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

**Welshpool**

Start: Powysland Museum, Welshpool  
Starting ref: SJ 226 073  
Distance: Approx. 4.5 miles  
Grade: Leisurely  
Walk time: 3 hours including a stop at Powis Castle

This is a town and country walk that starts and ends in the historic Welsh border town of Welshpool. It includes many points of hidden history to uncover along the way. Definitely one for the curious and those with an interest in local and Welsh history.

**Directions**

There are a number of pay and display car parks around Welshpool, so after parking head for the Powysland Museum next to the canal, and take a look around before you set off.

To start your walk head for the main road and turn right, cross over the road bridge and take the steps back down to the canal tow path on the other side and continue walking away from the museum.

**Powysland Museum** (SJ 226 079)

The Powysland Museum in Welshpool was established in 1874 by a local history society, the Powysland Club.

The extensive collections cover the archaeology and social history of the area, ranging from a horde of Roman coins to ancient animal bones. In 1974, the running of the museum was taken over by the Powys County Council and in 1990, the collections were moved to their current location in an old warehouse by the Montgomeryshire Canal, which had been carefully restored and refurbished to house a modern museum.
Follow the canal towpath and re-join the main road at the bridge and turn left on to Mill Lane. At the top, turn left again joining Salop Road, and continue to walk towards St Mary’s Church up ahead on the right. Cross at the zebra and look out for the site of the original Powysland Museum and next to it the ‘Grace Evans Cottage’, a lovely black and white building, just before you enter the churchyard.

Grace Evans (SJ 226 076)

Grace Evans was the faithful maid of Lady Nithsdale who was the daughter of the 1st Marquess of Powys. She was instrumental in helping Lord Nithsdale escape from imprisonment in the Tower of London in 1716, and as a thank you, Lord Nithsdale gave her the cottage when she returned home to Welshpool in 1735.

Walk through St Mary’s churchyard before descending steps and heading for the main street, enjoying views over the town.

At the traffic lights in the centre of town, turn right and walk up Broad Street. Halfway up the street look for New Street on your left, and take this slight detour to discover some hidden history in the form of The Welshpool Cockpit.

Turn down the small alley at the signpost and look out for the Cockpit across a car park on your left.
The Cockpit (SJ 224 075)

Now used as the meeting place of the Welshpool WI, this building is an original cockpit, built in the early 18th century and used for cockfighting, hence its distinctive rounded shape. Cockfighting tournaments were held here until the sport was outlawed in 1849. It’s also the only surviving Cockpit in Wales that’s still in its original position.

Retrace your steps to Broad Street and head towards the Town Hall, where, down a side street you will find a wall plaque commemorating the heroics of Lance Sergeant Waring who was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry during World War One.

Lance Sergeant Herbert Waring (SJ 223 076)

Lance Sergeant Herbert Waring was a local man who served with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in France and was awarded the Victoria Cross for astonishing bravery and leadership under heavy fire. He led an attack against enemy machine gun posts, capturing 20 Germans before reorganising his men and advancing with them for another 400m before being mortally wounded.
Continue up Broad Street and leaving the town behind turn left following a sign for the cemetery. At the top of the hill just before the patch of grass, take the small path leading off to the left and arrive at the magnificent Christchurch, a former church now being restored.

Please note it’s currently only open to visitors on Fridays between 12-3pm and every first Sunday of the month.

Walk back to the main path and follow the track downhill towards the fields and kissing gate. You have now entered the grounds of the Powis Estate. Turn right and follow the faint footpath veering to the right, heading down towards the main track and cattle grid.

Once over the cattle grid you’re now in the deer park so keep an eye out for the red deer that run free in the park.

Continue along the road heading for the magnificent Powis Castle rising up ahead.
There has been a castle on this site since the mid 13th century when this area, and its proximity to the Welsh-English border made it so strategically important.

It’s undergone many changes of ownership over the years, but has largely been the family seat of the earl of Powis for generations. It’s also well known for its association to the Clive family when Edward Clive (son of Clive of India) became the 1st Earl of Powis in 1804.

The extensive castle gardens also draw visitors from all over with show stopping giant Yew hedges dotted around.

The main courtyard of the castle is open to visitors at no charge, but as the site is now owned and operated by the National Trust there is a charge to enter the castle and gardens.

After visiting the castle, return to the main car park and follow the road round to the right, past the estate buildings and offices. Continue along the drive until you come to the main road.

Turn left and walk down to the main road. Cross over and turn right until you come to an entrance on to the canal and begin your canalside walk back to Welshpool along the tow path.
Montgomery Canal – ‘The Monty’

The Montgomery Canal was built to link Newtown with the main canal system in Llangollen. It was built primarily to carry limestone from Llanymynech to canal-side kilns so that quicklime could be produced to increase the fertility of the surrounding farmland. Work started on the first sections of the canal in 1790 and, although always known as The Montgomery Canal, actually never went anywhere near to Montgomery itself!

Follow the towpath all the way back to Welshpool along the canal, appreciating the rich diversity of plants and wildlife. On approaching Welshpool, it’s possible to cross over the canal bringing you back to Powysland Museum and the end of your walk.