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Celtic Heritage

Take a virtual tour around some of the finest hillforts in Mid Wales, built more than 2,000 years ago by the Iron Age Celts.



Y Breiddin

One of the largest hillforts in the Welsh Marches.



Ffridd Faldwyn

A fine hillfort overlooking the Severn Valley.



Pen Dinas

Take in great views of Cardigan Bay from this famous site.



Pen y Crug

A large and impressive site on the outskirts of Brecon.

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Celtic Heritage

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Find out more about Iron Age Celts through stories & games

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Ffridd Faldwyn

Last updated: 26 November 2005

The multiple banks and ditches of this fine hillfort are located on the outskirts of the town of Montgomery, overlooking the Severn Valley.



Excavations in the 1930s showed that there was activity on this land in Neolithic times but the hillfort defences are essentially Iron Age. The fort has a complex development history with additional banks and ditches allowing for an expansion in the interior.

The earliest Iron Age settlement discovered through excavations here appears to have been a fairly small enclosure, measuring 1.2ha and exploiting the natural summit of the hill. This enclosure had an entrance on the south, and probably also on the north.

Excavations have also found a number of large post-holes, probably for 'four-posters' (granaries raised off the ground on four posts to protect the grain from pests).

A number of round hut sites containing hearths and occupation debris were uncovered between the inner and outer enclosure of the fort.

Parts of the site are hidden by wood and growth but the summit is open and much of the detail can still be appreciated.

Directions: The nearest place to park is Montgomery Castle car park. For castle, turn left at Town Hall to Kerry Street. Follow road round to the right up the hill. The car park is on your right just before a farm, with the entrance through the gate east of farm. Take the lane up from the car park for 0.8km to the stile on the right beside gate. Cross stile and head up the hill.

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Pen Dinas

Last updated: 26 November 2005

A well-known Iron Age hillfort in a prominent coastal position, overlooking Aberystwyth on one side and the sea on the other.



The fort is believed to have been occupied for some 300 years up to and including the 1st century BC.

The hill includes twin summits and the defences divide into three systems. Excavations in the 1930s demonstrated at least four phases to the defences.

The northernmost defence is a single bank and ditch of 1.5ha. The southern area is defended by a single bank and ditch on the steeper southern and western sides and on the east by triple defences. Linking the two is a single bank and ditch. The total area enclosed is some 4ha.

You can still see some evidence of occupation today - within the southern enclosure, some eight house platforms can still be seen.

Most of the buildings were circular, though one D-shaped building was excavated in the 1930s.

The ridged top site is enclosed by a series of banks and ditches. There have been numerous finds on the site and most are now in the hands of the National Museum of Wales. They include a clay pot made in the Malvern Hills and a pale yellow glass bead, possibly made in Somerset, as well as decorated Iron Age pottery, a 4th century Roman coin, spindle whorls and loom weights.

The northern enclosure is farmed privately and is not open to visitors, though it can be viewed from the southern summit. The Wellington Monument, raised in 1852, stands within.



Directions: Take the A487 south from Aberystwyth, across bridge and through Trefechan. Just beyond Trefechan, take right hand turn marked No Through Road. Follow road 0.8km and park in the pull-in just beyond the gate on the left, signed public footpath. Take the track up to the summit, heading for the Wellington Monument.

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Pen y Crug

Last updated: 26 November 2005

Well worth visiting and with relatively easy access, this is one of a number of hillforts in the Brecon area.



Pen y Crug is an impressive and large site, occupying the summit of a prominent and steep hill. Its excellent natural position means it was difficult for the enemy to penetrate but strong defences were built anyway.

The defences were built by throwing material down the steep slopes, a common technique used by the Celts, so forming a quarry ditch inside the inner bank and a counterscarp bank outside the outer ditch.

A series of defensive ramparts surround the summit of the hill, the innermost standing over 4m in height. A simple entrance lies on the south-east. Unfortunately, bracken renders it almost impossible to identify any hut positions.

Enjoy the site and its commanding position overlooking the valleys of the Usk and the Honddu by taking a walk round the top of the inner rampart.

Directions: In Brecon, turn off the B4601 immediately north of the bridge. In Cradoc, after 3.5km, turn right. Park in the lay-by on your left about 1.3km further on. The path is signposted opposite. The best access to the site is from the further, south side follow the path to the next marker beyond the crest to reach this. Take care as the path can be slippery.

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Y Breiddin

Last updated: 26 November 2005

This 28-hectare multi-period site in Welshpool is one of the largest hillforts in the Welsh Marches.



Although a Bronze Age and Iron Age hillfort, Y Breiddin was also occupied during the Roman period. It is believed the Iron Age defences were built around 300BC.

Recently cleared of extensive forestry, the hillfort has been subject to a number of excavations from the 1930s on.

The fort occupies a ridge running south-west to north-east. Much of the south-west end has, however, been forested or quarried away and the readily visible position is only about half of the original site and is to be seen from the entrance north-eastwards.

You can still see the defences today, consisting of a strong stone inner bank, originally 5-6m wide, with a weaker outer bank.

At the entrance, the two banks join together on either side of a passage. A further strong outer rampart with a visible outer ditch runs north-east from the entrance at the foot of the slope.

Excavations have shown that the fort contained timber roundhouses, mainly 5-7m in diameter, as well as square and rectangular granaries. Iron Age finds indicated various activities including spinning and weaving, leather, metal and wood work.

A former pond within the fort was excavated the wet conditions had ensured the preservation of wooden objects which included a wooden bowl and sword. The sword could have been a toy, a weaving tool, or a ritual object.

Evidence suggests that the hillfort was also defended in Bronze Age times.

Directions: Take A458/A483 from Welshpool towards Oswestry. About 1.1 km beyond northern bypass roundabout, take the A458 right towards Shrewsbury. At Trewern, turn left by the phone box and, at T-junction after 2.9km, turn right. Continue through the quarry and, after 2.1km, take the forestry track on the right signposted Rodney's Column. There is limited parking available on the left before the gate. Take the path on foot. After 1.2km, fork right and continue to top. The sites outer defence is visible on the right beyond the gate. Walking shoes advisable in wet weather.

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