



# upland walk LLANFAIRFECHAN

Broaden your horizons...

- Circular Walk
- Stone Age Sites
- Coastal Views



## HOW TO GET HERE

**From the train station:** turn right up Station Road. At the crossroads go straight on up Village Road. Continue past the shops and take a left hand turn up to Valley Road. Carry on through the houses and past two right turns (the latter with the National Park logo on the bridge). Just before a sharp turn to the left you will see the entrance to Nant Y Coed Local Nature Reserve. Follow the main path through the reserve to Three Streams car park.

Tel: 08457 48 49 50 [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

**From the bus stop:** at the crossroads follow the same route as above.

Tel: Traveline Wales 0871 200 22 33 [www.traveline-cymru.info](http://www.traveline-cymru.info)

**By Car:** follow the A55 from the west to junction 14 from the east junction 15, for Llanfairfechan. Follow the main road to the crossroads with traffic lights.

**A)** Take the turning up to Village Road and then follow Valley Road through the houses. Take the second turning on the right with the National Park logo on the bridge. Follow the road around to the left to arrive at Three Streams car park on your left.

**B)** Take the turning down Station Road to a car park on your right hand side. Follow the instructions 'from the train station'.

Public Transport Enquiry line: 01492 575412  
(Conwy County Borough Council).

## Walk information

A circular walk from the top of Llanfairfechan town which crosses the thousand foot/304m contour line to take you to the foot of the Carneddau range of mountains. Explore a landscape rich in archaeological sites, dating from the Stone Age onwards.

**Terrain:** heath and moorland, some moderate and steep climbs. Distance: 7 kilometers / 4 1/2 miles.

**Time:** approximately 4 hours.

**Paths:** moorland paths, Roman Road, tracks and lanes.

**Dogs:** dogs should be kept under close control.

**Start and finish grid reference:** SH 698 736.

**Map:** Explorer OL17.

**Refreshments:** available in local shops and pubs.

All times and distances are approximate.

Be Prepared. Wear strong walking boots. Take warm, waterproof clothing and a packed lunch with you.

Check the weather at:

[www.mountainweatherwales.org](http://www.mountainweatherwales.org)

Be aware of changeable weather conditions.



 Please follow The Countryside Code  
Respect • Protect • Enjoy

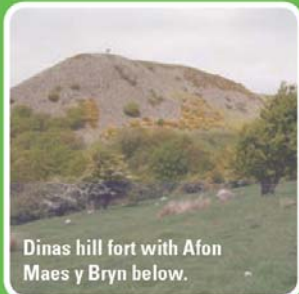




Location 1.

### THREE STREAMS CAR PARK TO LOCATION 1 SH 7010 7350

Turn left out of the car park and take the public footpath to your left through the kissing gate. Cross over the bridge and follow the waymarkers along a track to a field. Stop just before the boundary in front of you. You have arrived at Location 1.



Dinas hill fort with Afon Maes y Bryn below.

At Location 1 turn around and admire the view. Rising in front of you is Dinas, a hill fort. Below is afon Maes-y-bryn which drains from the marsh, to the right, below the mountain Tal-y-Fan. This joins other streams to form Afon Llanfairfechan which flows through the village to the sea.

In this valley carved by the river you will see a dense variety of trees such as mountain ash, willow, ash, oak and black thorn. As you gain height on the hillside notice how the trees are replaced by gorse and bracken.



Walking towards Location 2.

### LOCATION 1 TO LOCATION 2 - SH 70100 7340

From Location 1 follow the right hand boundary of the field to a gate and kissing gate. Go through the gate to arrive at Location 2. From this point on you are walking on the 'ffridd'.

Once again turn around and take a look back at the hill fort, Dinas. It was probably built in the Iron Age and occupied into Roman times.

Extensive robbing has obscured the details of the plan but there seems to have been a central enclosure about 36.5m/120' in diameter with two additional ramparts to the south and north. The walls were about 3m/9' thick but survive only to about 30cm/1' in height. The entrance was on the north-east. There are traces of 14 huts from 6m/20' to 9m/30' in diameter. In 1925 an excavation showed the central hut to be 9m/30'9" wide to the north-east. The walls were faced with thin vertical slabs internally but were left rough externally. The

floor was rough paved and there is a single posthole 60cm/2' north east of the centre.

Dinas forms part of the Graiglwyd stone axe factory group which you will see from the next location.

### LOCATION 2 TO LOCATION 3 SH 7060 7290

From Location 2 continue ahead to join a track. Follow the track to the mountain wall, go through the gate and to Location 3.

The land from here on is common land. Since the introduction of sheep on a large scale two centuries ago, the moorland has changed from cattle pastures to the close cropped grass, gorse, bracken, bilberry and heather we know today. Very often Welsh Mountain Ponies can be seen on this moorland. They are left to run wild on the hills, and once a year they are rounded up.

Looking towards the sea you can enjoy magnificent views over the valley to the coast and Menai Straits. At low tide the Lavan sands stretch across towards Anglesey. These sands are famous for their marine and bird life. Before the construction of the Menai Bridge travellers journeyed over these sands towards Anglesey, completing the crossing by boat. On clear days, Parys Mountain and Holyhead Mountain are visible. Note the 'V' shaped valley and the large scattered boulders which are remnants of the retreating ice age whose glaciers carved our hills and valleys into their now familiar shapes.

As you look back beyond Dinas you will see Graiglwyd. Today it is a flourishing granite quarry. In ancient times this granite was used to make stone axes, today it is used for road foundations and surfacing.

The right hand skyline shows the original contour of the mountain, which is known as Braich y Dinas and was the site of one of the most extensive hillforts in Wales. It was comparable with Tre'r Ceiri, near Trefor on the Llyn Peninsula.

### Did you know?

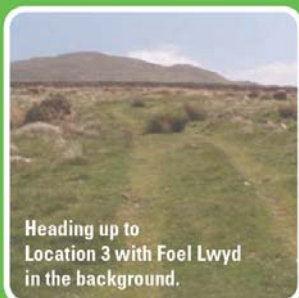
Ffridd is rough farmland which is used for grazing, mainly sheep, but cattle and Welsh mountain ponies are sometimes seen. It is enclosed land usually found between lowland pastures and open mountain land.

### Did you know?

The largest stone axe factory in Great Britain was found at Graiglwyd. As the mountain is gradually quarried away the height of the mountain has to be continually altered on reference maps. Can you find the height of Graiglwyd on the map?



Reproduction of Stone axes similar to those found in this area.



Heading up to Location 3 with Foel Lwyd in the background.

### Did you know?

The chough is the only member of the crow family to have red legs and a red beak. It nests on mountain crags, sea cliffs and ledges and has also been found in farm buildings. It feeds on ground invertebrates, which it hunts for using its long curved beak.

Stonechats are the birds you may see, which have black heads and a bright orange-red breast. Only the male birds have this red breast, the females being more brown in colour. They feed on insects, seeds and fruits and can often be seen perching on top of gorse bushes, bracken or dry stone walls.

### Did you know?

The Romans were in Wales between AD48–399. A Roman mile consisted of 1000 double steps or two strides by a Roman soldier (approx 1620 yards, 1.5km).

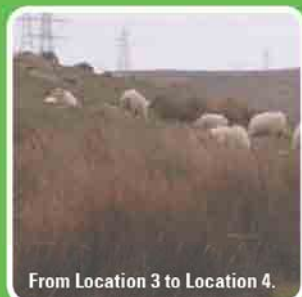
On a Roman road it was common to erect a stone every mile to announce the distance from Rome. The stones were called milestones.



Bryngaer Dinas  
Dinas Hill Fort

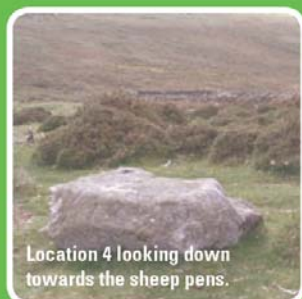
Dinas hill fort





## LOCATION 3 TO LOCATION 4 SH 7100 7260

From the mountain wall continue ahead at approximately the same distance from Afon Ddu on your right until you are close to the sheep pens on your right. Walk towards the sheep pens until you find location 4. Take a left turn up to the base of Foel Lwyd where you can discover old settlements and burial chamber Grid Ref: SH 7132 7255 and 7135 7275. Return to Location 4.



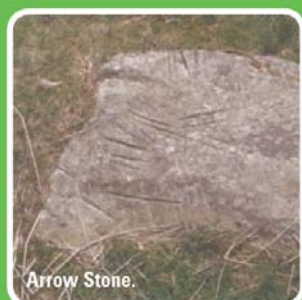
Looking ahead from Location 4 you can see Bwlch y Ddeufaen (The pass of the two stones) which features in an ancient legend. Just beyond the further of the two stones, on the right hand side, there is a large cairn known as Barclodiad y Gawres. (The Giantess's Apronful). The story is that the stones were dropped from the apron of a giantess as she and her husband were journeying to Ireland.

To your right you will see a multi-cellular sheep pen. This is a unique type found only on this side of the Carneddau between Llanfairfechan and Bethesda. They are about 200 years old, and were used by the farmers to sort out sheep where they shared a common sheepwalk. The flocks, on occasions such as a shearing, were driven into the central enclosure, the individual sheep were then divided into the smaller cells which were the property of a particular farm.

Walking to your left towards the base of Foel Lwyd you will discover remains of settlements, a burial mound (Tumulus) and burial chamber (Cist). This tumulus is situated on the flanks of Foel Lwyd and consists of a level circular platform 10m /32' diameter and 60cm/2' high with a kerb of large stones. In the centre is a rectangular cist (burial chamber) with its longer axis east to west, 1.2m/4' long, 60cm/2' wide and 62cm/2' 6" deep. Each side consists of a single upright slab. The west side has fallen outwards. North-west of the cist is a dislodged capstone measuring 1.8m/6' by 1.2m /4' by 30cm/1'.

## LOCATION 4 TO LOCATION 5 SH 7102 7244

From location 4 walk ahead (aiming for the pylon shown in the photo) and then down to the right to Afon Ddu and Location 5. Just before you cross Afon Ddu take a look down and discover an Arrow stone. This stone with its markings is thought to be the place where iron implements were sharpened.

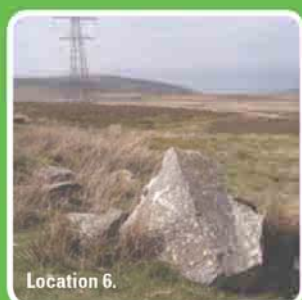


The habitat that lies around you in this area is a mosaic of upland acidic grassland and heathland. The heathland would have been more prominent in previous years, before animals introduced by man began to graze the land. Some of the plant species that are found in the area are remnants of this heathland, such as the bilberry and western gorse.

Birds that you may see in this area include: raven, chough, stonechat, skylark, meadow pipits. Dotterels have also been seen in this area, passing through from Scotland to their overwintering habitat in the Middle East and North Africa.

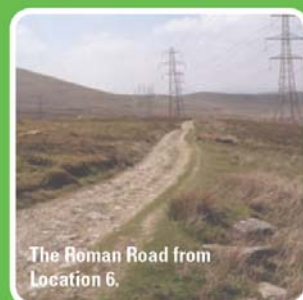
## LOCATION 5 TO LOCATION 6 SH 7090 7205

From the stream aim for the same pylon as before and slightly to the right to join the Roman Road by a pyramid like stone with one side suitable to be a seat.



The Roman Road ran from Canovium (Caerhun) in the Conwy Valley to Segontium (Caernarfon). The road is about 4.5m/15' wide. Much of the original paving has been removed for walling. In 1952, during work by the Central Electricity Generating board, clearance of the peat showed paving stones 30cm/1' by 48cm/1' 6" long of irregular shape and 1.2m/4" to 1.8m/6" thick. Separated from this by 42cm/1' 4" of sandy gravel was a similar layer of flat stones.

The two layers represent, perhaps, two periods of construction, coinciding with the erection of the two Roman Milestones found near Rhiwiau (off route, Grid Ref: 6790 7275). Both stones are in the British Museum, but a replica can be seen in situ of the one erected in 121 A.D. when Hadrian was Emperor of Rome. It records the 8th mile from Canovium.



## LOCATION 6 TO LOCATION 7 SH 6935 7223

From Location 6 follow the Roman Road towards the coast until you arrive at a junction and signpost. You have arrived at 'the Meeting of the Tracks' and Location 7. From here you will take the first turning to the right towards Llanfairfechan and follow the waymarkers for the North Wales Path.



The "Meeting of the Tracks" is so called because from this point tracks radiate off to Aber, Llanfairfechan, Conwy Valley and also ascend into the mountains. Straight ahead, a track traversing the side of Yr Orsedd, leads to the summit of Drum, then onto the higher peaks of the Carneddau, finally descending into the Ogwen Valley.

Before you take the first right turn towards Llanfairfechan search the area on your right for an arrow stone and an incised stone. The incised stone is of particular interest as the surface bears a design consisting of three concentric squares, the centre of each of the sides being cut at right angles by a short line. It has been suggested that this could be a Nine Men's Morris Board – a board game, using stones and counters.





Between Location 7 and 8.

## LOCATION 7 TO LOCATION 8 SH 6880 7330

From Location 7 you will take the first turn right towards Llanfairfechan and follow the waymarkers for the North Wales Path. You will skirt around the base of Garreg Fawr to your right and enjoy views over the Aber valley to your left. Continue along the track through a narrow gap between the wall and Garreg Fawr. Take a right turn to skirt Garreg Fawr to arrive at another multicellular sheep pen. Walk to the furthest corner of the sheep pens. This is Location 8.

Between Garreg Fawr and Aber lies marshy ground known as Waen y Gors. In this region there are many items of archaeological interest.

Between the ruins of a small holding, Tyddyn-y-Waen and the Roman Road below Foel Ganol, three mounds of burnt stones mixed with charcoal can be found. The mounds, covered with grass are a crescent shape, with openings facing small streams and are about 91cm/3' in height. They were temporary settlements of the folk referred to as 'pot boilers' as they practiced a very primitive form of cooking. Steam was generated by throwing heated stones into a pool of water, and after use the stones were thrown away, forming in time, the crescentic mounds which can be seen today.



Location 8.

The rocks of Garreg Fawr, which is also part of the Graiglwyd Stone Axe Factory Group, comprises a volcanic intrusion into the surrounding granite. This was the rock which flaked easily and so made possible the carving of stone axes. It was a difficult process as the large spoil heap testifies. At Graiglwyd broken and unfinished axes can be found, but the finished article is a rare find indeed.

It is thought that they were, in fact, polished and finished elsewhere. The axes were used for tree felling and have been found as far afield as South Wales, Yorkshire, Hampshire and Cambridgeshire.



Location 9.

## LOCATION 8 TO LOCATION 9 SH 6852 7365

From Location 8 take the path going left through the gorse towards the sea.

Go past an open area of grassland and continue to a junction and take the second turning on the right.

You have now re-joined the North Wales Path. Towards the coast you will see a circular area of open grassland. This is Location 9.

Between Locations 8 and 9 the trail passes through an extensive Iron Age field system between the 325m/1066ft a 230m/755ft. contours. The fields, irregular in shape and layout, seem to have been dictated by the local topography. They are bounded by terraces 91cm/3' to 1.5m/5' high but sometimes reaching 2.4m/8'.

### Did you know?

Location 9 is the site of an enclosed hut group. It is in a ruined state but the foundations of three huts can be seen. The inhabitants of these huts farmed the field system referred to above.



Stone cannon.

## LOCATION 9 TO LOCATION 10 SH 6860 7412

Re-join the North Wales Path and go through a kissing gate. Continue down the path, following the North Wales Path waymarker posts. Cross two stiles and continue until you arrive at a kissing gate and Terrace Walk.

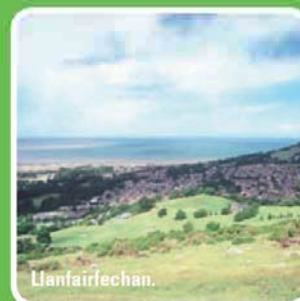
### You may:

**A)** turn right here up Terrace Walk and return to Three streams car park or

**B)** to discover location 10 turn left down Terrace walk and take a right turn down a narrow lane. Go past the bench and set in the wall on your left, you will find 2 large

flat faced stones not far from each other. They are Stone Cannons. You may return to Terrace Walk and follow the road back to Three Streams Car Park or carry on down the road past the stone cannons to the village. ( see map on page 03).

The second Stone Cannon is the best example. Approximately 1.4m/4' 6" by 1.1m/3' 6", into which have been drilled 19 holes each hole approximately 3.3cm/1 1/2" in diameter. The stone would have originally laid on its back and was part of a custom practiced in this locality during the early part of the century. For celebrations and occasions such as weddings the holes were filled with a low explosive charge and detonated. The bangs could be heard across the valley. Other stones like this can be found in the area. Some of the holes in this particular stone have been filled with pieces of iron. It is said this was done deliberately by a person who didn't agree with the family of a young couple who were to be married the following day!



Llanfairfechan.

Llanfairfechan means "Church of St. Mary The Lesser". The town is a charming seaside town set amid beautiful countryside and spectacular mountain scenery on the North Wales coast, about halfway between Conwy and Bangor. It faces the Isle of Anglesey and Puffin Island across the Menai Strait, and is on the edge of the beautiful Snowdonia National Park.

Llanfairfechan was developed in the late 19th Century as a Victorian holiday resort, popular for its sea air and safe bathing. Much of the town's Victorian character remains, the long spacious promenade and original stone-built shops are now a conservation area.

You will find a selection of essential shops and services along the main streets and good facilities in the beach area.



