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:** Car Park near the Visitor Centre / Artisans Cafe, Oswestry Y10 0NA  
**Starting ref:** SJ 01686 19070  
**Distance:** Approximately 5 miles  
**Grade:** Leisurely  
**Walk time:** 2 hours

This gentle yet beautiful route takes us on a stroll along the incredible Lake Vyrnwy. Work began in around 1880 with the aim of providing clean water for the city of Liverpool. The natural geography of the area made this a perfect location for a man-made lake. It’s five miles long and holds enough water to fill 13,500 Olympic swimming pools.

This is a circular route, and a gentle one with the exception of some steps. Sensible footwear is recommended. Much of the route follows a road around the lake. Please be cautious and follow the Highway Code’s advice of walking on the side of oncoming traffic whenever pavements and paths are not available.

**Directions**

In the programme, the route started at the far side of the dam. However, where you’ve parked the car will be a better starting point for your walk. The route however, is essentially still the same.

From the car park near Artisan’s Café, you’re going to head right up the path with the yellow bollard at the bottom of it and towards the dam. As you reach the dam, turn right and cross it. At the end of the bridge cross the road carefully. You should see a stone display in front of you which holds commemorative plaques marking the dates the work on the dam was started and completed. You are now going to head left, so that the reservoir remains on your left. However, to walk on the road safely – you are going to be staying on the right hand side of the road so that any oncoming vehicles can see you.

Follow the road as it bends gently to the left, on your right you will see the entrance to the Lake Vyrnwy hotel. Once the dam had been complete, it was obvious a magical landscape had been created here so in order to show it off the hotel was opened. In 1910, the Prince of Wales stayed here to officially open the dam. Later that year he became King George V.

Continue straight ahead with the reservoir to your left, and eventually you will spot the straining tower.
Go past the straining tower and continue along the road in the same direction. You’ll eventually see a sign for the ‘Old village car park’. Just to the left of the sign you’ll see a small parking area. There is an entrance down to the edge of the reservoir here. Follow the path where you’ll find a picnic area and impressive views of the lake. This is also the nearest point you can get to where the original village of Llanwyddyn would have been before it was flooded to create the reservoir.

Straining Tower (SJ 01208 20152)
This is where the water begins its 68 mile journey from Lake Vyrnwy to taps all over Liverpool. The majority of the water’s journey is actually powered by the pull of gravity, with only a relatively small hydraulic system in place to help propel the water along. Although the tower might look like a fairy-tale castle, its purpose is to strain the water, filtering out any debris or waste material through a wire mesh.

Llanwyddyn (SH 99988 21355)
In the year 1877, this valley was highlighted as the perfect location for a reservoir which could provide clean water for Liverpool. Controversially, though this area was already home to a village. At that time, Llanwyddyn had around 400 residents, 37 homes, 10 farmsteads and three pubs. Major objections were dampened down, and it was later agreed that many of the buildings would be rebuilt further down the valley. A new church was built to replace the old one, with the bodies in the graveyard exhumed and moved along with it.

Derek and Sian learn about the village of Llanwyddyn with local Alwyn.
Weatherman Walking

Head back up the stone path towards the car park again. Cross the road safely and you’ll see black and white traffic bollards and a sign pointing left with ‘Giants of Vyrnwy Trail’ written on it. Follow the path into the woodlands (the reservoir will still be on your left). Follow the track to the right, and eventually you’ll see a number of extremely tall Douglas Fir trees, one of which has been carved into a giant hand reaching up to the sky. Have a look around this area as there is also a beautiful pool with waterfalls running into it in front of the trees.

Giant Hand of Vyrnwy (SJ 00026 21590)

This remarkable carving is what remains of a 124 year old Douglas fir. It once stood at 209 feet and was regarded as the joint tallest tree in the UK. The tree had to be felled after sustaining damage in a storm. This 50 foot memorial you see before you was created by Wrexham artist Simon O’Rourke. He based it on his own hand and from the wrist to the fingertip it measures 7ft. It took him a week to complete the project.

Turn back around and walk back the way you came. When you reach the road again cross it safely. You are now going to head back to the start. This time you will be walking on the right side of the road, with the lake to your right. Continue along the road. Just past the straining tower, you will notice two trees fenced off to the left of the road. These are some significant trees in the area, because the larger tree with the white fence was planted by George 5th when he was Prince of Wales over 100 years ago, and the small tree to the left of it was planted more recently by Prince Charles.
Weatherman Walking

When you reach the foot bridge over the dam you are going to cross it. The route now takes you down and behind this engineering marvel. To the left of the dam you will see a wooden kissing gate, with a number of steps heading down into the woodland. Follow these down.

Follow the path, and you will walk across a wooden footbridge. Continue along the gravel track through the sculpture park. You will have a different view of the dam now. It’s 144ft high and is one of the most impressive examples of Industrial architecture in Wales.
Weatherman Walking

Stay right and follow the path along the sculpture park. Continue along it, keeping the river to your right, and eventually you’ll come to a wooden gate with a cattle grid. Go through this gate, and take a sharp right across the metal footbridge over the river.

Once you’ve crossed the footbridge, turn right and head up the path with the river to your right. After a short while, you will see a branch off the path to the right, getting tighter to the river. Follow this path down to the right, all the way along and past the turbine control hut.

Walk up the path past the hut, and turn right into the car park. Walk straight across, and you’ll eventually see a gate with ‘no admittance’ on it. Turn left here, up a number of log steps. To your left here stands some of the homes in the newer village of Llanwyddyn. Stay right as you head up the steps, and turn right when you get to the road. A short walk ahead of you brings you back to the car park of Artisans café, and the end of your walk.