

BUMS Trip Report – Northern Clwydian Hills, October 18th, 2025

Group Participants: Iain (leader), Steve & Sarah, Ann & Neil, Dave Bond, Lesley & Mike, Jim, Della, Cate and Sue Lancaster with Edie,

Departure Location: Coed Llangwyfan & Penycloddiau car park

Planned Route: triple loop walk, taking in Moel Arthur and Penycloddiau hill forts

Planned Distance: 10.2 miles. **Actual Distance:** 9.3 miles. **Total Ascent:** 2335ft **Time** 5hrs (approx.)

Weather: more-or-less as forecast with high cloud, gradually becoming gloomier by late afternoon. No rain though until later in the evening. Three cars departed the Pavilion car park at 08:30 carrying 9 passengers. Two additional cars carrying the remaining walkers, plus one dog drove directly to the rendezvous point.

The original starting point from the small car park south of Moel Arthur was revised to the larger Coed Llangwyfan parking area immediately south of Penycloddiau in order to accommodate the higher number of BUMS vehicles. This also enabled some flexibility with the route which comprised 3 loops, taking in the 3 main hills of the north Clwydian range and including two cross-over points. Sadly, no public toilets were available anywhere on the route. The walk commenced a little after 9:30 as we made our way across a rising grassy field to the south, heading around the western shoulder of Moel Arthur towards the smaller southerly car park, which by 10:15 or so, was packed with vehicles. Picking up Offa's Dyke Path we climbed steeply up the heather-clad slopes circling to the east, before taking a short, sharp left turn to the summit of Moel Arthur, where the remains of the small Iron Age Fort could be seen.

Heading down the northern slope, the path crossed past our parked cars and picked up a forest trail skirting the western slope of the Penycloddiau Hill. The trail descended gradually, winding its way north before commencing to rise again where we stopped for a coffee break. Initial discussions took place regarding a small group of walkers potentially splitting off at the next crossing point and heading back over the hill to the cars. The views across the Vale of Clwyd once we were out of the forest were lovely, with patches of bright autumn colours showing, despite the increasingly murky daylight. On reaching the crossing point north of Penycloddiau, we agreed to split as discussed, ensuring that both groups kept in touch. The larger group of walkers continued north towards the Moel y Parc tv mast, in an anticlockwise direction around the most northerly loop, while the remaining 3 walkers took lunch and leisurely made their way back to the car park over the Penycloddiau Hill Fort.

Conscious that the other walkers may be waiting around, the larger group diverted left on descending Moel y Parc, instead of fully circling the hill as originally planned, thus shaving off around a mile, plus approximately 250' of descent from the walk. Following lunch at the crossing point north of Penycloddiau, the walkers made their way up the slope and through the ramparts of the huge hill fort (circa 64 acres!). The leader curtailed a small talk about the fort as the wind had picked up and walkers were looking a bit cold. More can be read here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/archaeology-classics-and-egyptology/study/liverpool-archaeological-field-school/penycloddiau-hillfort/>

We made our way back down the southern slope to the car park, where we reunited with the rest of the group. It was at this point that a dispute over the best satnav route home occurred. Needless to say, Jim was first back to the Dysart!





Final Clwydian Triple Loop



Distance	Time	Total ascent	Total descent
9.31 mi	5h 18m	2335 ft	-2328 ft

Elevation

