

The Dinorben Arms and Moel y Gaer, Bodfari, Denbighshire



Strenuous Terrain

3 miles
Circular
2 hours

100417



Access Notes



1. The route has several long and steep climbs and descents throughout.
2. You will need to negotiate several kissing gates, some flights of steps plus 14 stiles.
3. Almost all of these stiles are very tall with low or narrow footplates (or, in one case, missing footplates making it a vertical wooden ladder) and have tight wire mesh fence surrounds. This means the stiles will be difficult for less agile people and all dogs will need a lift over. If you are walking with a dog that you cannot easily lift over stiles, then this walk is not for you.
4. The paths through woodland and pastures are generally good, but can be muddy in part.
5. You will be sharing most of the grass pastures with sheep.
6. The final loop (which can be avoided if you prefer) involves crossing the A541 twice, within a 40mph stretch.

The Dinorben Arms sits proudly within the village centre, making the perfect destination for refreshments before or after your walk.

A circular pub walk of just more than 3 miles, from The Dinorben Arms in Bodfari, Denbighshire. The walking route climbs high into the surrounding hills, with rolling grass pastures and beautiful woodland, providing stunning panoramic views. On the return leg, your walk follows part of the Offa's Dyke Path long-distance trail, before crossing the River Wheeler and the old rail line on the way back into the village.

Getting there

Bodfari is located in north Denbighshire, on the A541. The walk starts and finishes outside The Dinorben Arms pub, which is located next to the church in the centre of the village. The pub has its own large car park.

Approximate post code **LL16 4DA**.

Walk Sections



Start to Woodland Exit



The walk begins outside the front door of The Dinorben Arms, alongside the church gates. Standing with your back to the pub door, turn right passing through the black and white lychgate to enter the churchyard. Go up the flight of steps and you will see the small war memorial on your left and the church clock tower ahead.

The Church of St Stephen is thought to date originally from the 7th century; it is certainly recorded in a taxation document of 1254 as the church of 'Bottewara'. The church is much altered, and the earliest part surviving is this late medieval tower.

Follow the tarmac path which bends right and continues with the church on your left. Beyond the church, the

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tarmac path leads you out of the churchyard via a metal gate to reach a stone parking area. Turn immediately right to join the grass path, with a stone wall on your right and a fenced sheep pasture on your left. Pass through the small gate into the sheep pasture and continue ahead to reach a wooden stile (without footplates, so more of a wooden ladder). Cross this to join another stretch of fenced grass path, still heading uphill. At the top, turn right over another stile to enter a section of woodland, Coed y Llan.

A few paces along, you will come to a fork. Take the right-hand branch, staying close to the fence on your right. On your right, you will have lovely views back to the church in Bodfari. The woodland is awash with wild garlic in the spring months. The path swings left around the edge of the woodland, undulating over root mounds and rocks, so do take care. The path winds ahead to reach a stile at the edge of a hillside grass pasture.



With your back to this stile, walk diagonally left (between 10 and 11 o'clock) and cross a stile at the far side to enter a second pasture. Continue ahead, going downhill and staying close to the fence and trees on your right. In the bottom right-hand corner, cross the stile to join a stone vehicle track within trees.

Follow this track, passing a gated drive on your right and then swinging right (and ignoring the bridleway signed left). A short distance later you will reach a staggered T-junction with a tarmac lane. Bear right and, after just 20 metres, take the stile with steps on your right to enter another pasture.

1 → 2 Woodland Exit to Plesyn Drive



NOTE: You are likely to find sheep in all these large grass pastures (even if you can't see them at first glance). Cross the stile and walk at about 1 o'clock, heading steeply uphill and passing just to the right of the trees in the centre of the field. On your way up the slope, you may wish to pause, catch your breath and enjoy the expansive views across the valley to your right. Tucked into the top corner of the field you will find a stile. Do NOT cross this, instead turn left and follow the top boundary of the pasture, staying close to the fence on your right.

The woodland beyond the fence on your right is called Coed Moel-y-Gaer, which translates as bald hill of the fortress. The summit of the hill is the site of an Iron Age hillfort, one of a chain of six hillforts on the Clwydian Range. Remains of a timber long house on the hill summit have been dated to the third millennium BC, and may represent the earliest human occupation of the region.

As you continue along this top boundary, far reaching views open up ahead to the north-west. When the woodland on your right ends, cross a stile on your right to enter a smaller pasture. Walk ahead, heading downhill and staying close to the fence on your left (passing two fenced white properties, Beehive Cottage and Plesyn, on your right). Take care not to slip when the section of loose flint begins. Immediately before the farm gate ahead, turn right to continue on the loose flint path. Cross a stile at the end of the path to reach the driveway for one of the properties. Bear left along this drive to reach the junction with a country lane.

2 → 3 Plesyn Drive to Stile with Steps

Turn right and follow the country lane steeply uphill. Pass one house, Gwern Hwlcyn, on your left and then, after a double bend, a second house also on your left. 20 metres later, turn right over a stile to enter a grass pasture. This is marked with an acorn, the symbol that denotes a National Trail, as you are now joining Offa's Dyke Path.

3 → 4 Stile with Steps to Tan y Fallen



Walk diagonally left up through this field, to reach a stile in the top boundary. Cross the stile and turn left on the path with a wire fence on your left and woodland sloping up to your right. This is the woodland on the slopes of Moel-y-Gaer once again. Follow the path leading you up a couple of flights of steps, crossing another stile and then descending via wooden steps (passing a particularly beautiful rock formation on your right).

The next stile leads you out of the woodland and into a grass pasture. Walk diagonally left, heading steeply downhill through the centre of this pasture. At the bottom of the field you will find a stile (just to the left of the house). Cross the stile to reach a quiet lane. Turn right along this quiet lane (leaving Offa's Dyke Path), passing the property called Tan-y-Fallen on your right. On your left here, you may see alpacas grazing in the pasture.

4 → 5 Tan y Fallen to Aberwheeler Farm

Stay with the quiet lane which leads you downhill, passing through the 30mph signs to enter the outskirts of Bodfari. About 50 metres later, where the lane swings left, you have two choices. If you wish to take a short cut back to the start (avoiding the road crossings in this next section), turn right along the signed tarmac footpath and this will lead you directly back to the village church and pub.



For the full walk, follow the lane which swings left to reach a bus stop at the junction with the A541. Cross over the main road with care to take the kissing gate ahead, once again joining Offa's Dyke Path. Follow this enclosed path ahead and then cross a footbridge over the River Wheeler (via two gates). This leads you into another grass pasture.

Continue ahead through this pasture, keeping close to the hedge on your left. At the end of the field, you will emerge via a kissing gate to a junction with a quiet tarmac road (with Aberwheeler Farm on your left).

5 → 6 Aberwheeler Farm to End



Turn right along the narrow country lane (leaving Offa's Dyke Path again), with the pastures and river running across to your right. Follow this road all the way to the T-junction at the end. Turn right and follow the pavement through the tiny hamlet of Geinas. Before you reach the junction with the A541, cross over to join the left-hand grass verge and follow this as it turns left alongside the main road.

Continue for just 60 metres, then cross over the main road with care to turn right through a kissing gate into a grass pasture. Walk directly ahead, heading for the wide farm gate (with the village of Bodfari visible to the right of this). As you reach the wide gate, pass through the smaller kissing gate alongside and keep ahead to cross the stone bridge. This bridge is now redundant as it crosses part of the pasture, but it once crossed a rail line. Bodfari, a seemingly sleepy settlement, had a rail station until 1962.

A further kissing gate leads you onto an unmade vehicle track. Follow this up the slope to reach a junction with the village road (with the village school on your left). Turn right along the road for just a short distance to reach The Dinorben Arms for some well-earned hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleace (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

