Barmouth and Pont Scethin

This is a mountain bike route of 19.9 miles on the western edge of the Snowdonia National Park, in Mid-Wales. It starts in the seaside town on Barmouth and heads into the mountains behind for some big climbs and technical, rocky descents, including the fantastic descent to Pont Sethin.

1. Start from the large car park in the centre of Barmouth near the leisure centre [(GR613156)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261302&y=315627&z=120&sv=261302,315627&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261302&ay=315627&lm=0). Exit the car park then turn left on the road by the seafront. After passing the ice cream shop at the end of the beach follow the road square left then continue on to where it ends at a junction [(GR615155)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261559&y=315567&z=120&sv=261559,315567&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261559&ay=315567&lm=0). Turn right and climb the main road heading out of Barmouth, going through a gap in the rocks at the top. Continue straight on where National Cycle Route 8 turns right across Barmouth Bridge to the next junction with a lane on the left, where the main road turns right [(GR619156)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261961&y=315657&z=120&sv=261961,315657&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261961&ay=315657&lm=0).

2. Turn left and climb the steep lane to the next junction and bear right to stay on the lane. The lane then bears left before coming to a junction with a steep path on the left. Bear right to stay on the lane and continue climbing. Go straight on at the next junction then, at the following forked junction, take the less steep lane on the right. The lane then climbs up the left hand side of a small valley, eventually going past the Panorama walk car park on the right, before reaching a junction with a lane on the left signed to [Bunkorama](http://www.bunkorama.co.uk/) directly after; *take note of this junction for the return journey* [(GR624166)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262483&y=316622&z=120&sv=262483,316622&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=262483&ay=316622&lm=0). Continue straight on to where the lane kicks up left before flattening off and following the line of the hill through a long open right hand bend past a light scattering of buildings. Near the end of the tarmac the lane kicks up through a left then right hand bend to a junction at Slyfean farm [(GR631185)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263135&y=318482&z=120&sv=263135,318482&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263135&ay=318482&lm=0).

3. Turn left and climb the wide, rocky track past a barn on the left. At the junction directly after go left and climb to a gate. Go through the gate and follow the trail as it bears left then right around the contour of the hillside. The track eventually comes to a junction with a track down to a farm building on the right. Follow the main track straight ahead to a junction with a wide, grassy track straight ahead and a rocky track through a gate in the wall on the right [(GR636200)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263640&y=320012&z=120&sv=263640,320012&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263640&ay=320012&lm=0).

4. Go right through the gate and follow the rocky track as it descends to cross a stream. Go past the boulders and the wide grassy track on the right then climb to a gate. After the gate go over the short rise then continue straight on for a muddy, rocky descent. Go through the gate on the way down then at the bottom and follow the trail right, keeping to the drystone wall on the right, and climb across the face of the hill. Eventually the trail kicks up to the left and comes to a gate. After the gate climb to the top and go through the left hand gate in the wall on the right. The trail then bears left and drops through a couple of bends to a junction at a drystone wall, marked by a large stone carved with ‘4M Tal-y-Bont’ [(GR655202)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=265535&y=320232&z=120&sv=265535,320232&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=265535&ay=320232&lm=0).

5. Turn hard left for a steep, loose and rocky climb. After a short distance go through the small gate and continue up the climb on a grassy track between the walls. After the next gate, where the ground kicks up straight ahead, bear right and follow the wall on the right. Keep climbing the double track ahead over a number of rocky sections and through two stone walls (and gates if the 2nd one has been fixed) to where the trail flattens off. At the following grassy junction directly at the bottom of a steep climb take the grassy track bearing off to the left and climb to a gate in the stone wall on the left [(GR646220)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=264595&y=322054&z=120&sv=264595,322054&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=264595&ay=322054&lm=0).

6. Go through the gate then turn right for a steep grassy and rutted climb that follows the stone wall, now on the right. Fortunately this doesn’t last long before it turns left and flattens off for a rutted traverse across the top of a bowl in the mountainside. If the weather is nice there's a fantastic view here over the Mawddach estuary. Near the end of the traverse the trail steepens before coming to a wall on the left at the top. Follow the trail by the wall to a gate in a stone wall ahead on the other side of the ridge [(GR638223)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263775&y=322404&z=120&sv=263775,322404&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263775&ay=322404&lm=0).

7. After the gate go straight on, past a cairn on the right, to start the descent off the mountain. Initially the track bears right on a rutted grassy track but this soon becomes a loose, rocky and rutted track that descends across the side of the mountain. The trail eventually goes through a tight left hand bend that leads onto more rocky riding.  After a while the rocks are replaced by grassy ruts before the trail bears right, past a vague grassy double track on the left, then travels though some tall grass on a thin gravel track. At the end of this continue descending more fast grassy ruts before reaching a long section of large uneven slabs that finish at Pont Scethin at the bottom of the descent [(GR634235)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263455&y=323554&z=120&sv=263455,323554&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263455&ay=323554&lm=0).

8. After a nice break by the bridge turn around and climb back up the stone slabs. After the slabs climb the grassy rutted section to a junction at the start of the tall grass with a vertical marker stone on the left, where the trail ahead becomes a gravel track [(GR636233)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263685&y=323337&z=120&sv=263685,323337&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=263685&ay=323337&lm=0). Turn right on the vague grassy double track through the tall boggy grass. The start of this trail can be a bit boggy in some sections in wet conditions but still fairly rideable. Continue straight ahead along the track that after some time goes past Llyn Irddyn on the left. The track then becomes more defined and rocky as it descends through a number of gates to a three-way junction, with a stone wall ahead [(GR609224)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260967&y=322467&z=120&sv=260967,322467&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=260967&ay=322467&lm=0).

9. Turn left and climb the steep, grassy and rutted track, following the wall on the right. When the incline reduces continue straight ahead along the grassy double track. After quite some time the trail descends over a section of uneven boulders before reaching a gate [(GR622206)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262235&y=320639&z=120&sv=262235,320639&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=262235&ay=320639&lm=0). Go through the gate and into the bottom corner of a field. Climb the steep, grassy trail as it bears slightly left from the gate, gradually heading away from the stone wall on the left. Go through the gate in the wall at the top of the field then climb the steep, loose and rocky track by a gully on the left. Further up there is a short hike’a’bike section. The trail eventually levels off and comes to a gate in the stone wall at a saddle on the ridge [(GR627200)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262710&y=320039&z=120&sv=262710,320039&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=262710&ay=320039&lm=0).

10. Go through the gate then follow the rocky trail heading left, past a footpath on the right. Descend the loose, rocky and rutted track, going through a gate on the way down, to where it ends at a junction with a wide grassy track and stone wall straight ahead. Turn right and ride a very short way to the previously visited junction with the rocky double track [(GR636200)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263655&y=320014&z=120&sv=263655,320014&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263655&ay=320014&lm=0). Go straight on and follow the track back to the junction with the lane at Slyfean farm [(GR631185)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=263135&y=318482&z=120&sv=263135,318482&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=524&ax=263135&ay=318482&lm=0).

11. Turn right and follow the lane back across the side of the hill. After a while the lane bears left up a short climb before a fast descent to junction with a lane on the right directly at the start of the Panorama walk car park [(GR624166)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=262483&y=316622&z=120&sv=262483,316622&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=262483&ay=316622&lm=0). Turn right and climb the singeltrack lane to the Bunkorama bunk house. After passing the bunkhouse the lane becomes extremely steep. After some time the lane flattens off a bit before bearing left through a gate. After the gate the lane kicks up steeply again, going through a right hand bend, to the top. At the top follow the lane to where it becomes a dirt track at a house and barn [(GR618169)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261794&y=316902&z=120&sv=261794,316902&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261794&ay=316902&lm=0).

12. Follow the track ahead, between the buildings, and climb the thin track to the left. The track soon bears right and continues climbing to a grassy three-way junction with drystone walls on the left [(GR616171)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261676&y=317117&z=120&sv=261676,317117&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261676&ay=317117&lm=0). Turn left and follow the grassy double track between the walls for a short flat section. At the end of the wall on the left follow the track right and climb steeply to a gate. Go through the gate and continue climbing, bearing right, all the way to the top where the track then bears left. Continue along the track until it comes to a junction on a left hand bend [(GR167175)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261788&y=317572&z=120&sv=261788,317572&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261788&ay=317572&lm=0).

13. Keep left and go up a short climb then head straight on to a gate. Go through the gate then descend a rocky track ahead that drops left towards the sea. The rocks soon give way to a number of tight corners, the last corner turns right then the trail heads straight on to a junction in the bottom of a dip, with a track on the left between two stone walls [(GR610179)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=261074&y=317989&z=120&sv=261074,317989&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=261074&ay=317989&lm=0). Turn left and follow the grassy track between the walls, going through a couple of bends. The track then descends steeply though a field, heading down to the sea. Go straight on through the first gate then past a private track on the left to a second gate. After the second gate the track turns left and drops steeply between two stone walls on a thin stone cobbled track strewn with sections of big rocks. Descend this track straight ahead, going through the gate halfway down, to the farm buildings at the bottom. At the farm follow the track right to where it ends at a lane. Turn hard left through a gate and descend the lane to a junction with the A496 main road at the bottom [(GR599180)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=259976&y=318034&z=120&sv=259976,318034&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=259976&ay=318034&lm=0).

14. Turn left along the road, with the sea on the right, to go past a cemetery and following small chapel. Continue to a junction in the next cluster of houses with a very small lane on the right signed for National Cycle Route 8, directly after a house on the right very close to the main road [(GR603174)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260313&y=317444&z=120&sv=260313,317444&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=260313&ay=317444&lm=0). Turn right and descend the lane that soon bears left before reaching a junction at the bottom [(GR603173)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=260300&y=317314&z=120&sv=260300,317314&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=883&ax=260300&ay=317314&lm=0). Turn right and go across the railway crossing then turn left and follow the road beside the seawall back into Barmouth. Continue following National Cycle Route 8 straight ahead, along the road by the beach, to the car park on the left just after the leisure centre to complete the ride.