354627&z=115&sv=292643,354627&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=292643&ay=354627&lm=0). Go straight on over the summit and descend the trail to a gate halfway down. After the gate continue descending the track, back in the trees, to where it ends at a junction. Be careful at this junction, as you can arrive at speed and there is a big drop into a stream gully straight ahead [(GR931542)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=293108&y=354204&z=115&sv=293108,354204&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=293108&ay=354204&lm=0).

5. Turn right and follow the wide track a short way to a junction with a track on the left at the cycle trail marker post. Turn left and follow the undulating singletrack through the trees. Where the singletrack ends continue ahead on the wide forest track. Follow the forest track for a while until it comes to a junction, on a right hand bend, with track on the left at a cycle trail marker post [(GR943531)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=294313&y=353174&z=115&sv=294313,353174&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=294313&ay=353174&lm=0). Turn left and descend the singletrack that soon goes through a tight right hand bend before reaching a small bridge at the bottom. After the bridge follow the track left then climb quite steeply through a number of bends. Where the singletrack ends at a wide forest track continue ahead to the next signposted track on the left [(GR949529)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=294890&y=352914&z=115&sv=294890,352914&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=521&ax=294890&ay=352914&lm=0). Turn left and descend the singletrack towards the Alwen reservoir. Continue along the undulating track back to the Alwen reservoir dam. At the end follow the track left and go across the dam to complete the ride back at the car park.