

## **Hazard Assessment for Alltycrib (Talybont) Lead Mine in Ceredigion**

The very first mining activity probably coincides with early to middle Bronze Age, the attraction being the copper deposits which occurred over to the west. There are also very strong indications of Roman mining, but large scale mining only started in 1617 when Sir Hugh Myddleton took over the leases for the Society of Mines Royal. Later the mines were worked by Thomas Bushell whose name was given to the level commenced in 1637 and driven for a distance of 200 fathoms. This was to be the main working level of the mine for the next 200 years.

After Bushell left, little was done until the frenzy of the early 19th century when the Flintshire Smelting Company drove a deep adit from the centre of Talybont village. This was at a place known as "Y Wern" which is behind the 2 pubs.

The land was sold to a local factory owner in about 1916 who blocked off the deep adit and culverted the water outflow, so there is no access at the portal. This is now private ground.

However, access to the deep adit is possible by descending an air shaft up on the hill at SN653893, it is important that this access remain open as it's the only way that the deep adit which passes under most of the village, can be inspected. The deep adit also has a pumping angle bob and remains of a horse whim at an underground shaft therefore is of archaeological importance.

Other accessible underground remains are Wilkinsons Level, immediately above the track at SN650893 and Myddletons Level at SN649893. The latter only goes a short distance to a complete collapse at Western Engine Shaft which is run all the way down through the workings, however it is a fine example of a level driven by hand tools.

Wilkinsons is fairly easy to explore and has no particular hazards except for a tight crawl through an oil drum fitted some years ago in a left hand branch. This branch ends at a collapse at Western Engine Shaft but just before there is a descent to lower workings. Obviously, this should only be attempted by persons who have the necessary skills and presents different considerations to a simple exploration of the level.

A right fork in the main level cuts Felix's Shaft from surface where daylight streams in from above, this is very obvious and does not present any particular hazard.

Deep adit can only be reached by the use of vertical techniques to descend air shaft. The shaft itself is in reasonable condition the descent being by way of a steep slope rather than a true vertical pitch. There is an initial descent of about 15 metres followed by a second of about 5 metres, and then a third easy free climb down steps and short modern ladders fitted by explorers in the past.

The accessible section of the deep adit is reasonably stable and a flooded winze is easily identified.

### **Access and parking**

There is parking for several vehicles at the entrance to the track at SN 650899 which provides best access to the mine workings. People should be careful not to block the access for other vehicles

## **Risk Assessments**

### **Myddletons Level**

Hazard	Description	Mitigation
General Hazards	Uneven floor with strewn rocks as usually encountered underground.	Individual explorers should be suitably attired for underground exploration with sturdy boots or wellies and exercise a reasonable amount of care.

### **Wilkinsons level**

Hazard	Description	Mitigation
General Hazards	Uneven floor with strewn rocks as usually encountered underground.	Individual explorers should be suitably attired for underground exploration with sturdy boots or wellies and exercise a reasonable amount of care.
Felix's Shaft	Very obvious	Keep clear of the edge
Crawl on left branch	The crawl is through an oil drum fitted in the 1970s, although still in reasonable condition it presents a degree of difficulty.	Persons attempting this should be forewarned and at least one person remains on the outside to fetch assistance should it be required.
Descent to lower workings, (past the oil drum)	The descent is an initial 40 metres with a second one of about 8 metres to the bottom of a stope.	All explorers should be suitably equipped for vertical exploration and have sufficient training and experience to undertake this.

#### Air Shaft and deep Adit

Hazard	Description	Mitigation
General Hazards	Uneven floor with strewn rocks as usually encountered underground.	Individual explorers should be suitably attired for underground exploration with sturdy boots or wellies and exercise a reasonable amount of care.
Vertical descent of air shaft.	As described in the general description	All explorers should be suitably equipped for vertical exploration and have sufficient training and experience to undertake this.
Underground flooded winze in deep adit	Rather obvious by presence of angle bob, edges are clearly defined.	Stay clear of the edge.
Collapsing timber roadway to the west	Was an abortive dig by modern explorers some years ago. Leads nowhere and is best avoided.	Keep out of this area.