

# World Heritage Sites in Wales |





# What are World Heritage Sites?

World Heritage Sites are places of Outstanding Universal Value to the whole of humanity. This means that their cultural and/or natural significance is so exceptional that it has special importance for people everywhere, now and in the future.

World Heritage Sites are not simply the best examples of their type; they are sites, monuments and landscapes that say something fundamental about humanity, where we have come from and the world we inhabit. The selection process is rigorous and demanding to make sure that World Heritage Sites are truly an exclusive collection of international significance.

There is no higher recognition of heritage value than World Heritage Site status. This means that we have a responsibility to protect, conserve and present our World Heritage Sites for future generations.

There are four World Heritage Sites in Wales:

- Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd.
- Blaenavon Industrial Landscape.
- Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal.
- The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales.

Ref: <https://cadw.gov.wales/advice-support/historic-assets/conservation-areas-other-historic-assets/other-historic-assets/world#section-introduction>

# Castles and Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd

Beaumaris, Caernarfon, Conwy and Harlech were the finest castles built by King Edward I in Wales. At Caernarfon and Conwy, new towns were built within massive walls at the same time as the castles.

The four castles of Beaumaris, Conwy, Caernarfon, Harlech and the attendant fortified towns at Conwy and Caernarfon in Gwynedd, North Wales, are the finest examples of late 13th century and early 14th century military architecture in Europe.

The castles of Beaumaris and Harlech are unique artistic achievements for the way they combine characteristic 13th century double-wall structures with a central plan, and for the beauty of their proportions and masonry.

All were begun and substantially completed between 1283 and 1330. The result, both individually and collectively, is the finest surviving example of late thirteenth-century military architecture in Europe.

Ref: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/374/>



# Blaenavon Industrial Landscape

The landscape of Blaenavon, at the upper end of the Avon Llwyd valley in South Wales, provides exceptional testimony to the area's international importance in iron making and coal mining in the late 18th and the early 19th century. The parallel development of these industries was one of the principal dynamic forces of the Industrial Revolution.

The major preserved sites of Blaenavon Ironworks and Big Pit, together with the outstanding relict landscape of mineral exploitation, manufacturing, transport, and settlement which surrounds them, provide an extraordinarily comprehensive picture of all the crucial elements of the industrialisation process: coal and ore mines, quarries, a primitive railway system and canal, furnaces, workers' homes, and the social infrastructure of the early industrial community. The area reflects the pre-eminence of South Wales in the production of iron, steel and coal in the 19th century.

The remains of the late 18th century furnaces, together with later 19th century furnaces, are the best preserved of its period in the United Kingdom. Beside the furnaces, two of the original casting houses can still be seen. The remains of the original workers' housing provided on site can still be seen around the original base of the massive chimney to the blowing engine house, and the cast-iron pillars and brackets which carried blast pipes to the furnaces still survive. The iconic water balance tower of 1839 is an excellent example of lift technology using water to counter-balance loads.

The Blaenavon landscape reflects ways in which all the raw materials necessary for making iron were obtained. The landscape includes coal, iron ore, fireclay and limestone workings and transport systems including a primitive iron-railed railway, leading to the canal and later steam railway tracks which were used for the import and export of materials.





## Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal

Situated in north-eastern Wales, the 18 kilometre long Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal is a feat of civil engineering of the Industrial Revolution, completed in the early years of the 19th century. Covering a difficult geographical setting, the building of the canal required substantial, bold civil engineering solutions.

The aqueduct is a pioneering masterpiece of engineering and monumental metal architecture, conceived by the celebrated civil engineer Thomas Telford. The use of both cast and wrought iron in the aqueduct enabled the construction of arches that were light and strong, producing an overall effect that is both monumental and elegant. The property is inscribed as a masterpiece of creative genius, and as a remarkable synthesis of expertise already acquired in Europe and recognised as an innovative ensemble that inspired many projects all over the world.

The Pontcysyllte Canal is a remarkable example of the construction of a human-engineered waterway in a difficult geographical environment. The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal are early and outstanding examples of the innovations brought about by the Industrial Revolution in Britain, where they made decisive development in transport capacities possible.

# The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales

The Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales illustrates the transformation that industrial slate quarrying and mining brought about in the traditional rural environment of the mountains and valleys of the Snowdon massif. The territory, extending from mountain-top to sea-coast, presented opportunities and constraints that were used and challenged by the large-scale industrial processes undertaken by landowners and capital investors, which reshaped the agricultural landscape into an industrial centre for slate production during the Industrial Revolution (1780-1914).

The serial property comprises six components each encompassing relict quarries and mines, archaeological sites related to slate industrial processing, historical settlements, both living and relict, historic gardens and grand country houses, ports, harbours and quays, and railway and road systems illustrating the functional and social linkages of the relict slate industrial landscape. The property was internationally significant not only for the export of slates, but also for the export of technology and skilled workers from the 1780s to the early 20th century. It played a leading role in the field and constituted a model for other slate quarries in different parts of the world. It offers an important and remarkable example of interchange of materials, technology and human values.





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Am fwy o adnoddau ewch i:

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