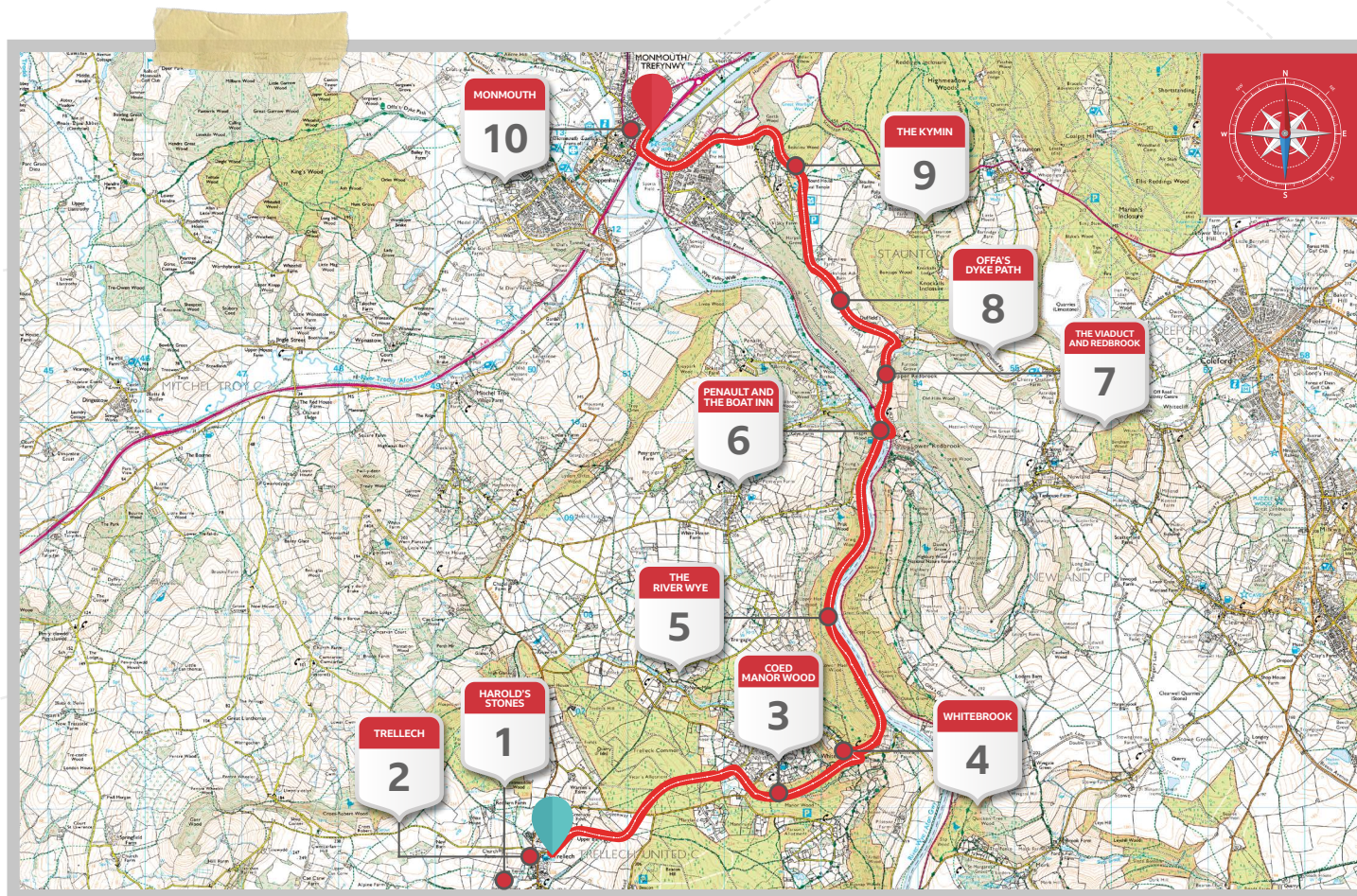


Weatherman Walking

Trellech to Monmouth



TRELLECH TO MONMOUTH



The Weatherman Walking maps are intended as a guide to help you walk the route. We recommend using an OS map of the area in conjunction with this guide. Routes and conditions may have changed since this guide was written.

The BBC takes no responsibility for any accident or injury that may occur while following the route. Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear and check weather conditions before heading out.

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2009. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100019855.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE:



9 MILES
MONMOUTH



For this walk we've included OS grid references should you wish to use them.

This is a rich and varied walk, starting in the historic village of **Trellech** it then journeys via ancient woodland, to the historic village of **Whitebrook** and on to the **River Wye**, named as Wales' favourite river. Crossing the river at **Redbook**, the walk joins the Offa's Dyke path, climbing to the Kymin with magnificent views of **Monmouth**, the Black Mountains and beyond.



Start:

Harold's Stones

Starting Ref:

SO 49929 05147

Walk time:

Approx. 4-5 hours

Grade:

Moderate with some steep climbs and descents. This route is currently not fully waymarked so take a map with you.

Parking:

On street parking in Trellech. Multiple off-street car parks in Monmouth.

Distance:

Approx. 9 miles

Travel information:

The 65 bus runs roughly every two hours between Trellech and Monmouth. It can be picked up outside Court Farm in Trellech and the Bus Station, Monmouth.

Further information:

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk

Directions

We're starting this walk at Harold's Stones, a landmark just to the south of the village. From the Chepstow Road there is a sign and double green metal and wooden gates into a field with three large standing stones and an information board.



Entrance to standing stones



HAROLD'S STONES

1

Harold's Stones (SO 49929 05147)

The stones date back to the Bronze Age and are believed to have been dragged to the site on logs and levered into position, probably either for seasonal information or for use at religious ceremonies. They give the village its name – Tre – translating from the Welsh as 'three' and 'lech' as stones. But they are known as Harold's stones as they are said to mark the spot where three Welsh warriors battled for their territory against King Harold II of England.

Directions

Leaving the site via the gate, turn right along the Chepstow Road and walk for approx. 500 yards, follow the left-hand bend into Church Street, which has St Nicholas' Church in the centre of the village on the left and the Lion pub opposite.



TRELLECH

2

Trellech (SO 50077 05488)

Trellech was once a thriving Medieval town, larger than Cardiff or Swansea. It is most likely that the town was established specifically to make the most of local supplies of iron ore and charcoal, for weapons, armour and iron work for building and protecting the Welsh borders, including the building of Caerphilly Castle.



Trellech Pew

Trellech Pew

Derek says, “If you want to see something slightly unusual, you can do a short detour, following on the main road and turning left opposite the school. At the end of that road is a lane which passes through meadowland and leads to an old pew – The Trellech Pew – perched in a field for all to come and enjoy. The pew was originally in St Nicholas’ Church but now is a great stopping off point for walkers. When I was there, I meet a group of youngsters from the primary school who use it on their Forest School lessons. They were great and were keen to show me the fishing roads they had made using sticks and string. If you take this route you can carry on walking through the field, cross at the Monmouth Road and take a short lane opposite to cross a field and re-join the route. Turn left when you hit Greenway Lane.”

Directions

From Trellech, at the fork in the road past the church, go right next to The Lion, Greenway Lane, and follow the road up to just past a sharp right-hand bend. A footpath will be marked off on the left-hand side of the road which leads through ancient woodland, part of Trellech Common, for about a mile until you reach a village called The Narth. As you hit the road, turn right and cross the road to enter Manor Wood (Coed Manor).



Woodland near The Narth

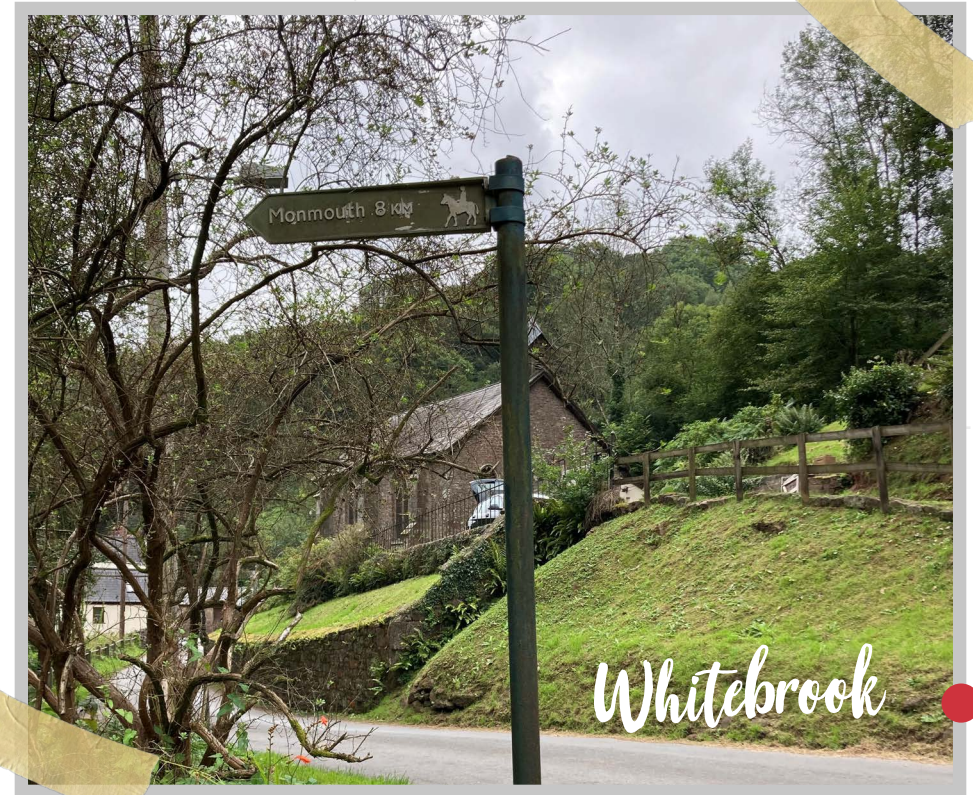
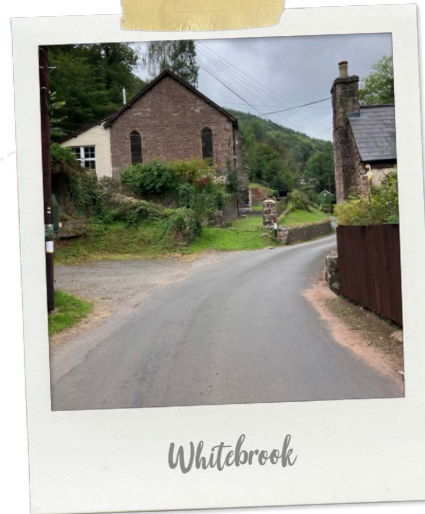


Coed Manor Wood (SO 52251 06203)

This woodland was once an industrial area and home to paper mills, a corn mill and a cider mill. There are remnants of charcoal and sawing pits and other signs of industry hidden away in the woods. A highlight of this trail through the woodland is the Whitebrook Valley viewpoint which has a bench to sit, rest and enjoy the view.

Directions

Walking through the wood some of the path is on uneven, rocky ground which can be slippery. The path is about a mile long and some sections are also along established tracks which are former transport routes. It's an atmospheric walk. After passing the viewing bench, continue on and there will be some route signs marked off to the right. Either take these or, alternatively, a little further on there is a narrow path off to the right which will become part of the Monmouthshire Way. There are currently plans to make the Monmouthshire Way an established 121-mile circular route which takes in many of the landscape highlights, rivers, towns and villages of Monmouthshire. When this happens the route will be fully waymarked. Either path leads down to the historic village of Whitebrook.



WHITEBROOK

4

Whitebrook (SO 53380 06549)

It's hard to imagine that this quiet, small village was once an important industrial area. A branch of Tintern Wireworks was established here in 1606, and wire working continued to be the main industry of the valley until about 1720. By about 1760, paper mills had taken over. Much of the housing in the valley was built for millworkers around that time. Pollution from the paper mills turned the brook white giving the village its name. Today all industry has gone. Many of the former mills have become desirable residential properties and the village is best known for fine dining at The Whitebrook, a Michelin starred restaurant.

Directions

Arriving at the village turn left along the road and continue to a small 'V' junction, veer right to cross the water and then follow the pathway signs up to the left along a track. The path will again take you through dense woodland before dropping down to the banks of the River Wye.



Woodland to the Wye



Derek next to the Wye

THE
RIVER WYE

5

The River Wye (SO 53375 07498)

The River Wye or in Welsh Afon Gwy - is the fourth-longest river in the UK, stretching some 155 miles from its source on the moorland and mountains of central Wales at Plynlimon; flowing to become part of the English-Welsh border before meeting the River Severn at the Severn Estuary in Chepstow. It has been voted Britain's favourite river. It's an important river for nature conservation and recreation but is severely impacted by pollution which has affected the water quality and wildlife, seeing a decrease in the likes of otters and kingfishers.

Post swim with Angela Jones

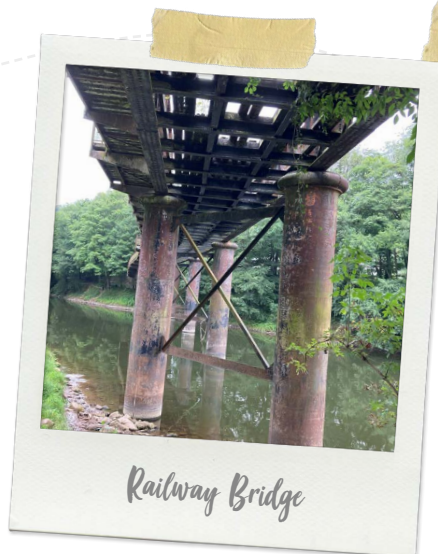


Swimming in the Wye

Derek says, “When I reached the river, I met Angela Jones, known as the ‘Wild Woman of the Wye’. She is passionate about it and swims in the river for about five hours every day. She is also an active campaigner, fighting to protect it. Angela suggested I join her for a swim so – donning some new swimming trunks with ducks on – I let her guide me in. Now I must admit, I’m not the bravest when it comes to cold water, but Angela eased me in slowly encouraging me to think of the temperature as “tropical”! Well, I wouldn’t say it was tropical, but I would say it was refreshing. Swimming in the Wye, that was a first for me.”

Directions

The footpath continues next to the Wye for about half a mile. This section of the river is fairly slow moving so it's a very peaceful stroll and you are very close to the water on your right. The path then rises as you come up under a railway bridge, emerging onto a tarmacked road in the hamlet of Penault, with Redbrook on the opposite side of the river.



PENALT AND
THE BOAT INN

6

Penalt and The Boat Inn (SO 53596 09810)

Generations of stone masons used to work around here creating great millstones from the rock and there are several abandoned millstone quarries all around the area. The quartz conglomerate rock was ideal as it was a very hard – like a natural concrete. It was known as Puddingstone. Traditionally millstones ground corn but, as this was also a good cider producing area, they were also used in cider presses. The Boat Inn is one of the oldest pubs in the Wye Valley, dating to the 1800s and is in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is thought it got its name from the days when it used to offer a small ferry service across the river, before the bridge was built, and customers would shout “Boat!” to attract the ferryman’s attention.

Directions

The railway viaduct and pedestrian bridge are immediately in front of the pub and the path crosses over the River Wye at this point. The footbridge is solid and sturdy and runs for about 300 ft, sloping down to the riverbank in Redbrook.



The Viaduct and Redbrook (SO 53607 09843)

Penault Viaduct, built on a slight curve, was once part of the Wye Valley Railway and was opened in 1876. It carried the single track of the railway over the River Wye from Penault in Wales across to Redbrook, which is in England. The viaduct is a plate-girder structure supported on four pairs of cast-iron columns filled with concrete. The line was closed to passenger services on 5 January 1959, and to goods five years later.

Directions

From the bridge cross the car park in front and then the A466 Redbrook Road. Turn left and there will be a waymark up off the main road in front of some houses. This will take you up Brewery Terrace which then joins Incline Road.

At a fork veer left on Duffields Lane and follow the track up and round the left-hand bend. A few hundred yards further on there will be a farm which spans both sides of the path. Jamie's Farm is a place where deprived or vulnerable youngsters come to learn new skills and to develop confidence by working with farm animals. The farm is on the Offa's Dyke Path.



Offa's Dyke Path (SO 53284 11074)

Offa's Dyke Path is a national trail that runs 177 miles from Chepstow in the South of Wales to Prestatyn in the north. It runs along the border between England and Wales. It is named after and often follows the dyke or large ditch that King Offa had built in the 8th century, to divide his kingdom of Mercia from rival kingdoms in what is now Wales. The earthwork, which was up to 65 feet wide (including its flanking ditch) and 8 feet high, crossed low ground, hills and rivers. Today it is protected as a scheduled monument.

Directions

The path leads upwards, with amazing views behind, skirts woodland before joining a woodland path for a few hundred feet. It comes out on the edge of a National Trust site at The Kymin. Walk through the car park towards the top of the hill.



View from The Kymin



The Roundhouse

THE KYMIN

9

The Kymin (SO 52774 12435)

The Kymin is a 9-acre park that was once part of the enormous Monmouthshire estate of the Duke of Beaufort. Towards the top on the left is a naval temple built in 1800 to celebrate some of the greatest British admirals and victories of all time. Among those honoured at the temple is Horatio Nelson, who visited Monmouth several times, often to survey the local timber that was being used to build his armada. Nelson visited this spot in 1802, two years after his victorious battle of the Nile. And he had breakfast in the nearby roundhouse, built to maximise the view. It was reported that from here you could look out over TEN counties.

Directions

From here the path drops down steeply, firstly through rugged forest, passing through Beaulieu Wood and on to a short section of road before being waymarked off via pastureland. You may well be greeted by some inquisitive horses before heading down a narrow track past fields of sheep and pigs. The track leads once more through some woodland before levelling out as it heads towards the pretty market town of Monmouth. The road will lead you across the bridge over the River Wye towards the town.



Making new friends



MONMOUTH

10

Monmouth (SO 51131 12792)

Monmouth is a bustling town, filled with shops and cafes so a great place to finish a walk. It's also an historic town, famed for the Monmouth cap which was worn with pride at the Battle of Agincourt; for being the birthplace of Henry V and home to the famous Monmouth School which was founded in 1614 and for its connections to Nelson. It's been a tourist destination since the 18th century, not least due to its position on The Wye.



Rowing on the Wye

Derek says, “I was lucky enough to be invited to join three other rowers from Monmouth Rowing Club to make up a 4-man crew. The conditions were perfect but I’m not sure I totally got the hang of it, I seemed to be a bit out of kilter with the others! But I could totally see the benefits of it – being out in the fresh air, exercising and socialising at the same time. It was great.”



End of the Walk

Derek says, “This was a really beautiful walk through the Wye Valley and along the River Wye and I can imagine it would be stunning all through the year. I loved swimming in the river – even if it was a bit chilly – and rowing on it when I reached Monmouth. I’d never visited The Kymin before and would highly recommend the effort of walking (or driving) up, not only to see the naval memorial and roundhouse, but also just to enjoy the views.”