# Anglesey coastline closed to adventure activities to protect wildlife habitats



A section of the Anglesey coastline on Holy Island has been closed to all adventure activities until mid-September in a bid to protect vulnerable wildlife habitats. This six-month exclusion zone, established by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) at the request of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), began on 15 March and covers a 1.8-mile stretch that includes The Range, a prominent promontory within the South Stack Nature Reserve.

The reserve, managed by RSPB Cymru under a lease from Anglesey Council, is designated as part of the Glannau Ynys Gybi Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The ban is timed to coincide with the key bird breeding season in the area, aiming to safeguard rare bird species such as chough and peregrine falcons, along with other protected wildlife including seals and rare butterflies. The location is also notable for its unique geology as part of the GeoMôn UNESCO Global Geopark.

The decision follows concerns about damage caused by commercial adventure activities, including sea cliff traversing and coasteering, which had been taking place without council or RSPB approval. Although initial arrangements allowed individual climbers to access the site under strict guidelines, recent breaches of these rules have led to a complete prohibition of all activities, including recreational climbing, until at least 15 September.

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) Cymru, which had been liaising with the RSPB to clarify access permissions and maintain a balance between recreation and conservation, confirmed this latest development in a social media statement on 17 April. The BMC indicated that climbing at Penrhyn Mawr would be prohibited until mid-September at the earliest and attributed the stricter measures to recent non-compliance with Regional Access Database (RAD) restrictions.

They said: “Following further conversations with RSPB Cymru regarding access to climbing at Penrhyn Mawr, they’ve decided that due to the difficulties in management that all activities will be restricted until September 25, 2025.” The organisation added that the new restrictions aim “to help allow nature to get an opportunity back on the site” after some rules were not followed in recent weeks.

Despite the prohibition on adventure pursuits, the Wales Coast Path and other designated public rights of way remain accessible to walkers, as the exclusion zone specifically exempts these routes to allow continued public enjoyment of the landscape.

Anglesey Council has emphasised its commitment to finding a sustainable and workable solution for managing the site. While the RSPB has the authority to set access conditions under its lease, the council is actively seeking engagement with the outdoor and climbing communities during and after the trial period to explore options for the future. NRW will closely monitor wildlife recovery within the exclusion zone and review the situation following the expiry of the ban.

BMC Cymru also highlighted the broader challenges faced by bird populations across the UK, citing factors such as changing sea temperatures and avian diseases. They said: “By keeping a safe and respectable distance away, we can help allow these species to recover.” The organisation expressed hope for further collaboration with RSPB after September to develop a balanced approach moving forward.

The measures illustrate the complexities involved in balancing outdoor recreation with conservation objectives in ecologically sensitive areas, as authorities and user groups work together to protect the region’s valued natural heritage.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.anglesey.gov.wales/en/Residents/Countryside/Biodiversity/What-are-we-doing-to-help-biodiversity-on-Anglesey.aspx> - Discusses Anglesey's biodiversity protection efforts, relevant to the broader conservation context of the exclusion zone.
* <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-blogs/news/exclusion-zone-to-prevent-damage-at-protected-site/?lang=en> - Details NRW's establishment of a 1.8-mile exclusion zone at the Anglesey SSSI, effective March 15 to September 15, 2025, to protect wildlife from adventure activities.
* <https://www.anglesey.gov.wales/en/Residents/Countryside/Biodiversity/What-are-we-doing-to-help-biodiversity-on-Anglesey.aspx> - Mentions Anglesey's Local Biodiversity Action Plan framework, supporting partnership-based habitat management referenced in the article.
* <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-blogs/news/exclusion-zone-to-prevent-damage-at-protected-site/?lang=en> - Confirms the exclusion zone applies to The Range within Glannau Ynys Gybi SSSI, managed by RSPB under lease from Anglesey Council.
* <https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/news-and-blogs/news/exclusion-zone-to-prevent-damage-at-protected-site/?lang=en> - Provides the rationale for the ban, citing damage from unapproved commercial coasteering and climbing activities during breeding seasons.