



Clynnog Fawr, Llŷn Peninsula

Neolithic monuments, rocky shores and a super-sized place of pilgrimage.

"This short walk offers some fascinating glimpses into the past, plus plenty of opportunity to enjoy Llŷn's unique landscape of mountains and coast."

RHYS GWYN ROBERTS, WALES COAST PATH OFFICER

Start and Finish:

St Beuno's church, Clynnog Fawr.

Distance:

Just under 1 mile or 1km (the church, monument (burial chamber) and beach within this distance).



St Beuno's church, Clynnog Fawr



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St Beuno's church looking towards the coast

Along the way...

Begin by visiting beautiful St Beuno's church, before heading down the path at the side of the churchyard (marked as a 'Coastal Communities' walk) and crossing the A499 road. Go through the gate and follow the footpath down towards a small lane, before taking a left at the junction to visit Bachwen Burial Chamber.

Dating back to the early Neolithic period, it's an impressive chambered long cairn, topped by a mighty capstone measuring 9 feet or 2.75 metres. As you approach the chamber, you'll be treated to dramatic views of the Yr Eifl mountains further along Llŷn's northern coast.

Next, return to the junction and pick up the path that leads towards the sea. A climb down some steps takes you to the rocky shore where you can soak in the sea views (the sunsets here are particularly spectacular), go for a refreshing swim in the sea or try your hand at some stone stacking. When you're ready, retrace your steps back to the village.

About the Sacred Heritage Place:

Born in the late 6th century, Beuno was a descendant of the princes of Powys and one of the most celebrated of North Wales' early Christian monks.

In 616AD, he chose Clynnog Fawr as the location for a 'clas' – a combination of monastery and college devoted to prayer, teaching, ministry and mission.

The first thing you'll notice about the church that stands here today (built in the 15th and 16th centuries) is its size. Unusually large for a church in such a small village, its sheer scale and distinctive castle-like crenellations are a reflection of the site's significance.

As well as an important stopping point for pilgrims on their way to Bardsey Island, it was a place of pilgrimage in its own right – the nearby holy well was said to have curative powers, while people could be healed by spending a night on St Beuno's tomb.

When the church is open, don't miss the chance to visit St Beuno's chapel. Reached via an atmospheric passageway from the main building, it is thought to stand on the site of the original church and Beuno's tomb.

Also keep an eye out for St Beuno's Chest, an ancient wooden box carved from a single piece of ash where pilgrims could leave money to pay off their sins.

Need to know:

There is roadside parking in the village, which is also served by the number 12 bus between Caernarfon and Pwllheli.

For snacks and refreshments, there is a village shop/petrol station a short distance from the church.