

Bangor On Dee

Location, Parking and Access



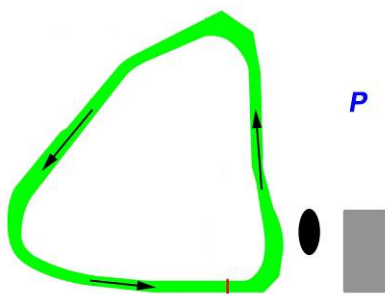
Warning this is Bangor-on-Dee near Wrexham, not the resort on the North Wales coast if you got this wrong you wouldn't be the first, even the occasional horsebox has been seen wending its merry way to the wrong Bangor.

Located on a minor road (B5069) accessible from the A525 Wrexham to Stoke road or the A528 Wrexham to Shrewsbury road.

Parking is on grass and you pay your admission to the course as you enter the car park ... so if you have pre-booked make sure you have your ticket ready on arrival. Those in the know arrive early and park at the far end of the car park so they can watch the racing from the comfort of their car. If you want to go into the paddock enclosure you then pay an upgrade admission at the transfer gate.

Access by public transport isn't easy, the nearest railway station being Wrexham 6 miles away, however there is no regular bus from the station to the course. There is a single bus transfer leaving the station 1½ hours before the first race, returning 20 minutes after the last race, the transfer is free and priority is given to those racegoers travelling by train.

Course Layout



Bangor is a very tight circuit, 1½ miles round, racing left handed (anti-clockwise) with some undulations. The course is also unusual in that the finishing straight is head-on to the main enclosures, although it is possible to walk down the side of the course beside the finishing post. The big disadvantage of Bangor is there is very little

shelter if it rains.

With relatively easy jumps, apart from a tricky open ditch, the horses jumping is not too strongly tested. The track is a turning one with very few straight sections. Being a sharpish track it would normally be expected that front runners are favoured, however the 325 yard run-in does result in some fast finishing types grabbing the spoils on the line.

Admission

Bangor operates a dual enclosure policy with the Paddock enclosure (£18) and a course enclosure (£8)

Annual membership £160

There is no formal dress code at Bangor. (2011 prices)

Discounts: Seniors Disabled (Free) Advance

Overview

Bangor is renowned as the course without a grandstand, which is fine if the weather is good, if not then you could be looking at an uncomfortable day out. There are indoor areas to shelter but these are insufficient to accommodate everybody. If you have never attended a point to point meet then, Cartmel excepted, Bangor is the nearest you will get at a mainstream course.



In terms of viewing the lack of a grandstand isn't a major issue as the track is in a natural amphitheatre, with clear viewing from the banks surrounding the side of the course. From most of the main enclosure the entire course can be seen with a pair of binoculars. There is a big screen available.

The paddock enclosure is a segregated area surrounded by the course enclosure. Bangor do not issue badges to racegoers so if you do leave the paddock enclosure to go to the course area, ensure you pick up a pass out voucher, otherwise you will have to pay to regain entry.

The strangest feature of the course is the main enclosure areas are head-on to the finishing straight, meaning the only way you can clearly see the developing closing stages is on the big screen. Having said that it is possible to walk down to the side of the course along the home straight, however you are then at a lower level than the enclosures and behind the big screen, therefore to see the entire race from this 'vantage point' you must have a pair of binoculars.

If you already enjoy point to point racing then Bangor is for you. If you like a bit of comfort at the races you could be in for a rough day.

There is very limited seating, there are some benches but these are quickly grabbed and guarded, especially at the busier meetings. More canny racegoers bring their own seats with them, or watch from the comfort of their cars parked alongside the rail, especially when raining.

As alluded to earlier, the configuration of the course is not ideal with the enclosures being head on to the finish, so the only way to see the finish clearly is on the big screen. Perhaps I am being overly simplistic but a way of addressing the situation would be to make the course right instead of left handed, with the finishing straight in front of the enclosures.

I'm sure the executive would come up with the answer that we have been racing this way for years, so why should we change it now? Some tradition is good but when tradition actually inhibits the enjoyment of racing it cannot be a good tradition and should be reviewed.

In a way Bangor is a disappointing course. I would personally question if the paddock enclosure was worth the £17 admission when compared with the £8 for course admission and I wouldn't consider going if the weather was inclement but I am at an age where I like my comforts.

Having said that, there was a sizable crowd, even at the midweek meeting, so they are clearly doing something right.

If you don't mind taking a chance when the weather is a bit iffy then you could do worse than an afternoons racing at Bangor. The crowd tend to be knowledgeable racing fans, especially at the midweek meetings. However the weekend meetings tend to attract a more diverse crowd, not all of them seemingly seeing the racing as a priority.

I have to confess my first visit to Bangor was at a very busy weekend meeting and clearly I did not see the course at its best. The second, midweek, meeting was a much more enjoyable experience – apart from the cold weather but one cannot really blame the course for that.

Catering

Spending time walking around Bangor one is left with the impression that the courses priority is selling alcohol rather than food as bars abound but eateries are few and far between.

The premier eating location is the Paddock Restaurant where the package costs £68.00 (Plus VAT), including admission, three course lunch, table for the afternoon and racecard.

The Wynnstay Restaurant offers a la carte dining. A table can be reserved for the afternoon for £10. Starters from £3.75 to £6.75, mains £11.50 - £17.50 and desserts £5.50 - £6.75.

In the Paddock enclosure there is the Nosebag offering home made Steak and Ale or Lamb and New Potato pies for £35

Other offerings were Chicken Curry for £5, Bacon Roll (£3), Pork and Leek Sausage bap (£3.90) and soup £2.95.

There is a seafood / champagne bar, open at some meetings, they have a bread selection (£2.00), Olives (£3.50), half-pint prawns (£5.50), Crab Salad (£13.50), Tuna Salad (£13.00), Smoked Salmon Salad (£11.00), Smoked Salmon (£7.50).

There was a coffee vending unit in the Paddock enclosure, which was also selling sandwiches from £2.50 plus, plus various muffins.

At the March 2009 visit there was a mobile unit in the Paddock enclosure selling various Welsh lamb products for between £3.50 and £4.50. excellent quality and highly recommended.

In the course enclosure the food choice was restricted to mobile units.

Two mobile units with the usual range of burgers for £4.50, singles for £2.50 or a bacon roll for £3.

Bitter is priced at £2.80 a pint and lager £3.00

Ancillaries

Bookmakers

A surprisingly large number of bookmakers operating, with around 40 in the paddock enclosure and a further 20 in the course enclosure. However despite the large number of layers they were backing to an over round of 1.91% a runner with five of the seven races betting at over 2%, very poor value for punters.

Racecard

Costing £2.50 the racecard served its purpose, no frills or editorial but perfectly adequate.

Toilets

Clean and adequate but there were queues by mid-afternoon at the weekend meeting.

Parade Ring

The parade ring is small and unpretentious with a steepish hill leading down to the course itself. There is button seating around the parade ring and some tiered viewing



The pre-parade ring is further behind the paddock, linked by a walkway ... the combined setup appearing dumbbell shaped.

Non Racing Attractions

To be honest there is little of any interest in the immediate vicinity. Bangor-on-Dee is a pretty village and there are some river walks in the area.

Not too far away is Chester one of the major tourist attractions in the region.

Contact Details

	www.bangorondeeraces.co.uk
	01978 780 323
	Overton Road Bangor On Dee Wrexham

Ownership	Chester Racecourse
------------------	--------------------

Fixtures 2012

January 6th
February 10th & 29th
March 24th
April 21st
May 4th (eve) & 19th
July 24th (eve)
August 3rd , 27th & 31st
October 4th & 29th
November 14th
December 1st & 14th

Inspection Dates

<i>Date</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Type</i>
24/03/07	Sunny with a cool wind	7 jump weekend
17/12/08	Cold winters day with some sunshine	7 jump midweek
21/03/09	Sunny becoming overcast with a cool breeze.	7 jump weekend
16/12/09	Overcast with spits and spots of rain	7 jump midweek
15/12/10	Dry but bitterly cold	7 jump midweek