The Weatherman Walking maps are intended as a guide to help you walk the route. We recommend using an OS map of the area in conjunction with this guide. Routes and conditions may have changed since this guide was written. The BBC takes no responsibility for any accident or injury that may occur while following the route. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear and check weather conditions before heading out.
Weatherman Walking

Start: Dinefwr Park, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6RT
Starting ref: SN 61359 22184
Distance: Approximately 6 miles
Grade: Leisurely
Walk time: 2.5 hours
Entrance Fee: There is an £8 entry fee for adults and a £4 entry for children. Look out for open days when entry is sometimes free.

This route takes you through the spectacular grounds of Dinefwr Park, encompassing the incredible Newton House, Dinefwr Castle and much more.

This is a circular route, and although it’s a decent length, it’s quite gentle most of the way through. Sensible footwear is essential, as a lot of the route is through woodland that can be slightly boggy in poor weather conditions.

**Directions**
Starting at the car park next to the visitor centre, you are going to walk past the centre with it on your left, bear slightly right then follow the road to the left. There you’ll see a large field containing the famous White Park Cattle to your right.

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White Park Cattle (SN 61505 22532)
The famous White Park Cattle have been associated with Dinefwr Park since the 9th century. The earliest reference to the cattle is found in the laws of Hywel Dda, where they were listed as an important part of the tribute paid to the Welsh Princes at the time. They’re one of the few remaining herds in Britain and there is a breeding programme underway at the park to safeguard their future. Incredibly, this cattle breed is actually rarer than the Giant Panda!

Derek and park ranger Sarah with the White Park Cattle
On your left is Newton House. The cost to venture inside is included in your entrance fee. The mansion provides a ‘hands on’ 1912 experience, exhibitions on the history of the house and tearooms.

Newton House (SN 61458 22534)

Newton House was built in 1660-1664 by the Rhys / Rice family. Today, the house features a gothic façade exterior from when the house was updated at a later date. The house was surrounded by formal gardens up until 1750. George and Cecil Rice decided they wanted a more ‘natural’ look, as the formal look was becoming unfashionable at the time. They went to great lengths, redesigning and landscaping the grounds to look as natural and pleasing to the eye as possible. They invited legendary landscape gardener, Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown to take a look at their work. In 1775, he visited the estate and gave his seal of approval to what the family had achieved.

Continue following the track along until you reach the wooden gate at the end of the path. Go through the gate, and turn immediately right. Follow this path all the way along, keeping the White Park Cattle field to your right. Go through the wooden gate half way along, and continue along the path to the end. When you reach the end of the path, another wooden gate will take you out onto a gravel road. Turn immediately left and follow the road.

Eventually you will come to a collection of old farm buildings including a large metal tank. That is Home Farm to your right, the historic heart of all the farm work completed on the grounds. It was placed this far away from the main house so the Rhys family didn’t have all the sights and smells of a working farm spoiling the experience for their guests!
You are going to turn left here as you reach Home Farm, and up the long track ahead of you. Go through the wooden gate at the crest of a gentle hill on this track, and continue straight ahead past the large cowshed to your left. At the end of the track you will see a wooden gate. You are not going through this, but are going to follow the road to the left through two stone pillars. Continue straight.

Along this road you will see a large field to your right. If you are lucky, you might catch a glimpse of Dinefwr Park’s wonderful herd of fallow deer meandering through the fields. Continue along until you reach a large wooden gate across the road. You are turning immediately right here, and through the black metal gate to the right. Go through the metal gate, and follow the footpath to the left and through the woodland.

Walking through the woodland, you will eventually come to a curious little building in the woods called the Ice House. Ice taken from the river would have been stored in this construction to keep cool.
Ice House (SN 61355 22786)
The Ice House is believed to have been built c1850. It is where the family stored their ice before fridges and freezers. The ice was collected from the millpond and from the nearby Tywi River. The ice blocks were separated by layers of hay, and records suggest that when stored this way the ice could last for up to two years!

Continue through the woods on the footpath. Keep your eyes out when walking on this track; as if you’re lucky you may find a magical fairy village in the trees! As this footpath reaches a junction, you are turning right and following the track up the hill. Eventually you will come to a black metal gate. This is the entrance to the aforementioned deer park, please check for opening and closing times as usually this area is closed at 5pm. Dogs are not allowed in this section of the grounds. Go through this gate and into the park.

Deer Park (SN 61079 22538)
The Deer Park is one of the reasons this estate has such important accreditations, including a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the only parkland Natural Nature Reserve (NNR) in Wales. The park contains a wide range of unusual lichens and veteran trees. You may be able to catch a glimpse of the fallow deer herd on this section of the walk too.
Follow the footpath along. You’ll notice the area is strewn with fallen trees. This is due to the SSSI status the area has; wardens are only allowed to move trees blocking the footpath. Continue until you see a wooden bench on your left, and a cedar tree just ahead of it. This is the only cedar tree in the estate, and was planted by the Rhys family as a marker showing a great viewpoint for Newton House. If you stop here and take a seat on the bench you will be treated to a fantastic view of the house. This is actually the back of the house, which many suggest is the more attractive side of the building.

Once you’ve had a good look at the house, continue following the grassy footpath down. When you’ve reached the end of this path, you are going to turn left then bear immediately right, following the woodland path down to the right. Along this path, if you look out to your right you will see a collection of Oxbow lakes in the adjacent fields.

Continue all the way along this route, through the wooden gate and straight ahead. Eventually you will reach some steps, which you are going to walk down and bear left, bringing you out next to the Millpond. We are going to stay left and follow the path around the Millpond. This path eventually leads you onto a boardwalk.
Follow the boardwalk along, bearing left as it splits early on. Keep walking and eventually you will see some fallen branches surrounded by a metal fence to protect them from animals on the right. Immediately next to this fence is Castle Oak, believed to be the oldest tree on the estate, aged between 800-850 years old. Continue along the rest of the boardwalk, which will eventually take you out through a metal gate and onto a road.

Turn right here, and follow the road through the gates. You will see a hill with a well-trodden path directly ahead of you. Follow this path up, and bear left at the top through a wooden gate. This gate has a sign on it saying ‘Path to Castle’.

Stay on this path through the woodland, which will bring you out to a road at the other side. Turn right when you reach the road, and follow the path all the way up to Dinefwr Castle. The castle is managed by Cadw and is free to enter. For opening hours check at Cadw’s website.

Dinefwr Castle (SN 61168 21728)
Legend has it that the first fortification at Dinefwr was built by Rhodri Mawr, King of Wales, in around 877 although there is a lack of available excavation data to prove this. The castle as it stands now was probably built around 1165 following the capture of Dinefwr by Lord Rhys. It was eventually captured by the English under the rule of Edward I, and remained in English hands until the 17th century.

Have a good look around the wonderful castle, before heading back the way you came – all the way back through the woodlands, along the well-trodden footpath down the hill and straight ahead through the wooden gate, back in the direction you came from. Walk back past the metal gate you exited the boardwalk from, and continue straight along this path past the Castle Walk Café on your left. This road leads you all the way back to the visitor centre, and possibly where you parked your car!