

About the Area

This walk is within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Britain, and like the National Parks, they work with the landowners to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the



Little Malvern Priory

area. The two principal owners of the land over which the route passes are Eastnor Estate and the Malvern Hills Conservators. Eastnor Estate is privately owned, and the route generally follows permissive paths. The Malvern Hills Conservators is a public body set up in 1884 to protect and manage the hills. The land under their jurisdiction has unrestricted access on foot.

Nearby Refreshments

Ledbury:

Ledbury is well supplied with many cafés and pubs.

Eastnor:

Eastnor Castle, when open, has a tea room for Castle visitors. T: 01531 633160

British Camp:

Ruben's Kiosk
Malvern Hills Hotel T: 01684 540690

Gardiner's Quarry:

Kettle Sings T: 01684 540244

Colwall; within 200m of the station:

Colwall Park Hotel T: 01684 540000
Crown Inn T: 01684 541074
Colwall Coffee Lounge T: 01684 541155

Route Info

Access:

The majority of the route follows public footpaths, with permissive paths across Eastnor Park. If Eastnor Park has restricted access for any reason, signs will show a diversionary route.

Walk Starting Point:

Ledbury /Colwall Station car park.

Distance:

8 miles/13 kilometres

Terrain:

Undulating with a steep climb from Colwall station to the hills.

Trains:

At the time of writing trains run between Colwall and Ledbury every hour in daytime, except on Sundays when they run at 1½ hr intervals. Travellers should check <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/> for accurate times and note that when boarding, a permit to travel must be bought from the platform using small change, except at Ledbury when the ticket office is open.

Buses:

The 44B, 675,388 and 671 bus routes may be useful on this route. Information is available on the Traveline web site.

Public Toilets are available in Ledbury and at British Camp.

The Malvern Hills AONB Partnership would welcome any comments you have on this trail.

You can contact us on T: 01684 560616
E: aonb@worcestershires.gov.uk



Eastnor and the Malverns

A circular tour, mostly on foot



Points of Interest



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The letters below correspond to points on the map. Where the letters have a **PURPLE BACKGROUND** there is a spoken commentary that will eventually be available from www.malvernhillsonb.org.uk/media.html

A Ledbury

This delightful market town has a wealth of interesting buildings, including a C17 timbered market house, a C15 century painted room and St Katherine's, a rare example of a C13 hospital complex. The Poet Laureate, John Masefield, spent his formative years here.

B Colwall

Colwall is famous for women's cricket, its schools, where the poet WH Auden taught, and as the former bottling site for Malvern Water. Colwall was developed by a local family, the Ballards, who amongst other things, dug

the railway tunnel through the hills and founded the Malvern Hills Conservators, who look after the hills.

C Gardiner's Quarry

The Malvern Hills stand out from the surrounding landscape because they are made of very hard igneous rock and have not eroded over time. Being hard often means being brittle, so the stone was not much use for building and was principally quarried for road stone. Quarrying has now stopped, and in its place are car parks cut out of the rocks, which are over 680 million years old, the oldest in England.

D Black Hill

The house, whose garden adjoins the car park, was built by Sir Barry Jackson, the founder of the Malvern Festival. The Festival featured works by Edward Elgar and George Bernard Shaw.

E British Camp

This prominent iron-age hill fort was built in stages from 600 – 300BC. When the Normans invaded, they dug the topmost rampart for a wooden castle. Be it a fort or a camp, no-one can be sure what its originators made it for. However, there are 260 hut circles within the ramparts, and it is assumed that people lived there. The reservoir is full of Malvern's famous water and was a holding facility for Malvern's supply. Just beyond it are the picturesque buildings and gardens of Little Malvern Court and Priory. The oldest part of the Priory dates from 1171. It was here in the mid 14th century that William Langland was a novice monk. He wrote 'The Vision of Piers Ploughman', set initially on the Malverns, and it envisaged a rural heaven.

F Shire Ditch and Clutter's/Giant's Cave

This is the ditch and embankment by the stone dais. It runs the length of the hills. Records reveal that it was built in 1215 by the Earl of Gloucester. Following a long boundary dispute with the Bishop of Hereford, the Earl dug to define its boundary; and, strangely, the profile of the ditch allowed the precious deer from the Bishop of Hereford's land to cross the ditch but not return – a deer ha-ha.



Clutter's Cave

100m along the path is Clutter's Cave. It is a man made feature, possibly part of the designed landscape of Eastnor Park, and is made of pillow-sized gobbets of lava. These were formed by cooling under water 700 million years ago and so consolidated into their current shape.

G Eastnor Obelisk

Standing prominently in Eastnor Park, the obelisk was always part of the planned landscape and became a memorial to members of the Somers Cocks family, one of whom was killed in the Duke of Wellington's campaigns in Spain in 1812.

H Eastnor Castle

Built in 1812, this romantically-sited castle is sometimes open to the public: see **www.eastnorcastle.com**. The grounds of the castle have an arboretum, tea room and family entertainments.

I Coneygree Wood

Before iron and steel, woods and the timber they produced were at the heart of British industry. The timber-framed houses of Ledbury came from them, as did the woven and plastered panels that filled the frames. The sticks to weave the panels came from coppice, which involves cutting a young tree at its base and cultivating all the new thin shoots that grow. There are many examples of coppice in the upper reaches of Coneygree Wood.

Route Directions

The guidance below is to help navigate only the difficult sections of the route. The numbers by the words refer to the numbers on the map. Where there are no words, please refer to the map and the public footpath way markers on the ground. All distances are approximate.

- 1** Park at Ledbury station and take the train to Colwall.
- 2** From Colwall platform, cross the line via the bridge. Follow the footpath signs up towards the Malvern Hills.
- 3** After 900m, the path makes a T junction with a mud track. Turn right and head towards the Kettle Sings café. At the café car park, turn left up the hill. Cross the B4232 road into the Gardiner's Quarry car park and turn right. Go to the end of the car park and follow the track there. After 300m, at a bench to 'Irene Box', take the left hand uphill track. After 150 metres take the second right hand path. At the next junction by a backless bench, take the right hand path and continue to Blackhill car park.
- 4** Pass the information board at Blackhill car park, cross the car park and take the path that follows the road round to the left. Go past the Malvern Hills Hotel, crossing the A449 into British Camp car park. Go through the second of the gates on the right and follow the track for 1000m.
- 5** At the brow of the hill by the stone dais, follow the path marked to Giant's Cave (Clutter's Cave) The Cave is on the left in 100m. Continue along this path for a further 400m. At a junction where 5 paths meet, take the second on the right, up the hill, where the stone marker shows 'The Gullet and Midsummer Hill'. Follow that path along the ridge.



The Obelisk in Eastnor Park



View of British Camp and reservoir taken from Hangman's Hill

- 6** After 600m and just after the crest of the hill, take the first narrow footpath on the right towards the obelisk. Where it meets a stoned vehicle track, turn left and cross a cattlegrid after 60m. Continue along the stoned track for about 600m.
- 7** At the next gate turn right into Eastnor Park by a deer grid and take the second vehicle track from the left. After 500m you will pass the obelisk; stay on this track for a further 1000m always going straight ahead and downhill.
- 8** At the T junction with a tarmac track turn left (Permissive Path). At the next T junction after 600m turn right down hill. After 400m, turn right onto a stoned track and follow that round over the bridge and past the Bowling Club house. At the top of the rise, turn left onto the tarmac track.



Eastnor Well and Church

- 9** After 400m you'll meet the A438 road. Do not cross it yet, but turn right along the grass verge. After 50m, cross the road and go up the avenue of trees to Eastnor Church. Go through the gate and turn right onto the road. Turn left to make a detour to the village green and well. Otherwise turn right and after 50m, turn left at the footpath marker post and follow the waymarked public footpath.



Ledbury Market House

- 10** Where the path meets the A449 road, cross the road to the steps and turn left. Just after the Police Station turn right towards the church. On entering the churchyard, bear left on all paths until you get to the main wrought iron gateway. Go through that and down the cobbled road ahead to the Market House and turn right onto the high street. Ledbury station is 1000m along this road.

MAP KEY

Route

1 Route direction reference

A Places of interest

B Places of interest (spoken commentary available)

Scale

1 km

1 mile



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