

Shropshire Way: linear walk using the local bus and train service

Church Stretton to Craven Arms

10 miles linear walk over Ragleth Hill, through Acton Scott and along Wenlock Edge.

Allow 6 hours

Grade **** (18 stiles)

OS Map: Explorer sheet 217

You start this walk in Church Stretton (the bus stop is in Beaumont Road).

Bus:

435 Shrewsbury to Ludlow: hourly Monday to Saturday

Key bus stops as follows:

- Shrewsbury Bus Station
- Church Stretton, Beaumont Road
- Craven Arms, opposite Tuffins supermarket
- Ludlow Assembly Rooms (around the corner from Ludlow Visitor Information Centre)

To look up bus timetables for this walk and for further information visit www.travelinemidlands.co.uk or contact Traveline 0871 200 22 33

Dogs are allowed on the buses at the driver's discretion; please contact the bus company direct for further information:

- 435 Shrewsbury to Ludlow – Minsterley Motors 01743 791208

Train:

Daily train service from Church Stretton to Shrewsbury approximately every hour on Monday-Saturday and two hourly on Sundays.

For further train information contact **National Rail 08457 48 49 50** or www.arrivatrainswales.co.uk

Church Stretton is designated a 'walkers are welcome' town, you will find everything you need to begin your walk here. The walk takes you past Acton Scott historic Working Farm, where you can stop for refreshments. The walk ends at the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre which includes a café, toilets and visitor information.

Walk directions:

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1. From Platform 1 follow the station drive to a junction with Central Avenue and Sandford Avenue. Go left along Central Avenue. From the bus stop at Beaumont Road go left and left again into Sandford Avenue then second right into Central Avenue. Look for a surfaced footpath on the left which passes over a footbridge and then reaches the very busy A49 road. Cross with care. The path runs between gardens to cross a road and continues to climb between more gardens to reach another road. Go right and then left to climb Ragleth Road. Go right up Poplar Drive and you'll find a path at the top.
2. The path climbs up the hillside. Ignore the stile into Gough's Coppice but instead follow it left and then right beneath broadleaved trees to cross a stile. It becomes steeper now and go over the stile. At the junction beneath an oak tree keep left and the path bends again but still rising all of the time. You soon reach the open ground where there are rewarding views of Caradoc, the Clee Hills and Wenlock Edge.
3. You will approach a stile by a barred gate but do not go over it. Your way is to the right up the bracken clad hillside on a green swathe to the high ground of Ragleth Hill. At the top there's a superb view of Hope Bowdler church. The path runs along Ragleth Hill with panoramic views of the area around Church Stretton.
4. On reaching the pole you will find a path down; it is a steep descent and you have to be sure footed for this one. It drops to a line of trees which you follow down to the hillside to cross a stile. Head slightly left again to rise up to another stile. Go over this and head in a similar direction to walk alongside a hedge to a stile leading onto a road.
5. Go right on the road and follow this for approximately one mile to the village of Acton Scott. At the junction, go left. Just beyond the entrance road to Acton Scott Historic Working Farm, there's a stile on the right and the footpath leads through a grassy car parking area to a stile in the corner. Go over here and head slightly right across the field to cross another stile into a wood. It soon exits on the left into a pasture.
6. Turn right in the field and at the boundary cross a stile. In the next field, head slightly right to rise to a stile in the hedge. Once over proceed in a similar direction through a very long field. There are waymarker posts at several points but aim slightly right and eventually you will reach the far bottom right corner. Cross a stile, turn left and cross a second stile. This is the remnant of the old railway line between Craven Arms and Wellington.
7. Emerge into a large field. Your way is slightly right to the far corner where you join a tractor track heading in the direction of Wolverton farm. As you approach the farm go left up steps and through a gate into the adjacent field on the left. Go slightly right across the field to a gate onto the road.

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8. Cross this and go through the wicket gate and keep ahead to the Byne Brook where you'll find a footbridge. Walk over the bridge and head slightly left to an adjacent field. Now turn right to start the climb of Wenlock Edge. On reaching the corner enter Wolverton wood and after approximately 100 metres take a right turn; the path climbs up the hillside behind a magnificent canopy of broad leaved trees.
9. Join a bridleway which runs along the edge. Turn right and follow this for about one mile where it begins to open up before it reaches a junction by an electric telegraph pole. Go left here and walk down the track to a road. Turn right and right again at the next junction. The lane bends to the right by the entrance to Callow Hill and runs through to the hamlet of Lower Dinchope. Go right here and then keep ahead at the next two junctions.
10. The road rises up to a junction of paths. Go left to cross a stile and head slightly right up the hillside heading to the left of a crown of trees. Walk along the ridge by mounds and head right at the waymark to descend the edge. Cross the stile and descend through Halford wood and then aim slightly left to cross a stile into the next field. Cross a stile beneath an oak tree. Keep ahead by the hedge to cross a stile onto the road. Take care as you cross it to enter a field opposite.
11. Head slightly left to follow the edge of the stream. Cross a stile and continue ahead moving away from the stream. Go over the bridge over the Onny River and the path now continues along a lane past the community garden to the Discovery Centre. There are bus stops on the main A49 near to the Discovery Centre for buses to Ludlow or Shrewsbury. The walk to the railway station takes about 10 minutes and is signposted through the town.