

**IVEL VALLEY GROUP**  
**TRIP TO BARMOUTH 30 SEPTEMBER TO 3 OCTOBER 2016**



*Figure 1 Railway Bridge over Mawddach Estuary, Barmouth*

**Barmouth**

Barmouth is a seaside town on Cardigan Bay at the mouth of the Mawddach River Estuary. It lies within the Snowdonia National Park and the Wales Coastal Path passes through the town. There is reasonable amount of holiday accommodation, including camp sites, in and around the town. For further information, contact the Tourist Information Office in the town at Station Road, Barmouth, Gwynedd, LL42 1LU, tel 01341 280787, e-mail [barmouth.tic@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:barmouth.tic@gwynedd.gov.uk).

The town has good facilities, with a number of shops, pubs and restaurants. There are two banks with outside cash machines (Barclays and HSBC) and a further one outside the Co-op Supermarket.

**Travel**

It is approximately 200 miles from Bedford to Barmouth and with a stop should take about 4 ½ hours. The most obvious route is to join the M1 at junction 13 and travel via the M1, M6, M54 and A5 to Shrewsbury. A good place for a stop is the services at the A5/A49 roundabout, where Dobbies' garden centre has a good cafeteria. Leave the A5 to follow the the A458 via Welshpool and join the A470 to Dolgellau at Caersws.

**Friday 30 September**  
**Quaker Trail near Dolgellau**

Meeting Time: 2:00 pm

Meeting Place: Eldon Square, LL40 1RD (Grid ref: SH 728 178)

Parking: Marian Mawr long term car park, LL40 1UU (Grid ref: SH 727 179), £3.00 for 4 hours

Distance: 6 miles

Map: Explorer 18 Snowdonia (Harlech)

This circular walk celebrates the local Quakers, such as Roland Ellis and Ellis Pugh, who journeyed to Pennsylvania, USA in the 1680s to escape religious persecution. Although the walk climbs about 600 feet, most of this occurs in the first 1 ½ miles on a minor road, which rises gradually with good views over the Afon Wnion valley. On the high ground we leave the road to visit the Quaker burial ground near Tyddyn y Garreg farm.

The remainder of the walk crosses woods and farmland on the high ground above Dolgellau and then drops down to the town. This was the area farmed by a number of Quakers, who ultimately emigrated.



**Saturday 1 October**

**Wales Coastal Path to Harlech**

Meeting Time: 9:45 am for 10:01 am train

Meeting Place: Barmouth Railway Station, LL42 1LS (Grid ref: SH 612 158)

Parking: There is limited free street parking in Marine Parade and the roads off it, otherwise a day's parking in one of the long term car parks is £6.00

Distance: long walk 12 miles; short walk 4 ½ miles

Map: Explorer 18 Snowdonia (Harlech)

For the long walk, purchase a single to Tal y Bont, £1.40 with a railcard or £2.10 without. For the short walk purchase a single to Llanbedr, £2.40 with a railcard or £3.20 without. A ticket for the return journey from Harlech to Barmouth costs £3.25 with a railcard or £4.88 without. At Barmouth station, there is no ticket office nor any ticket machines, but tickets can be bought in the Tourist Information Office at the station, but this only opens at 10:00 am. There are no ticket facilities at Harlech station. Otherwise, the conductor will sell you a ticket on the train (cards accepted). Rail tickets can also be bought online via the Arriva Trains Wales web site and collected from a ticket machine at your local station e.g. Bedford.

Harlech castle will be open until 5:00 pm with last tickets at 4:30 pm. Admission is £6.00 for adults and £4.20 for senior citizens. It has refreshment facilities.



*Figure 3 Wales Coastal Path at Shell Island*

### Long Walk Tal y Bont to Harlech

The first part of the walk threads its way through caravan parks and small fields to reach the long sandy beach of Morfa Dyffryn. There is now a 2 ½ mile walk along the beach, mainly on hard packed sand except at high tide, with sand dunes to the right and fine views over the sea to the Llyn Peninsula. In the middle of the beach is a naturist area. We turn off the beach at Shell Island, a vast camp site area amongst the sand dunes. On leaving the camp site and its neighbouring marsh, there is a mile or so of road walking to the village of Llanbedr passing the entrance to an airfield, formerly part of the Royal Aircraft Establishment like Thurleigh. In Llanbedr, we have a pub stop at the Victoria Inn, which has an attractive garden by a small river, Afon Cwmnantcol.

On leaving the pub, the route follows the line of the river to its estuary and the marina at Pensarn and then alongside the marshes to the village of Llandanwg. A ¾ mile of road walking follows to avoid a small headland. The route then drops sharply down to the end of Harlech beach. Then follows 1 ¼ mile of beach walking, mainly on hard packed sand except at high tide, again with good views of the Llyn Peninsula. On leaving the beach, there is ½ mile of road walking to Harlech village, with good views of the castle. The walk finishes near

the railway station in time to catch the train to Barmouth at 4:29 pm. Those wanting to visit the castle could get the 38 bus to Barmouth at 5:50 pm or the next train at 6:30 pm.

### Short Walk Llanbedr to Harlech

The route is the same as that for the long walk from Llanbedr onwards. The length of the walk will allow plenty of time to explore Harlech village and visit the castle. Times of the trains are as above, with an earlier departure at 2:28 pm, if required.



*Figure 4 The Approach to Harlech Castle*

### **Sunday 2 October**

#### **Mawddach Estuary Trail**

Meeting Time: 10:00 am

Meeting Place: Pont y Wernddu car park, off A470/A493 junction near Dolgellau, LL40 2SP (Grid ref: SH 715 173)

Parking: free

Distance: long walk 10 ½ miles; short walk 6 ½ miles

Map: Explorer 18 Snowdonia (Harlech), but note that a small part of the walk just after the estuary bridge is on Explorer 23 Cader Idris & Llyn Tegid

## Car Shuffle

For both the long and the short walk, it is necessary to take cars from Pont y Wernddu car park to the respective start points. This is because the only pub on the route at Penmaenpool needs to be reached at lunch time.

The long walk will start in Barmouth at the railway station LL42 1LS (Grid ref: SH 612 158). Try to find street parking in Marine Parade and the streets off it, otherwise use one of the long term car parks costing £6.00 for the day.

The short walk will start at Arthog car park off the A493 LL39 1YY (Grid ref: SH 640 148). This car park is free, but not easy to find. It is down a gated lane off the main road just before a green corrugated iron building. Look for the sign to Min y Don Christian Adventure Centre.



*Figure 5 Toll Bridge and George III Inn at Penmaenpool*

## Long Walk

From the station the walk follows the Wales Coastal Path along the Barmouth sea front and round the harbour to the main road. A short walk along the road leads to the path alongside

the railway over the estuary bridge, possibly the highlight of the walk with views of Cader Idris inland. Instead of following the cycle route to Arthog, our route follows a series of footpaths closer to the estuary.

On joining the cycle route at Arthog, the Trail hugs the shore line of the estuary for most of the 5 miles to Penmaenpool, mainly with thick woods on the right and the changing sand banks and creeks of the estuary on the left. The pub stop will be at the George III inn at Penmaenpool. This is another highlight of the walk, with the toll bridge over the estuary and an old railway signal outside the pub.

A 1 ½ mile of walking, with the estuary gradually closing in, leads back to the from Pont y Wernddu car park. This, however does not mark the end of the walk, as there is a 2 mile circular into Dolgellau and back. Time can be taken in the town for afternoon tea at the Y Sospan or Ty Bwyta Da cafes, before returning to the car park and onwards back to Barmouth.

### Short Walk

The short walk is the same as the long walk from Arthog to Pont y Wernddu car park. The cars at Arthog then need to be collected. When returning from Arthog, it is possible to shorten the journey to Barmouth by using the toll bridge at Penmaenpool, a snip at 90p for the average family car. Those wishing to have tea in Dolgellau could drive to the short term car park at Marian Mawr.

NB

Gwynedd Council have been in discussions with Network Rail about the maintenance costs of the footpath alongside the railway on the estuary bridge since 2015 and there has been press speculation about closure of the footpath. At the time of writing, no conclusion has been reached and the footpath is still open. Even if the bridge were to be closed, it will be possible to do the long walk by a car shuffle and starting at the Beach Road long term car park in Fairbourne, LL38 2EJ (Grid reference SH 611 130).

### Monday 3 October

#### Rhaeadr Ddu; the Black Waterfall Walk

Meeting Time: 10:30 am

Meeting Place: National Trust car park at Ganllwyd, LL40 2TN (Grid ref: SH 727 243) on the A470 5 miles north of Dolgellau

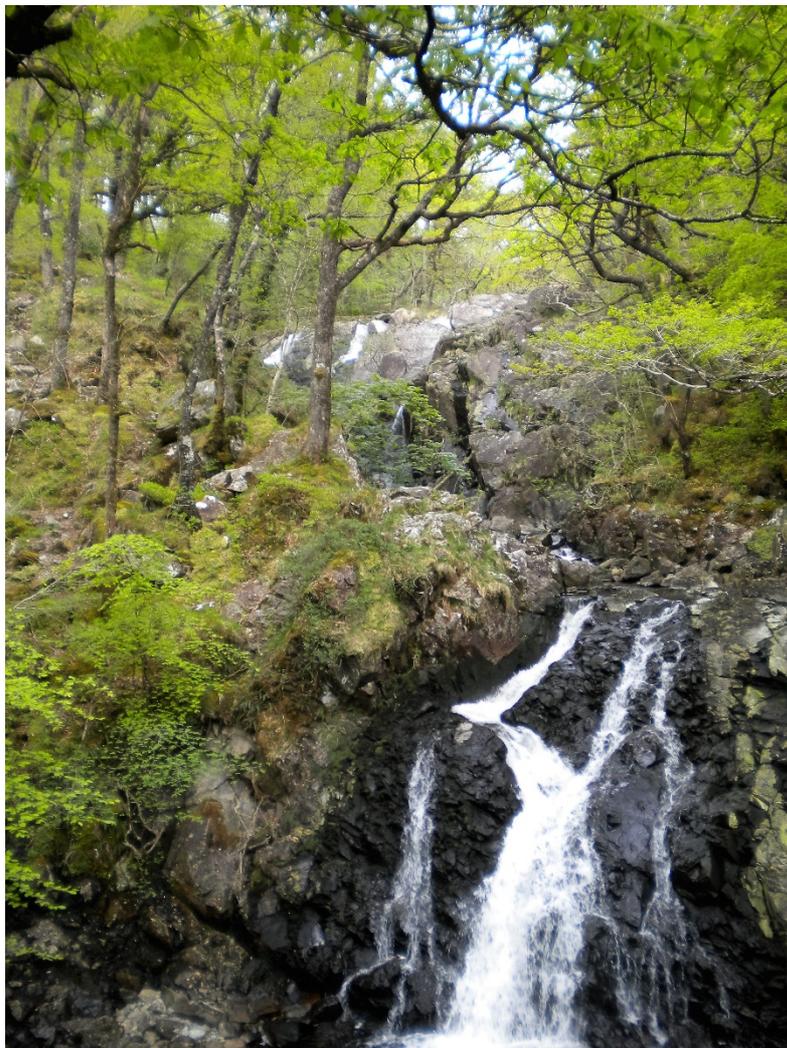
Parking: parking is free and there are also toilets

Distance: 4 ½ miles

Map: Explorer 18 Snowdonia (Harlech)

There are various signposted routes set up by the National Trust and our walk follows parts of the Woodland (blue discs) and Gold Mine (green discs) walks. There is 600 ft of ascent altogether in the form of gradual climbs. The first 150 ft up to the Rhaeadr Ddu falls is on a farm track and well worth a visit, even if not doing the whole walk.

After viewing the falls, the route climbs gradually through the forest to emerge onto pasture near the former Cefn-coch gold mine. All that remains is some sturdy ruins, but with good views of the surrounding hills. Having returned to the forest, the route continues on good forestry tracks to emerge in the valley of the Afon Gamlan river. Eventually, the river is crossed and the return to the car park made mainly on paths close to the other bank of the river.



*Figure 6 Rhaeadr Ddu; the Black Waterfall*

**Evening Meal Sunday 2 October**

Plans are in hand to arrange a meal together on the Sunday night. Those, who have booked will be contacted with details, including menu choices, nearer the time.

**NB**

This is an interim itinerary and the final updated one will be issued to all those who have booked within a few weeks of the trip.

There is a booking slip with the current programme. For further information, contact Tony on 01234 831388 or e-mail him on [tony.sheward@btinternet.com](mailto:tony.sheward@btinternet.com).

Hope to see you on the trip.

Tony Sheward & Mike Connolly; 23 May 2016.