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.
This delightful walk through Dylan Thomas country takes in views of the Taf Estuary, the coastal salt marshes, and across the rolling hills of Carmarthenshire. Sections of the walk follow the Dylan Thomas Birthday Walk and the Wales Coast Path. They also take in the ancient sunken lanes around Laugharne. The walk is a “figure of eight” with the mid-point in the town of Laugharne. This means you can break the walk halfway to enjoy lunch or refreshments in one of the town’s cafes or pubs.

Directions

The walk begins at the famous Dylan Thomas Boathouse, which is well signposted from the centre of Laugharne. There is a small museum and a café at the Boathouse.

Dylan Thomas’s Boathouse (SO 306 110)

Dylan Thomas and his family lived at the Boathouse for the last four years of his life. These years marked a creative renaissance for the writer as he worked in the Writing Shed above the Boathouse. The first poem he wrote there was “Over Sir John’s Hill”, describing the views from the shed. Other works written there include “Do Not Go Gentle” and “Under Milk Wood”. In 1953 it was from here that he travelled to New York where he died aged 39. The Boathouse is now a tourist attraction. Upstairs there is a small museum showing a short film about Thomas. Downstairs there is a café.
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Follow the steps up from the Boathouse back to the road and turn left towards Laugharne. You will soon reach the famous Writing Shed where Thomas worked. It is not open to the public but you can peer through the window.

Immediately past the Writing Shed leave the road over the stone stile and go down the steps towards the estuary.

At the bottom of the steps you need to cross some uneven rocks to get to a main path. The rocks are slippery when wet – even in good footwear. Follow the broad stone path towards the town.

Cross the small stone bridge over the stream into a car park then turn sharp left along the edge of the car park, following the stream. The route is signposted both as the Wales Coast Path and the Dylan Thomas Birthday Walk. There are fine views of Laugharne Castle behind you.
At the end of the car park continue along the wide path. Carry on until a clear signpost shows the route of the Dylan Thomas Birthday Walk turning to the right up a hill. This section can be muddy if it’s been wet.

The path has climbing and level sections through pretty woodland. Along the way are benches inscribed with poetry and information boards celebrating Thomas’s “Poem in October”. You will pass through a gate with a sign saying “Salt House Farm”. You’ll get fine views over the estuary and there is a bench with a scenic viewpoint and an information board about the local wildlife.

Dylan Thomas Birthday Walk (SO)

Our path takes us around the side of Sir John’s Hill – a path taken by Dylan Thomas on his 30th birthday. The walk inspired him to write his well-known “Poem in October”. The path was built by the Laugharne Corporation in the 19th Century to help cockle pickers access the lucrative cockle beds on the marshes. Today the path is marked by benches with quotes from Thomas’s famous poem and by information boards.

Laugharne Castle (SO 302 108)

This castle was famously described as “Brown as Owls” by Thomas. He knew the castle well and spent time writing in its summer house. The castle itself dates from the 13th century and is said to be built over an earlier Norman castle. It saw action during the Civil War and was besieged by Parliamentary forces after which it was partially dismantled. The castle boasts pleasant Victorian gardens.
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Rounding a corner you will see another information board about Thomas’s poetry and get some great views over the salt marshes. The path forks here and you take the lower fork. There is a small wooden sign to “The Last Verse”. Follow the steep and sometimes slippery path down through the woods.

At the bottom of the hill go over the stile and join the gravel path straight ahead. You will have a steep wooded slope to your right and the salt marshes to your left. The marshes were reclaimed from the sea in medieval times. Today they are used for rearing the famous salt marsh lamb which has a distinctive flavour. There can sometimes be livestock, including horses, on this section of the path.

When you get to the entrance of a farm go left through the metal kissing gate.

Pass through the farmland and over a cattle grid. Then look out for a wooden post with a coast path marker just off the track to your right. You turn right here towards a stile which is under a tree some 15 yards from the path. There is no path evident on the ground here and the stile may be obscured by foliage in summer. You need to head over the grass keeping to the right of the coast path marker.
Follow the steep narrow path up the hill through the woodland. The path can be muddy and slippery when wet. Ignore the rough track going off to your right near the top and keep heading towards the wooden steps. At the top of the steps go over the stile, and then over a second stile which will be on your right. After crossing that stile go left through the field keeping the hedge to your left. You will now be walking away from the woodland.

At the end of the field, go over the stile next to the metal gate and head downhill. At the end of the fence the path turns sharp left. Don’t follow it, go straight downhill over the grass towards the caravan park.

Head for a stone stile in the wall next to the road - it is more or less opposite the caravan park entrance. Cross the stile with care – it leads straight onto the road and there is no pavement. Then turn right down the road, and after a few yards take the left turn signposted for Llansadurnen. After a few yards an area of waste-ground – sometimes used for car parking – opens up to the right. Cross this land and go over the stile next to the gate on the other side.
On the other side of the stile turn right and follow the path into woods. Then follow along the bottom of the sloping fields. There is not much of a path on the ground here. You will come to a stile in the fence on the right which you can cross to find what little remains of Roche Castle.

To continue the walk go back over the stile and turn right, continuing to follow the edge of the field keeping the hedge to your right.

Follow the hedge when it turns sharp right and then through a gate into woodland. The earth is very red here and it can turn to thick mud.

The path leads to a stile which you cross. You will be in front of a white cottage by a stream. Follow straight on along the narrow walkway between the house and the stream. When you come out at the other side of the cottage follow the road straight ahead.

The road follows the river (crossing it occasionally) all the way into an area of Laugharne known as The Laques. When you get to the town and the 30mph speed limit sign, continue to follow the stream until the road opens out to a junction with parked cars and a stone Celtic cross in the centre.

You are now in the centre of Laugharne where there are shops and cafes for refreshments.
To continue the walk turn left up the hill past the Fountain Inn and the convenience shop. There are public toilets halfway up the hill.

Continue to the top of the hill where the road bends to the left and flattens out. Turn right beside the Three Mariners public house, following signs to the Dylan Thomas Boathouse. When you reach the Laugharne Park holiday complex take the footpath/bridleway to the left of the entrance. Continue up the hill rather than taking the lane to the left.

You are now walking on one of the area’s picturesque sunken lanes – worn down to below the level of the surrounding countryside by centuries of use.

Follow the gravel path up through a kissing gate. Carry straight on ignoring the temptation to take the path off to the left. The path here can be muddy and there is exposed stone which can also be slippery when wet.

The path continues to another kissing gate. After passing through that, the route continues along the edge of a field. Head downhill, keeping the hedge to your right. Across the field to your left you will see Delacourse Uchaf Farm.

At the bottom of the field there is a kissing gate on the right which you go through. Then follow a path, which can be muddy, downhill for 20 yards until you see another kissing gate below you on the right. You should get spectacular views of the Taf Estuary.
Follow the path downhill through the field until you see an isolated tree on your right. At this point leave the path and follow the bottom of the steep bank. You will soon be following along the bottom of a large cluster of gorse bushes.

As you round the gorse bushes another kissing gate comes into view. The approach to the gate can be boggy. Go through the gate and follow the narrow path through the woodland, catching glimpses of the river estuary through the trees to your right.

Eventually the path drops down past farm buildings and under a metal footbridge and comes out in front of Delacourse Farm.
Follow the farm road to the left of Delacourse Farm which takes you on a long and relatively strenuous climb. You know you have reached the top when you see a US-style silver post box on your left.

Just after the post box continue straight on, ignoring the road to the right. After a short distance take the single track road to the left which has a blue “Unsuitable for Wide Vehicles” sign.

Keep to the road, ignoring the turn to Delacourse Uchaf Farm. You will soon see Laugharne in the distance ahead.

After a walk along the road with nice views over Laugharne and the surrounding hills you pass a small black kissing gate to a churchyard. Ignore this and follow the road, which bends sharply right and steeply downhill. Just after the bend a small road turns off left going uphill again. It is signposted to Long Lane House. Take this road for 10-15 yards until you get to a wooden gate on your right which leads into a graveyard.

Go through the wooden gate into the graveyard
Walk straight down the hill from the gate between graves until you come to a white cross. This is the grave of Dylan and Caitlin Thomas.

Continue down and go left through the wooden gate and over the concrete bridge. Then turn left and continue downhill, go through the lychgate and onto the main road – Clifton Street. Turn left towards Laugharne. You will pass the Tin Shed motor museum on the right and then arrive at the finishing point – Browns Hotel - on your left.

**Browns Hotel** (SO 303 109)

Browns Hotel was originally built in 1752 but it was two centuries before it achieved worldwide fame as one Dylan Thomas’s favourite drinking dens. Since his death fans including former US President Jimmy Carter, actress Elizabeth Taylor, and Rolling Stone Mick Jagger have been among those visiting the hotel in search of Dylan’s roots.