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Newborough Forest and LLanddwyn Island

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Free car park near Maltreath Sands (SH 411671)
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer 263 – Anglesey East
Distance	8.2 miles
Date of Walk	15 September 2018
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This easy walk is through the Newborough Forest and out to the tidal LLanddwyn Island (Ynys Llanddwyn). The forest was planted between 1947 and 1965 with Corsican pine trees but there are quite a lot of other trees too and planting is being diversified on account of climate change. It is a working forest so there may be times when some paths/tracks are closed. There are a myriad of routes through the forest.

Although I visited at the end of the season, there appeared to be quite a variety of plant life in the forest but which was going to sleep for the winter.

The jewel on this walk is the fantastic beach and LLanddwyn Island, from where there are great views of the mountains of Snowdonia..

LLanddwyn Island is a tranquil, beautiful and atmospheric place. As well as being home to a wide variety of flora and sea birds, it has a number of interesting items. There are some unusually geological features, such as limestone mixed with fragments of "pillow lava", caused when molten lava erupting from the sea bed met the cold seawater. There is a large plain cross and a more ornate Celtic cross, both erected by the then owner of the island at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Tŵr Mawr (Big Tower) lighthouse was built in the style of local windmills and functioned from 1845 until 1976. Its function was then replaced by a flashing beacon on Tŵr Bach (little tower), which is actually the older of the two. It is believed this was originally built as a daytime landmark to guide shipping.

Further round the island, there is a row of old cottages which housed pilots who guided ships through the Menai Straits. When I passed, they were in the process of being refurbished for a "reality" TV series, where participants live as they would have in the early 1900s.

LLanddwyn means "The church of St. Dwynwen" and you will pass the 16th century ruin on your trip round the island. LLanddwyn Island was a popular place for Tudor pilgrims, who contributed the funds to build it. However, following his falling out with the Pope, Henry VII put an end to its prosperity!

The walk starts from the free car park at the side of the A4080, a mile and a quarter south of the village of Maltreath. It is clearly marked with a green, Forestry sign for parking and picnic tables etc.

Start: From the car parking (SH 411671), go through the gate and within a few yards, branch off right, following a public footpath fingerpost. A few yards further and the path swings left, slightly away from the water.

Arrive at a post with a red and white sign on the top. Branch right here.

The path emerges on to a broad track. Turn right.

At SH 405655, a sign indicates the coastal path goes off to the right. You can go this way but I chose to stick with the main track.

Continue on the main track until you join another on the right hand side by a post with the number 11 on it. Turn right here (SH 396647).

Arrive at another junction with post number 12. Turn left.

At post number 13 at the next junction, turn right to follow the coastal path sign.

The next marker for the coastal footpath turns right but here, where you feel you are at a dead end, turn left on a track through the trees. You will soon come across some signs indicating is for use by horses.

At the next junction, ignore the right turn and continue straight ahead, following the bridleway arrows.

Grass covered sand dunes start to appear on the right. I would advise against climbing these for a sight of the beach/sea. The dunes are very wide at this point and there is an easy access soon.

Follow the track along by the dunes for half a mile, until you get to an obvious cut through to the beach (SH 391640). You can now walk along the beach.

At SH 392635 you gain access to Llanddwyn Island. If the tide happens to be in, you do not have to wait long for it to recede for a dry crossing. Indeed, it is likely to be only a few inches deep but beware of spring tides or stormy water. I have no knowledge of the state of the crossing then.

Once across the sand, climb the few steps, then follow the path along the right hand side of the island, to circle it anti-clockwise. Note that the paths are surfaced with small shells, some crushed, some whole.

As you go anti-clockwise round the island you pass the various interesting features, mentioned in the introduction.

As you leave the island, head to the right of the spine of rocks and along the beach, until you reach an obvious gap in the dunes (SH 393636). You may see vehicles parked. Turn left here.

Follow the path inland, until you reach the broad vehicle track. Turn right along it.

Follow it to a 'T' junction, where the main vehicle track turns right. There is a post bearing number 8. Turn left here.

Stay on the main track until you get to another 'T' junction, by a bench. Turn left.

At the next junction at post 16, turn right.

You are now on the same section of track as on the outward journey. Just before it bends sharp right, turn left at post 34 and follow the footpath back to the car park.

