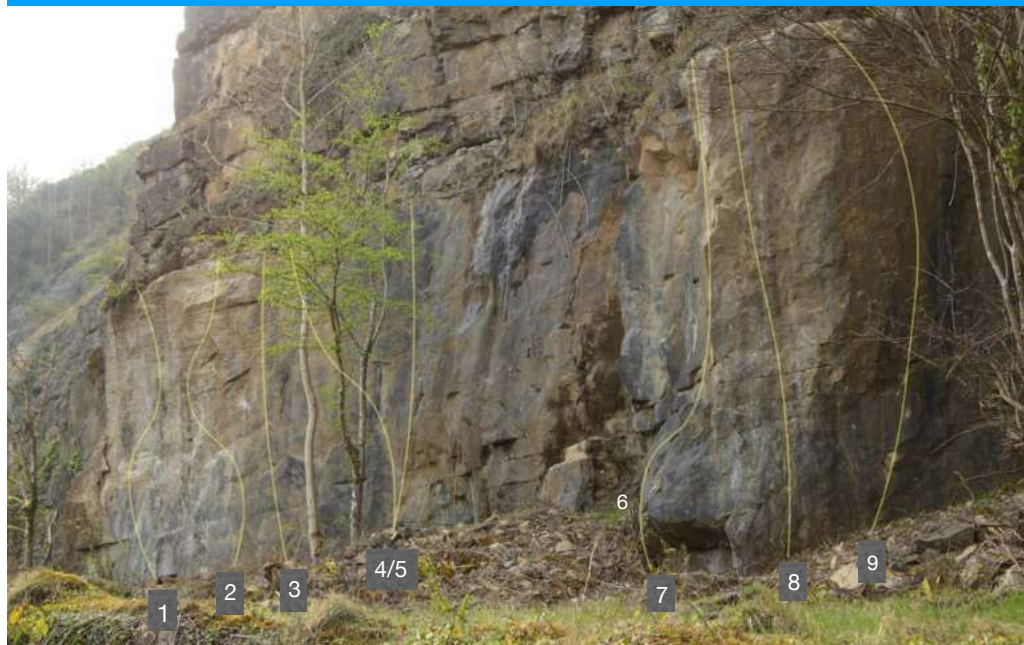


Mynydd Llangatwg

The 'lonely shepherd' was once a man who treated his wife so badly that she drowned herself from despair in the River Usk. After her death he was turned into rock for punishment but comes alive again every midsummer at midnight, when he takes a walk down to the river for a drink calling out his wife's name, trying to persuade her to return to him.

The limestone quarries of Mynydd Llangatwg contour the hillside above LLangattock, a herd overlooked by their 'lonely shepherd'. Whilst most quarrying has left larger rock faces better known as one of South Wales' premier adventure climbing and caving areas and frequently shunned by the risk averse (see 'Gower & S.E Wales' by Gai Ashmore & Roy Thomas/*The Gilwern Area* by Guy Percival for details of the routes here) there are exceptions in some peripheral areas, and after exploration by Martin Crocker and later, Guy Percival, Mark Davies, and Oliver Keynes, the stunningly beautiful hillside around Llangattock now contains a surprising amount of excellent highballs/micro-routes and bouldering, including an iconic boulder below the Lonely Shepherd that is spiritual home to some classic problems.





Approach - from A465, exit south-west at the small roundabout before/south of Gilwern. Turn left to double back beneath the A465 and continue left on a smaller road (Main Road - NP7 0LW) running parallel with the A465. Continue south and uphill through Clydach village until reaching a parking area on the right before Blackrock Quarry. Walk back north along the road from here for 1 minute, passing some old lime kilns on the left (can you see the creepy face watching you as you walk by?) and turn left just beyond these to enter the quarry.

A small section of quality bouldering is found on the first wall on the left as you enter the quarry:

1. **Project** [7?, ss] The left end of the wall, from a low sidepull/large flat hold, eliminating the 'shelf' at the base of the arête.

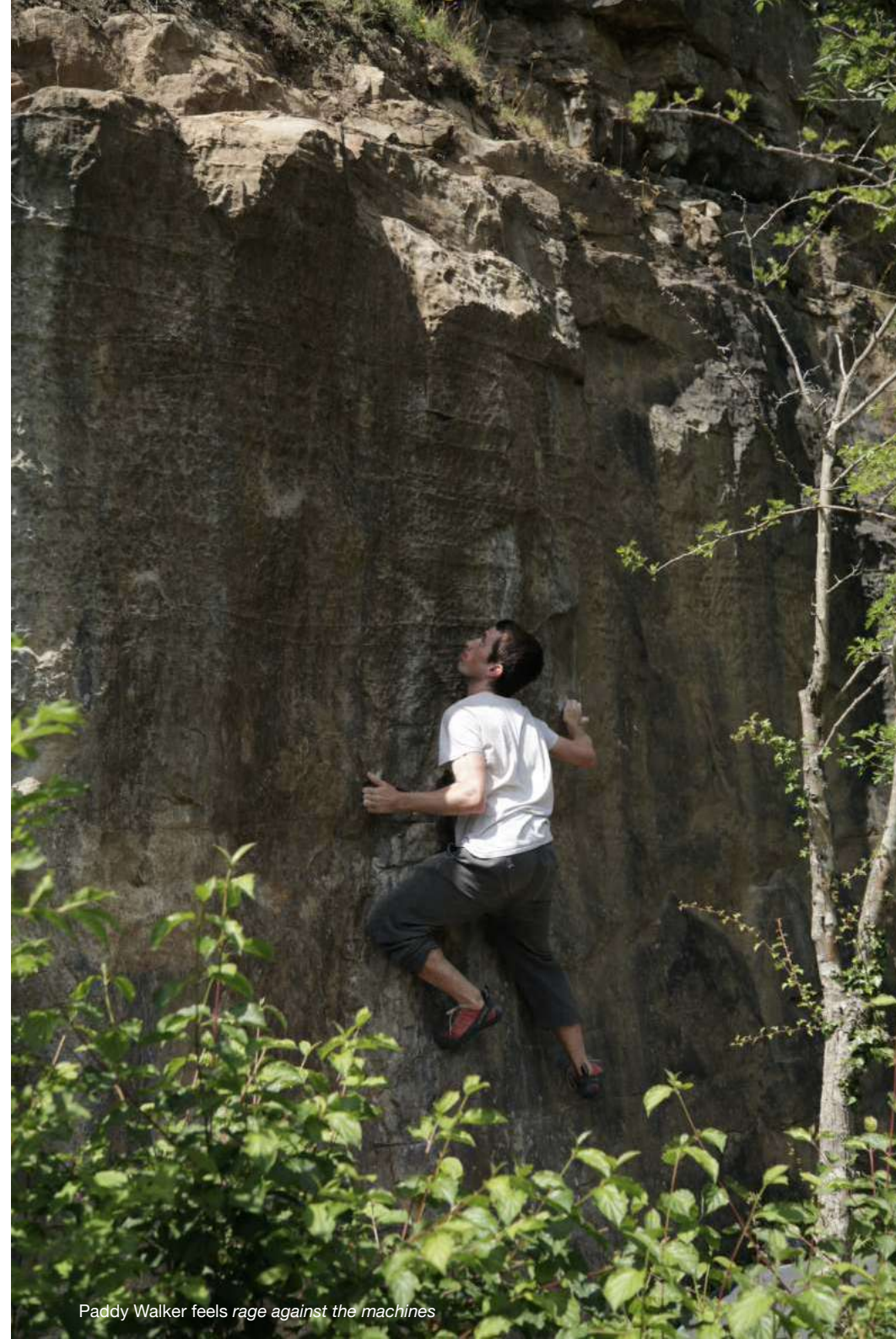
2. **Rage against the machines** [7a/7c, ss] An elegant problem, one of the area's best, up the smooth wall from a standing start 1m right of the low flat hold. Aim for the vertical flake. A sit-start from the big flat edge adds some very difficult moves (O.Keynes 29.4.19/ss M.Preece)

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3. **Grooveshark** [7a] The rightwards trending groove just right of *Rage* is another really good problem (P.Walker 5.4.21)

4. **Shock jock** [6b] From obvious foot-edges make a tricky move to pass the undercut, heading left to finish (G.X.Percival 15.2.19)

5. **Rock shock** [6a] Direct to the break from the large jug beside two trees. Topping out isn't possible so descend via the trees (O.Keynes 29.1.20)



Paddy Walker feels rage against the machines

The bulging wall right again has potential but seems permanently wet. Beyond this an attractive highball arête sticks out from the cliff. Note that descent from this feature is tricky. Down-climbing the corner groove (6) is the only way.

6. **The groove** [5] The shallow groove left of the arête has an awkward high move and is also the only way down from the top (*G.X.Percival & O.Keynes 21.2.19*)

7. **Dumb ass** [5+] The front of the arête climbed from the shelf is a good problem with a high crux (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 21.2.19*)

8. **Electric arête** [6b] The arête climbed on the right is harder and better than its sister version (*G.X.Percival & O.Keynes 21.2.19*)

9. **Shockaholic** [6a+] The back wall of the projecting arête using holds on the face and in the crack. Finish leftwards to get on top. A harder variant may be possible without using the crack (*G.X.Percival 21.2.19*)

3. **Burning the bones** [4+/hvs 5a - 6m] The next groove along has good layaway holds. Descend via ledges on the right (*G.X.Percival 2.5.17*)

4. **Snap judgement** [6a] An eliminate that makes for a good problem, up the wall just right of the groove (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.4.17*)

5. **The lost secrets of Llangattock** [5+] There is a shorter section of wall on the right (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.4.17*)

Moving out from the trees and the quarry feels more open, with a small area [B] of climbing found about 20m up from the first wall.

6. **My crack** [vd - 7m] The first crack is quite broken (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

7. **The accidental gift** [5/hvs 5b - 7m] Awkward moves gain the flake crack (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

8. **Curvy** [3+] Follow the curving crack left-right (*O.Keynes 2.11.18*)

9. **Straight** [4+] Bisect *Curvy* using a groove and the wall above (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

10. **The antidote** [6a, ss] Further right is a shorter section of steep wall which offers a good problem. Sit-start at the slots (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 2/5/17*).

Continue further right for around 100m, beyond a tall arête [**Fort Crag Arête**, severe, *M.Davies 28.6.19*], to another section of good-looking rock capped by a grassy ledge and two small trees. Easy descent from this ledge can be made to the right.



11. **The horse knows the way** [4 - 6m] On the left is a broken crack (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

12. **I wanna hear you make horsey noises** [6a - 6m] An aesthetic and very good highball up the shallow groove, with a tricky move up high (*O.Keynes 2.11.18*) #southsidetour

12b. Variant: head left up the wall between crack and groove without use of the crack (*H.Garner 12.18*)

Continue along the quarry to reach another wall of attractive rock and some good highballs beside low hawthorns. The landings here are flat, with descent from the top ledge made to the right.

Craig y Gaer - limestone, south facing, 5 minutes

Approach - from Clydach follow Main Road west as it becomes Old Abergavenny Road then turn right at the end junction to double back and continue east along the hilltop. Follow the narrow road until an open rounded parking area is reached on the right opposite some houses and before the road contours left around the hillside. If coming from the roadside quarries then follow the narrow hilltop road south for around 670m as it contours right around a bend in the hillside. The parking area is soon reached on the left.

From the parking walk away from the house (east) across grazing with a stone wall to the left. After 50m cross a stile, turn left, and continue through quarry workings to emerge near the crumbly pillar of Tom's Thumb (an abandoned remnant of the quarrying here). The bouldering problems can be found by following the quarry face around the corner further to the right.

The quarry extends gently downhill, with an easy path leading south through far left scrub to its far end. It is a peaceful spot mostly frequented by horses, and although a lot of the rock is rather broken there are some good bits here including an interesting handful of highballs. The first wall as described is hidden amongst trees at the far southern end.

1. **Limes disease** [6a/e2 5c - 6m] The far left groove has a tricky move half-way up (*G.X.Percival 2.5.17*)

2. **The Limey** [6a/E2 5c - 6m] Climb into the good holds on Limes disease from a big sidepull then direct to the top (*G.X.Percival 2.5.17*)



13. **Quicklime** [5+/e1] A high problem starting from the grassy ledge on the left side of the wall (*G.X.Percival 26.4.17*)

14. **Lime kiln groove** [5+] The shallow groove has a tricky midsection but good holds to finish (*O.Keynes 26.4.17*)

15. **Horse thorns** [5+] Centre of the wall (*O.Keynes 26.4.17*)

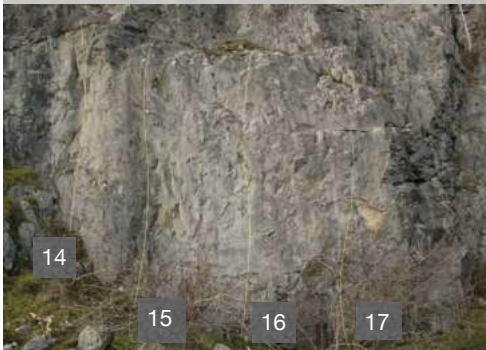
16. **Harder than you think, it's a beautiful thing** [5+] The shorter right side of the wall probably isn't (*O.Keynes 26.4.17*)

There is further climbing to the right but these are roped routes and not described. At the far end corner of the quarry is a trio of small solos.

17. **A walk in the countryside** [s 4a, 8m] The cracked corner via a little rib or groove (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 2.5.17*)

18. **Awake in the countryside** [hs 4b, 8m] The wall just right (*M.Davies & G.X.Percival 17.10.18*)

19. **A mattress of brambles** [vd, 8m] A slim pillar type feature (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)



The smaller of the two quarries is less friendly for classic bouldering, with its higher walls, but provides some entertaining soloing in a peaceful spot. Details can be found in GWR's *The Gilwern Area* guide.

1. **Go for the jugular** [6b] The steep wall in the small bay apparently presents the first 'bouldering' here as such (*G.X.Percival 16.9.16*)

2. **The overlap** [6a, ss] The diagonal overlap has a low start (*G.X.Percival 7.10.16*)

3. **Denarius arête** [6a+] The blunt arête (*G.X.Percival 22.9.16*)

4. **I don't like heights** [6a+] Start in the obvious pocket left of *Workers*, traverse right and end on the ledge by *Wiki curse* (*H.Beaumont 17.4.21*)

5. **Workers in the field** [4/vs 4c - 7m] The centre of the wall has a long shallow groove (*G.X.Percival 22.9.16*)



6. **Snake traverse** [5+] A rising traverse starting from *Workers* and finishing up *Impulse arête*, using the conglomerate 'snake' for feet (*G.X.Percival 3.10.18*)

7. **Block party** [5] The wall right of the groove has lovely sculpted holds (*G.X.Percival 22.9.16*)

8. **Party block** [5+] Start at flowstone undercuts and aim for a calcite block near the top (*G.X.Percival 22.9.16*)

9. **Impulse arête** [4/vs 4c - 10m] The lower wall has good holds before a finish up the juggy arête (*G.X.Percival 16.9.16*)



The roadside quarries of Coed Pantydarren - limestone, north facing, 1 minute

Approach - from Craig y Gaer contour west around the hillside for around 640m until reaching two small roadside quarries (separated from each other by 100m) on the left. If coming from the Lonely Shepherd parking then follow the narrow road east for around 600m until reaching the quarries on the right.

10. **The Wiki curse** [vdiff - 12m] *(M.Davies/G.X.Percival 7.10.16)*

11. **Flowstone groove** [5+/e1 5b - 7m] A hard start up the shallow groove leads to flowstone holds after a hard reach *(G.X.Percival 16.9.17)*

12. **Redbull content marketing strategy** [5/e2 5b - 7m] Climb the arête and wall on the right starting at a footledge, then treat yourself to an overpriced caffeinated sugar-laden drink *(G.X.Percival 16.9.17)*

The next quarry along the road includes some excellent offerings. It is distinguished by a trio of distinctive arêtes projecting out at various points along the quarry's length. Most problems here are highball/solos but have good landings and are quick to dry, with the quarry being a particularly lovely place on a sunny day with some stunning views from its earthworks.

1. **Project** [?] The left of the wall has two crimps in the middle.

2. **Sustained like Sustrans** [6c] The wall left of the blunt rib, passing a large hold *(M.Crocker 7.10.07)*

3. **Green mind atomic heart** [6a+] The first of the protruding arêtes forms a blunt rib near the quarry entrance, making a fantastic highball problem soon to be a classic *(M.Crocker 7.10.07)*

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There is potential for some more easier problems just right of *Green mind*.

4. **My little contribution** [1c+, ss] A pleasant way up large flat ledges which doubles as a way down for the next few problems *(O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 27.9.16)*



5. **Calcium days** [6a] The left side of the wall, passing a conglomerate band (G.X.Percival 27.9.16)

6. **Slippery wall** [6c] The night side of the wall is much harder with a tough finish (G.X.Percival 27.9.16)

7. **Rockefeller crack** [4] The crack has good lay-aways (G.X.Percival 27.9.16)

8. **Sheepbone slab** [vs 4b] The bow-shaped wall has nice, hidden holds. Go right to descend (G.X.Percival 27.9.16)

9. **Another little contribution** [5] A small problem just left of the corner below a small tree. Gain the big shelf. The wall above this is trickier than it seems (O.Keynes 2017).

The short corner has an old rope in-situ providing a way back down from nearby problems.

10. **Tiddles** [4+] The short white-streaked wall just right of the corner (M.Davies & G.X.Percival 4.10.16)

11. **5c problem** [5+] 4m left of the arête. Climb the wall via a hand ledge and then small edges (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

12. **5c no problem** [5+] The wall using a hollow flake (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

13. **Crowded by ghosts** [5+/e5 5c - 8m] Start as for *no problem* then head right using edges, and feeling increasingly exposed, to reach the top of the arête via an obvious concretion block (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

14. **Agoraphobia** [5+/e3 5c - 8m] The second arête is another excellent and classic highball line. Climb into an increasingly airy situation using concretions which may (or may not) stay glued to the wall (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

15. **Hooligan sheep** [5/e2 5b - 8m] The groove right of *Agoraphobia*. Finish on the arête or make an earlier escape right onto the grassy ledge at 5m (M.Davies & G.X.Percival 4.10.16).

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16. **Groovephilia** [5] The next groove, "with an awkward bit in the middle" (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

17. **Autumnal equinox** [5] The short steep wall further right (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

18. **Sponsored by no-one** [4+/hvs 5a - 6m] The wall left of the groove. Go right to finish (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

19. **High on a cone of grass** [5+/e1 5c - 7m] An excellent problem. A hard start from a grassy cone leads to the shallow groove (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

20. **Box jellyfish** [5/e3 5b - 8m] The third arête is another good climb, although perhaps not quite in the same league as its sisters (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

21. **Tentative master** [6a+/e4 5c - 8m] The wall 2m right of the arêt has a high crux. Exit left to finish on the arête (M.Crocker 7.10.07)

22. **Sorrow and love** [6b/e4 6a - 8m] The technical wall right of *Tentative master* has some flowstone nodules higher up (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

23. **Flow mingled down** [6b/e5 6a - 8m] The wall further right, featuring some exquisite moves near the top (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

24. **Receding hairline crack** [6c/e4 6b - 8m] Tricky moves from the left lead to the base of the thin crack (peg). (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

25. **Roadside craic** [4/vs 4c - 8m] The wide, juggy crack (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

26. **Thunderstorm slab** [hvs 4c - 8m] The wall right of the crack (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)

27. **The non-Boreal sponsored party** [e5 6a - 8m] The left side of the impressively bulging prow (G.X.Percival 22.9.16)



39. **No to Hunt** [hvs 4c - 8m] Slab and short wall, finishing between two saplings (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

28. **Dirtdag brand ambassador** [e4 6a - 8m] The right side of the impressively bulging prow (*G.X.Percival 4.10.16*)

29. **Blackberry picking on horseback** [vs5a - 8m] The parallel cracks left of the high wall are protectable (*M.Davies & G.X.Percival 4.10.16*)

30. **Sprain wall** [e5 5c - 9m] The high, bold wall. A fall from the top risks more than a sprain (*G.X.Percival 4.10.16*)

31. **Mindfulness** [vs 4c - 7m] Climb the scoop to just below the grassy ledge then step left and climb the slab (*M.Davies & G.X.Percival 4.10.16*)

32. **Wonder glue** [hvs 5b - 6m] The juggy wall with glued on blocks. Down-climb to descend (*M.Crocker 7.10.07*)

The next few climbs are found further right amongst trees.

33. **Managing the savagery** [e3 6a - 8m] A micro-route up the wall on the left of the bay, starting at large conglomerate holds (*G.X.Percival 28.9.16*)



34. **Me instead** [e1 5b - 8m] The groove further right (*M.Davies & G.X.Percival 28.9.16*)

35. **Get a grip arête** [e4 6a - 8m] Flowstone holds aid climbing this arête (*G.X.Percival & M.Davies 28.9.16*)

36. **Feeling flakey** [e3 5b/c - 8m] Conglomerate flakes right of the arête (*G.X.Percival 6.9.16*)

37. **Little overhang** [e1 5c]

38. **No to Johnson** [vs 4c - 8m] The crack, stepping right to finish (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

39. **No to Hunt** [hvs 4c - 8m] Slab and short wall (*M.Davies 28.6.19*)

The lonely boulder: a distinctive large sits in the middle of the quarry high up the hillside - like a lonely sheep overlooked by its lonely shepherd.

1. **Shepherd's crook** [5, ss] The back arête from low in the cramped pit (*O.Keynes 2016*)

2. **Shepherd's crack** [4, ss] Follow the rising crack up the sidewall leftwards from a low start on its right (*O.Keynes 2016*)

3. **Shepherd's delight** [5, ss] A good, clean straight-up problem from low holds at the bottom of the slanting crack on the sidewall (*O.Keynes 2016*)

4. **The lonely lap** [7c, ss] One for the bored local. Start as for 3 then traverse leftwards and continue all around the boulder, finishing as for *the lonely traverse* (*M.Preece 2.8.20*)

5. **Hugh's arête** [6a, ss] The left arête from an awkward low start is a good problem (*H.Garner 2016*)

6. *Hugh's arête* can be linked into the finish of *Scarlet* at 6c+ (*N.Lord 2017*)

7. **The lonely reverse** [7b, ss] Start bloc, home to some classic problems, *Hugh's arête* then traverse the lip rightwards and downwards to finish up *Pandemonium* (*P.Walker 6.21*)

8. **Project** [?, ss] Direct between the left arête and crack (without use of either) from a sitting start (*2021?*)

9. **Study in scarlet** [6c/7a+, ss] An excellent problem following the central crack which splits the middle of the boulder. A powerful start leads into a tricky sequence to get stood upon the lip. The standing start alone is easier and a very good problem in its own right. Amongst the best of South Wales (*H.Garner 10.3.17*) [#southsidetour](#)

10. Two variant finishes of *scarlet* are possible into problems 5 or 9 at around 7b (*L.Fyfe 6.17*)

11. **Project** [?] Mantle the lip halfway between the crack and right arête using slopers.

12. **Pandemonium** [7b, ss]. An eliminate sit-start at the base of the right arête (big sidepull is out) makes for a hard problem (*L.Fyfe 6.17*)

The Lonely Shepherd - limestone, north facing, 15 minutes

Approach - from Gilwern turn south off the A4077/Crickhowell Road into Church Road (NP7 0RW), opposite the Corn Exchange pub. Continue uphill for 1.4km through farmland until reaching St Eli's church in Llanelly then turn right then left to continue up for 1.3km through farmland until reaching a very steep and sharp fork at the end of the road. Turn left here and parking is possible beside the road. From the roadside quarry continue north (away from Tom's Thumb) for 570m as the narrow road contours the hillside and a small parking area can soon be found on the left before a sharp fork downhill.

Opposite the sharp fork is a track which runs uphill. Follow this for 260m as it steepens to climb the hillside then head right for another 200m towards the Lonely Shepherd to enter a small quarry.





13. **Pandemonium** can be linked into the finish of *Scarlet* at 7b or the full traverse at 7b+ (*L.Fyfe 6.17*) The wall at the back of the quarry contains a few more worthwhile highballs/micro-route solos.
14. **Shepherd's pie** [5, ss] Straight up from the large sidepull (*O.Keynes 2017*)
15. **The lonely traverse** [7b, ss] A classic problem of two distinct halves yet one distinct character. Starting from a large sidepull around the right arête traverse the undercut lip of the boulder for its full length, initially on slopers then edges, to finish up *Hugh's arête*. Another of the best in South Wales (*O.Keynes 18.5.17*) [#southsidetour](#)
16. **The not so lonely traverse** [5, ss] Traverse up and right from the large sidepull until reaching the shelf, then mantle to the top of the boulder (*O.Keynes 2017*)
17. **Lonely sheep** [4, ss] Start low between the large sidepull and the shelf (*O.Keynes 2017*)
18. **Shepherd arête** [5] The blunt arête is a good climb (*G.X.Percival 26.10.16*)
19. **Green pastures** [4+/hvs 5a - 6m] The wall just left of a deep crack. Take care with the holds (*G.X.Percival 19.10.16*)
20. **Quiet waters** [s 4a - 7m] The deep crack (*G.X.Percival 19.10.16*)
21. **Seth and his computer** [4/vs 4c - 7m] Start up the crack then step right to finish up a thin crack (*M.Davies 2019*)
22. **The flowmaster** (4+/e1 5a - 8m] A good climb up the high arête (*G.X.Percival 19.10.16*)
23. **Lonely groove** [s 4a - 8m] The groove behind the tree (*M.Davies 17.10.18*)



A path beside the back wall leads up to the Lonely Shepherd, where it is possible to climb this iconic rock on any side (although its north face is the most evocative). Continue north for 200m keeping close to the fence on the right until another hidden quarry is reached. This is filled with coils of old fencing, earning it the nickname 'fence quarry' from Martin Crocker who was first to climb here. It's a surprisingly sheltered spot despite an airy situation and the right 'parapet' wall has a few problems useful as warm-ups before tackling the harder lines back down on the lonely boulder.



24. **Fencing lessons** [3] The easy side wall has big holds (*O.Keynes 2020*)

25. **En garde!** [4+] Direct through the overhanging bulge (*O.Keynes 2018*)

26. **Fencing practice** [5, ss] A hard start leads into an easier top section (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.10.18*)

27. **Fenced in** [4+] The left wall has a long move to reach the top (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.10.18*)

28. **Parapet problem** [6b+, ss] Hard slaps up left lead to a sharp side-pull (*G.X.Percival 26.10.18*)

29. **Fencey meeting you here** [3] Left side of the central section (*O.Keynes 2020*)

30. **Fencey that** [3+] The groove is a contrived problem (*O.Keynes 2020*)

31. **Fencey a drink** [3+] Direct up from the plinth (*O.Keynes 2020*)

32. **Fencer's wall** [6a+, ss] The clean central wall offers a good problem. Start low on a positive edge to climb the centre of the wall (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.10.18*)

33. **Rattling sabres** [3+] Right of the central wall (*O.Keynes 2020*)

34. **Fencer's delight** [5, ss] The bulging arête from a big undercut (*O.Keynes & G.X.Percival 26.10.18*)

35. **Fencer's turkish delight** [4, ss] The short wall near the quarry entrance (*O.Keynes 2018*)

36. **Crack attack** [3+ - 5m] The obvious crack on the left of the bay (*M.Crocker 14.4.07*)

37. **Other crack** [3 - 5m] The right crack (*G.X.Percival 2017??*)

38. **Arête** [3+ - 4m] The pleasant little arête just right of the cracks (*G.X.Percival 2017??*)

39. **Defensive** [4+/e1 5a - 6m] The attractive larger arête is reminiscent of the roadside classics (*M.Crocker*)

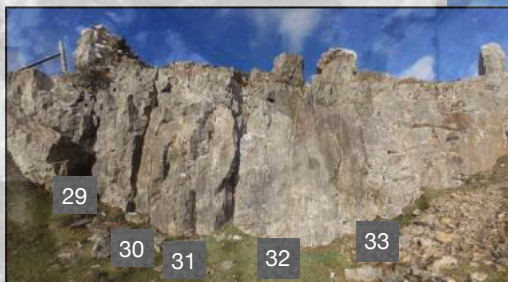
40. **Barbed wire boobs** [vs 4c - 6m] the crack right of the bigger arête (*M.Crocker 14.4.07*)

41. **Right crack** [? - 6m] The calcite covered rib (*G.X.Percival 2017??*)

42.

See GWR's *The Gilwern Area* for details of the wall further right beside coils of old fencing. Further right again, on the other side of the quarry, is...

43. **The Bristol Send Squad** [3] At the far end of the quarry is an isolated, short and quite pleasant arête (*G.X.Percival 3.5.19*)



Main cliff boulders - limestone, north facing, 20 minutes

Approach - turn right/north-west at the steep fork and continue along the road, with lovely views, for 1.7km until reaching the main parking for Llangattock cliffs. From here follow a track north-west through the quarry workings for around 1.2km, keeping the main cliff on the left, until reaching an area of boulders.