

Hosteli Unigeddau'r Elenydd : Elenydd Wilderness Hostels

Walks from Ty'n Cornel Hostel No.3 - Llanddewi Brefi and back - 14 miles (22.5km)

Summary

A very straightforward but delightful walk. First mile on the track and then on the road down to Llanddewi Brefi and back the same way. Do not be put off by having to return the same way (it looks very different coming back), the thought of road walking (very quiet) or the distance (comfortable with such a good surface). There is something quietly satisfying about descending to 'civilisation' and the pastoral lowlands and then returning to the wilds. Llanddewi Brefi itself is well worth the visit and provides bus connections to other places of interest - see below.

Safety

This walk is almost entirely on a quiet road. Be alert to traffic and walk on the right. Be aware that there is a short section of high and exposed ground.

Directions

Dead simple - turn right (west) out of the hostel and follow the track and then the road. The hostel is signed out of Llanddewi Brefi and subsequently. Nevertheless have an OS map with you to enhance the interest of the walk.

Points of Interest

NB. for more information see Guest Information Files at hostel.

- 1 Drovers - Your route is an old Drovers' Road. Livestock was driven from the coastal plains over the hills to markets to the S and E. This one from Llanddewi Brefi goes past Ty'n Cornel, over the tops and then down the now-flooded Camddwr valley.
- 2 Topography - The track climbs out of the Doethie valley into the headwaters of the Afon Pysgotwr (Fisherman's River). A less obvious but more significant watershed is crossed a mile or so after joining the road from Bryn Ambor. It divides the waters flowing southwards into Carmarthen Bay from those draining westwards into Cardigan Bay. The descent from the forest brings you into the valley of the Brefi, which comes in from the right at the foot of the hill. The valley sides continue steep and rugged most of the way but approaching the village, first marked by sighting of the church tower, the valley bottom broadens and becomes more verdant.
- 3 Electrification - The settlements of the Brefi, Pysgotwr and Doethie valleys, including the hostel, were the last in the country to be connected to the grid. See map overleaf for location of commemorative roadside plaque.
- 4 Llanddewi Brefi Church - The village name means 'The church of St. David in the Brefi Valley'. The church is of great interest, not just because of its surviving antiquities and impressive appearance, but because of its associations with St David and the resolution here of doctrinal disputes in the early church. You can read more about this in the guide book available at the hostel and on sale in the church. 19th century proposals to build a theological college here, because of these associations, would have transformed the place; they were scuppered by the intervention of a noble landowner who gave land for the College to be built at Lampeter. Even though the foundation stone had actually been laid at Llanddewi, the project was moved to Lampeter, no doubt with beneficial results for the noble lord's other lands.
- 5 Llanddewi Brefi facilities - Enjoy an excellent pub lunch with real ale in The New Inn and shop in the well stocked village stores next door (closes 1400hrs on Saturdays).
- 6 Wildlife - Buzzards abound. This area was for long the last British refuge of a few fork-tailed Red Kites - they now flourish and you are likely to see one. Listen out for the harsh screech of the jay in the woods and a raven's deep croak overhead.
- 7 Buses from Llanddewi Brefi go to Aberystwyth, Lampeter and Tregaron (Red Kite Centre and 'board walk' on the Cors Caron National Nature Reserve raised bog).

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Designed by M Hanks 2002

Day Walks from Ty'n Cornel Hostel No.3 Llanddewi Brefi and back - 14miles (22k)

