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# A short guide to Moel Fenli and other Clwydian hillforts

*by the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust*

Along the crest of the Clwydian hills are a chain of Iron Age hillforts which can be approached by public footpaths. Some lie within the Moel Famau Country Park. Moel Fenli lies towards the southern end of the Clwydians. The car park below the hillfort makes this a good starting point for exploring a number of the hillforts.



**Moel Fenli hillfort** (OS national grid reference SJ163601) is defended by a series of banks and ditches enclosing an area of c9.7 hectares. The ramparts may have originally been more simple and rebuilt several times. The only entrance is on the western side of the fort, this has an inturned bank to give added protection to the defenders. Excavations in 1879 revealed a road surface running through the west gate. The interior of the fort has many round platforms on which wooden or stone houses would have been built. There is also a spring near the centre of the fort and a cairn of pre-Iron Age date in the eastern end. Moel Fenli continued to be occupied during the Romano-British period.

Roman finds from as late as the 4th century AD were found during the excavations of 1879.

Other Iron Age hillforts on the Clwydians include:-

**Moel y Gaer** (SJ148617) is set on a promontory and is approached along a narrow neck of land from the east defended by an extra rampart.

**Moel Arthur** (SJ145660), a hillfort with two ramparts and an inturned entrance at the north-east. It was partially excavated in 1849 when stone walling and Iron Age finds were uncovered.

**Pen y Cloddiau** (SJ128676), multivallate ramparts enclosing an area of c20 hectares. There are two hut groups in the north-eastern part of the fort and a southern entrance with guard-chambers.

## *Access and parking*

Access to Moel Fenli is on a minor road between Llanbedr-Dyffryn-Clwyd and Tafarn-y-Gelyn.

From Llanbedr-Dyffryn-Clwyd, turn off the A494 just after the church and climb steeply to Moel Famau country park. There are two car parks, one on each side of the road, just below Moel Fenli hillfort. The hillfort lies to the south of the road. Access is also possible by turning

north off the A494 at Tafarn-y-Gelyn and approaching the car parks from the east. This route is less steep. Car parks/road suitable for minibuses/cars not coaches.

The footpath to Moel Fenlli is clearly signposted from the end of the easternmost carpark. The path is obvious although steep. The footpath northwards along the Clwydians is signposted on the other side of the road. The other three hillforts lie along this route.

Time required for climb to Moel Fenlli hillfort approximately 20 to 30 minutes each way.

Distance between Moel Fenlli and Pen-y-Cloddau about 6 km. Good shoes or boots required.

*Ordnance Survey Landranger map 116. Denbigh and Colwyn Bay.*

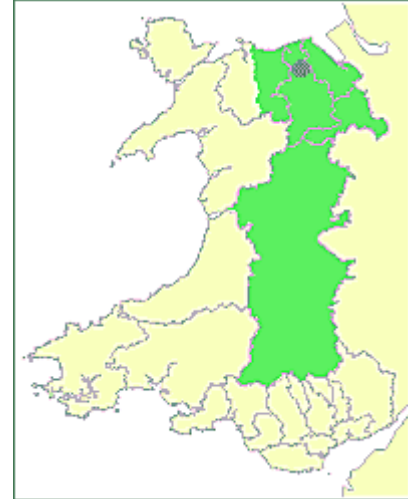
*The above information comes from the Sites and Monuments Record of the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust. For further information about the historic environment of this area, contact:-*

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