



## Walking with Offa 1



**Food, drink and accommodation**  
Imagine patrolling the border without a decent pub. How would Offa's Dyke have been built without them? Over a thousand years later, keep up the tradition and stop for a drink and a bite to eat at the **Plough Inn, Pontesbury.**

The Plough Inn is a lovely, Grade II listed, homely pub with real ales. They also do live music on Saturday nights. Call Carol and Ian on 01743 792989 or contact them on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/pages/The-plough-inn-pontesbury](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-plough-inn-pontesbury)

Pontesbury has a number of other places to eat and drink. Choose from pubs, the café, Chinese or Indian food or fish and chips. Hignetts bakery, butchers and shop also comes highly recommended

Accommodation listings can be found on [www.ludlowandtheshropshirehills.co.uk](http://www.ludlowandtheshropshirehills.co.uk)



### Getting there:

You can find public transport options throughout Shropshire through the Travel Shropshire website - [www.travelshropshire.co.uk](http://www.travelshropshire.co.uk).

Or contact Traveline on 08712 002233.

**BY BUS:** A regular bus service runs from Shrewsbury to Pontesbury (service no: 552/553).

It is possible to reach Pontesbury from surrounding areas by Shropshire Link. Journeys can be booked up to seven days in advance or with as little as 24 hours notice. Bookings are handled on a first served basis so where possible, book early. Call 0345 678 9068.

**BY CAR:** Car parking is available at The Plough Inn, Pontesbury SY5 0RJ.

To get the best from your walk we recommend comfortable walking boots, waterproof jacket and overtrousers, warm clothing, gloves and warm hat or sun cream and sun hat (depending on the season!), a mobile phone and something to eat and drink. Sheep and cattle are often in the fields on these routes – dogs must be kept under close control or on leads at all times.

**Walking with Offa** Promoting the Welsh English border as a great place to get your boots on, enjoy the beautiful countryside and indulge in some fabulous food and drink.

For more details contact the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership on **01588 674080** or see [www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk](http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk)



Many thanks to Alan Garner from Church Stretton for developing this walk. Photographs by Steven Levers.



There are twelve pub walks in this series and four 'Days Out'. Download, including podcasts, from [www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa](http://www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa). Turn your Smartphone into a complete outdoors GPS. Download an app: [www.viewranger.com](http://www.viewranger.com) and search for 'Walking with Offa'. A guide featuring all twelve walks is available.

Design: [www.thinkgraphic.co.uk](http://www.thinkgraphic.co.uk)  
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### Quarries and Woodland around Pontesbury

*A moderate four and a half mile walk through woodlands and quiet country lanes, with one steep climb. Allow two to three hours*



**The Welsh English Border - where King Offa met his match!**

**One of a series of walks with spectacular views and glimpses of history, wildlife and archaeology.**

**in the Shropshire Hills**



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## Quarries and Woodland around Pontesbury

A moderate 4.5 mile walk through woodlands and quiet country lanes, with one steep climb. Allow 2-3 hours



- ① Start at The Plough Inn, Chapel Street then cross the stream via footbridge and turn left along Whitwell Lane. Soon the tarmac ends and becomes a stone/dirt track. Shortly after take the marked path on right across open field. This joins a narrow path that goes through an arch onto road (note this point for your return journey). Turn left and follow road a short distance to fork and bear left along 'poorly maintained' Top Road. *Top road was the centre of a thriving community, built on quarrying, of Pontesbury Hill, with a couple of pubs, shops and many interesting buildings.* Continue on passing '1 Lower Hill' and on reaching the brow look for a finger post on the left. Turn left and follow the stone track as it leads you past houses to a narrow grassy path. This descends through trees, then rises to follow the edge of the woods to reach a wooden pedestrian gate and house.
- ② Bear left through gate and then straight on passing house and continue on this track. This widens to join a stone/dirt access track passing houses. It bends right and at the end of the fence of the last currently visible house bear sharp left to a metal gate and join the bridleway. Soon the path bends to the right, keeping building to your left follow it straight through the grassy stretch into woodland. Drop and keep to left boundary and you will shortly reach a stile on the left. Cross stile and take narrow path, which has a fence on the left, and leads to another metal gate into the woods. *This is Poles Coppice.*
- ③ At this gate turn right following the permissive path which bends slightly left and up some steps. Continue on to reach boardwalk before coming out on broad path (end of Pontesbury Hill road clearly seen on right). Turn left and ignoring the right path continue straight on the Bridleway until you reach another y-fork of paths. Take right footpath that climbs and follow this as it bears right, steeply up some steps, and on to reach wooden kissing gate at the top of Poles Coppice.
- ④ Do not exit via the gate but continue on keeping to

- the left boundary following the permissive woodland path that meanders down to eventually reach the lowest point of a streambed (can be dry) and small footbridge. Carry on to pass through a wooden kissing gate, straight on and soon bearing left on the level to join a partly concealed track into trees. This leads to wooden gates and then on to Poles Coppice parking area.
- ⑤ Turn right onto road and proceed downhill (beware of traffic, this is public highway). The road bends right and ignoring paths left head to the large metal gate on your right, which has a 'Danger Keep Out' sign (entrance to Callow Quarry), but it is a right of way. *The broad track was the track bed of the lead mines railway from Snailbeach mine to the railhead at Pontesbury.* Go around or over the gate and follow this track for ¼ mile, before it's blocked off, take the marked path on the right going steeply uphill. Follow this path to a wide y-fork and bear right and up to a less defined path junction. Here turn right and follow the now level path on to reach a fence. Turn right following the fence and on to join stone track and up to cross a stile into field.
  - ⑥ Continue straight on to join the right hedge boundary and on to cross stile in oncoming hedge. Turn left and, keeping the woods to your right, follow the path down and bear right and down to a gate and footbridge. Go straight ahead into woods and soon you will reach T-junction of paths. *At this point it is worth taking a short detour right to explore the abandoned quarry, which is carpeted with wildflowers in spring and summer.*
  - ⑦ Turn left and follow well-defined track to reach wooden barrier at entrance to Poles Coppice and a tarmac road. Go down this road for ½ mile until you pass Weavers

- Cottages on left and arrive at a road junction. Bear right and up to follow Top Road, passing Hawthorne Cottage immediately on the right to soon rejoin the earlier route to retrace your steps home.
- ⑧ Follow the road down passing the church and community room. When the road joins Pontesbury Hill road, keep right and soon you reach Hawthorne Lodge, the house on the right with the arch. Pass through the arch and gate into the field and down to the kissing gate, turn left onto the lane and soon you will be back at the Plough Inn.

