Weatherman Walking

Ynyslas to Aberystwyth

BBC | cymru wales
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.

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For this walk we’ve included OS grid references should you wish to use them.
This is an 8 mile linear walk starting on the Ceredigion coast path and joining up with the Wales Coast Path at Borth. The first half is an easy, flat walk but the second half can be fairly challenging. There are stunning views along much of the route as well as opportunities for refreshments and public toilets at various points along the route.

Start:
Ynyslas National Nature Reserve

Starting Ref:
SN 61046 94152

Distance:
Approximately 8 miles.

Grade:
Moderate/challenging (follow waymarks for Ceredigion Coast Path and then Wales Coast Path).

Walk time:
Approximately 5 hours. This is a linear walk so you need to plan your return journey.

Parking:
There is a small car park for the disabled next to the visitor centre and a large pay and display car park on the beach. Take note of tide times on warning signs during periods with high spring tides.

Travel information:
You can catch the 512 bus from Aberystwyth bus station or catch the train to Borth which is roughly 2 miles from Ynyslas National Nature Reserve. Check local timetables.

Further information:
Visit the ‘latest news’ section of the official Wales Coast Path website for more information and path diversions - www.walescoastpath.gov.uk
Directions
This walk starts at the Ynyslas National Nature Reserve on the Dyfi Estuary. There's plenty of parking on the beach and a cafe at the visitor centre (check opening times out of season).

From the beach, head to the visitor centre and pick up signs for the Ceredigion Coast Path heading through the dunes towards Borth, follow the waymarks cutting through a part of the golf course, cross the road and head along the track leading to the B4353.

Continue on the main road for a couple hundred yards crossing the bridge over the river and then level crossing over the railway line. There is a kissing gate just past the railway line on the right and the path runs parallel to the railway line for approximately quarter of a mile.

Start, Ynyslas National Nature Reserve (SN 61046 94152)
Ynyslas National Nature Reserve, managed by Natural Resources Wales has three main visitor attractions...

- The sand dunes, home to all forms of wildlife from impressive fungi such as the Dwarf Earthstar and multi-coloured wax caps to rare wild orchids and colourful butterflies
- The Dyfi Estuary saltmarsh which is one of Cardigan Bay’s most important areas for birds such as the dunlin, curlew, redshank and Greenland white-fronted geese
- Cors Fochno, a 6,000-year-old peat bog which is home to many rare species of insects and invertebrates and bog mosses
Peat has been accumulating here for over 6,000 years and now reaches a depth of over six metres. Each year remains of bog vegetation, pollen, sand grains and volcanic dust are preserved in the waterlogged conditions, allowing scientists to monitor the effects of climate change and our impact on the environment.

The raised bog is rich in bugs including the bog bush-cricket and the raft spider. It is also home to 15 species of bog moss, including three national rarities.
Directions
Passing through the pedestrian gate you will notice that outside the church’s grounds there is a small pet cemetery. Among those remembered here are Lucky, Lucky II and Chilli.

At this point the Ceredigion Coast Path and Wales Coast path join up. Turning right the path heads towards Borth Railway Station and Station Museum, well worth a detour.

Borth Station Museum (SN 60921 90100)
The coming of the railway in 1863 opened Borth up as a popular seaside resort and it experienced its heyday in the early 1900s. But in recent decades the station has fallen into a state of disrepair until a team of enthusiastic volunteers took it on as a project and opened part of the station buildings as a museum in 2011.

The old ticket office, manager’s office and waiting room have been transformed into a representation of how they would have looked back in the station’s glory days, but also filled with artefacts and memorabilia.

Borth is still a working station and trains run through 32 times a day. Admission to the museum is free.
The Great War 1914-1918 Memorial (SN 61623 92866)

The war memorial was originally built to commemorate 26 men from Borth who were killed during the First World War, 1914-18. It was damaged by lightning in 1983 and re-erected by public subscription the following year.

It also bears a plaque to those who died in the Second World War and among those remembered is a 16-year-old cabin boy, Raymond Hughes of Borth, who was serving on SS Bradfyne sailing from Montreal to Belfast when torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine in 1940.

Directions

Re-joining the coast path head into Borth and the option of walking up the main road through the town with its terraced houses, small shops and pubs, or take any of the small alleyways on the right side of the road, to walk along Borth’s shoreline which has a mixture of shingle and sand.

The walk leads past RNLI Borth lifeboat station and there are plenty of cafes and car parking here making it a popular spot for water sports including surfing and paddleboarding.

Up until this point the walk has all been pretty much on the flat but continuing along the path leads out of the town and up onto the headland. It’s a steep climb up to the war memorial but from here there are wonderful views on a clear day.
Sarn Cynfelyn (SN 58775 85744)

Formed by a glacial moraine left by receding ice sheets at the end of the last ice age, Sarn Cynfelyn is linked to one of Wales’ most famous legends, Cantre’r Gwaelod.

According to the legend, Cantre’r Gwaelod was the rich and fertile lowland governed by Gwyddno Garanhir, whose palace of Caer Wyddno, was reputed to be near Aberystwyth.

The land stretched across what is today Cardigan Bay, and lay below sea level, protected by a dyke. The watchman of the sea defences was Seithennyn, who was tasked with shutting the sea gates every night. One night Seithennyn got drunk at a feast and forgot to shut the sluice gates. It was a stormy night and the high spring tides broke through, quickly flooding Cantre’r Gwaelod forever.

Directions

After the memorial there is a series of fairly steep drops and climbs that can test the calf muscles. This stretch of coast path attracts about 250,000 walkers every year and there is constant repair due to erosion. Steps have been installed in some sections but you are often close to the edge so care needs to be taken.

Approximately two miles on from the war memorial you reach the rugged shoreline near Wallog and at low tide you can see a mysterious causeway, Sarn Cynfelyn.

Continuing on uphill away from Wallog, walk for about another mile and a half along the coast path until you reach the holiday destination of Clarach Bay, with its caravan parks and seaside attractions. There are also cafes and public toilets here.
**Directions**
Cross the wooden footbridge with its waymark and head on past the amusement park and holiday homes and up onto the headland opposite. It’s another fairly testing stretch that feels like a bit of a workout.

A mile on the path opens out on top of the rocky headland and the summit of Constitution Hill offers spectacular views over the university town of Aberystwyth to the left.

From here you have options; you can walk downhill along a rather ragged and stony walkway or alternatively, buy a ticket and catch a ride down on the Aberystwyth Cliff Railway – but not until you’ve seen all there is at the top.

**Constitution Hill** (SN 58459 82777)
Constitution Hill has been an amusement ‘park’ since the Victorians developed it and called it Lunar Park. Today there is a cafe and entertainment area for children as well as the longest funicular electric cliff railway in Britain and possibly the biggest camera obscura in the world.

The railway has been running for over a century and was originally powered by water until electrification in 1921.

The camera obscura captures the view from the summit through a mirror on the roof, reflects it through an enormous lens and displays it on a circular screen in a darkened room, giving a bird’s eye view of the surrounding landscape and coastline.
End, Aberystwyth Castle and war memorial (SN 57933 81553)
There's not a lot left of this fortress, once considered one of the greatest castles in Wales. It was built in the 13th century by Edward I and was one of a chain of castles built along the Welsh coast by the English king who wanted to assert his authority over the Welsh.

In front of the castle, overlooking the sea is the war memorial considered one of the finest in Britain. It was built between 1921 and 1923 to remember the 73 men from the town who died in the First World War. Designed by Italian sculptor Mario Rutelli, it features two bronze figures, one depicting Victory and the other Humanity. There are public car parks in Aberystwyth or from here you can catch the 512 bus from near the station back to Borth or all the way to Ynyslas. Check local timetables.