Shropshire Hills Walkers are Welcome

Walking in the Shropshire Hills
www.shropshirewalking.co.uk
There is lots of walking information on this website including the Shropshire Way, Offa’s Dyke National Trail, dates of local walking festivals, Walking With Offa routes, walk leaflets and podcasts to download, geocaching and the latest walking news.

Walking with Offa
12 waymarked pub walks and 4 Days Out leaflets for Bishop’s Castle, Church Stretton, Craven Arms and Ludlow available locally. Walking with Offa Guide available to buy.

Shropshire Ramblers
www.shropshireramblers.org.uk

Geocaching
www.geocaching.com
For local geocaching routes, GPS systems can be hired from Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Craven Arms. 01588 676060.

Other Walkers are Welcome towns outside the Shropshire Hills area
There are many other Walkers are Welcome towns around the Shropshire Hills area, which can be found on www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk

Travel
Travel information can be found in local Visitor Information Centres, and online at www.travelshropshire.co.uk

Buses:
Timetabled routes, contact Traveline on 0871 002 2233
ShropshireLink – a 'book ahead' bus service that can travel anywhere within specific zones of Shropshire. 0345 6789068
Shropshire Hills Shuttles – weekend Shuttle bus into the hills, Easter to September. 01588 676060 www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk

Trains
Stations at Church Stretton and Wellington. Nearby stations at Craven Arms, Ludlow, Shrewsbury and Telford. Contact National Rail, 08457 484950

Visiting
www.visitshropshirehills.co.uk and “Ludlow and Shropshire Hills Brochure” for accommodation and places to visit.
www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk for information on the Shropshire Hills, local events and activities.
www.shropshirehills-buylocal.co.uk for listings of local businesses, products and farmers markets.
Look out for the Shropshire Hills events booklet - your guide to the area, and the Buy Local stamp and Directory – these businesses have signed the Shropshire Hills Sustainability pledge.

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Shropshire Hills Walkers are Welcome

- Bishop’s Castle
- Church Stretton
- Cleobury Mortimer
- Much Wenlock
- Wellington

Shropshire Hills
Bury Ditches Iron Age Hillfort
Shropshire Hills Walkers are Welcome

The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is recognised as one of Britain’s finest landscapes. The stunning scenery includes the craggy Stiperstones and Wrekin, Wenlock Edge and the Clee Hills, the wide open spaces and hidden valleys of the Long Mynd, and peaceful river valleys such as the Clun and the Corve. The Severn Valley and Wyre Forest lie to the east of the AONB with sandstone valleys and ancient oak woodland to explore.

The Shropshire Hills AONB covers 23% of Shropshire, but is home to only about 6% of the county’s population. No wonder you can walk for miles without seeing a soul. The area is one of the most geologically diverse in the country and you can enjoy this wonderfully contrasting scenery on the well maintained and waymarked footpaths that criss-cross the Shropshire Hills. There is walking to suit all abilities and ages, across heather and rough hill tops, through meadows and secret woods, with a mewing buzzard overhead often the loudest sound.

A rich border heritage with hillforts and castles is matched by towns and villages of great character, a friendly welcome and some fantastic food and festivals. The five Shropshire Hills Walkers are Welcome towns – Bishop’s Castle, Church Stretton, Cleobury Mortimer, Much Wenlock and Wellington – are steeped in local history and all retain a vibrant high street of independent shops, so it’s worth enjoying a visit to them all.

Walkers are Welcome towns and villages are places which have something special to offer walkers.

A visit to a ‘Walkers are Welcome’ town guarantees you a series of excellent, waymarked walks from the centre of town. The walks vary in length and ease with something to suit everyone. Local groups ensure these walks are well maintained, clearly signed and promoted. Walk information is available from local outlets and from the towns’ websites.

Walkers are Welcome is a national community led scheme which allows towns and villages to express their enthusiasm for visitors and to encourage walkers into their shops, pubs, cafes and accommodation. All of the businesses that support the scheme, and welcome walkers, bear this logo.

The five Shropshire Hills Walkers are Welcome towns have joined together to help produce this booklet and improve the walking offer to local people and visitors. We hope you will be encouraged to explore and enjoy some of the beauty and variety of our stunning Shropshire Hills.
Bishop’s Castle is at the centre of beautiful, unspoilt hill country where walking is a joy for people who appreciate the quiet landscape with its hill tops, woods and stream filled valleys.

This is farming country that gave its name to the Clun Forest and Kerry Hill sheep breeds. Lambs abound in the spring. Beef cattle graze the hillsides and in the valleys there are rich meadows with abundant wild flowers and mixed arable fields. There are song birds in the hedgerows and kites and buzzards soar overhead.

The town itself has kept its 12th Century layout yet is a lively, friendly place with a strong sense of its identity and history. It has a long and proud history of brewing with two thriving breweries and many individual shops, restaurants, pubs and cafes. The area is home to many excellent artists, musicians and crafts people.

The Shropshire Way runs through the town centre and the Offa’s Dyke path, following the Saxon ditch and dyke border between England and Wales, passes just to the west. To the east rise the dramatic ridge of the Long Mynd and the jagged tors of the Stiperstones.

The bcring is a challenging five days of walking (www.bcring.co.uk) and the Walking Festival in June is a celebration of the excellent hill-country walking in the area (www.walkingfestival.co.uk). Walking for Pleasure leaflets, offering walks from 1 to 8 miles, are all freely available locally.

Visitor Information:
Old Time, High Street
01588 638467
www.bishopscastle.co.uk
Church Stretton lies in a landscape of stunning variety and beauty. The only town within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, its 5,000 residents live in a valley between the heather-covered Long Mynd and the even more imposing rocky peaks of the Stretton Hills to the east.

The town boasts a friendly welcome, three banks, a post office, traditional shops, two supermarkets, three pubs and over twenty eateries – along with free two hour on street parking, or cheap central car parks, and a Visitor Information Centre.

For walkers there are many maps, guides and leaflets, giving almost immediate access to a wilderness of high moorland through Rectory Field and Wood onto the Long Mynd plateau. On its flanks are deep gullies and shallow, rocky streams, while lower down the hills are woodlands and fields. Wildlife includes buzzards, curlew, raven, red grouse, deer, brown hares, badgers, Exmoor ponies and thousands of sheep.

Our hill country is a magnet for walkers of all ages and abilities. On offer are ambles, Walking for Health paths, more active rambles and the opportunity to walk the hill tops with surprisingly modest effort. There are over 30 miles of well maintained grassy paths and 20 miles of bridleways covering the heather of the moorlands, the grass, bracken and woods of the Shropshire Hills and the lush greenery of the batches and lowland fields.

Our prize-winning gardens at the railway station are a fitting place to start many local walks and the Shropshire Hills Shuttle buses run at the weekends, Easter to September, providing easy access into the hills from Church Stretton and Carding Mill Valley – a delightful National Trust picnic and play area along with its café, car parks and shop.
Cleobury Mortimer is an ancient market town at the heart of Cleobury Country – an area of eleven parishes extending from Titterstone Clee to the River Severn set in the rolling landscape of South Shropshire. There are views of the Malvern, Abberley and Clee Hills. The Cotswolds, Clent Hills, Welsh mountains, Long Mynd, Wenlock Edge and the Wrekin are more distant sights. Mortimer Forest, wooded foothills of Brown Clee and Wyre Forest are on our fringes.

Cleobury sits astride the A4117 between Ludlow and Kidderminster, yet the High Street once described by John Betjeman as ‘A long curving street of Georgian houses and shops interspersed with genuine half-timber’ retains this character. St. Mary’s church with its rare twisted spire is a focal point, and the Market Hall has Visitor Information. Stottesdon has a community shop; all but 3 parishes have pubs and all have historic churches.

Cleobury Country parishes are connected by footpaths, well maintained by Cleobury Mortimer Footpath Association, Stotty Strollers and Kinlet Countryside Group. They have written and waymarked 35 walks, the Clee to Severn extension of the Shropshire Way, the Geopark Way section through Kinlet parish, and organised the bi-annual Food and Ale Trail, promoting Cleobury’s own Hobsons beer.

Visitor Information:
Market Hall, Church Street and Cleobury Country Centre, Love Lane  01299 272300  www.cleoburycountry.com
Walking group websites: www.cmfa.co.uk & www.stottystrollers.org.uk
Much Wenlock

Much Wenlock is a unique and special place. It is a beautiful medieval town that has also played its part in the birth of the modern Olympic Games. With a population of around 3,000 people it feels more like a village than a town, and one into which you have stepped back fifty years. It has been a market town for 700 years, but its history goes back much further than that.

It is a town of holy wells, shuts, cobbles, whipping posts, and stocks. It has a magnificent ancient Guildhall, open to the public in the summer, and the ruins of a priory built upon the site of Milburga’s Abbey. It has a fascinating museum that covers its long history, its links with the Olympics, and the local geology and ecology.

The town sits in a picturesque hollow on Wenlock Edge, a unique geological feature stretching 18 miles north-east/south-west from the Severn Gorge to Craven Arms affording magnificent view of the Shropshire Hills. On the fringe of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is an area to be explored with walks for all abilities, both close to the town and further afield, with superb scenery all around.

It is accessible by bus from Shrewsbury or Telford railway stations, and is only 20 minutes from the M54.

Visitor Information:
Much Wenlock Museum, High Street, 01952 727679
www.muchwenlockguide.info
Wellington under The Wrekin

The pretty little historic town of Wellington is situated near the famous Roman Road of Watling Street. Henry III granted the town its market charter in 1244 and there is still a thriving market here on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. There is a good train service to the town, free car parking and a very warm welcome awaits all visitors who want to visit and walk in the area.

The famous local landmark of The Wrekin is at the most northerly section of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The 407 metre high hill of volcanic rock lies within a forty minute walk from the centre of Wellington. Young and old feel the same sense of achievement as they walk up the hill, past the remains of an Iron Age Hill Fort to reach the summit and the 360 degree panorama, which on a clear day can include 17 counties.

But there is much more to see than just Wellington and The Wrekin. The Ercall, the hill next to The Wrekin, is comprised of Shropshire’s oldest rocks. Here you can see the vivid red winged Cinnabar moths and Green Hairstreak butterflies. The ancient woodland of Limekiln Wood is home to 150 plant species that include yellow archangel and twayblade orchids. Peregrine falcons return to nest at the foot of The Wrekin and Daubenton’s and Pipistrelle bats roost in the area.

There are regular Walking for Health walks from the new Leisure Centre and library complex in Wellington, and Wellington Walkers are Welcome lead a walk on the first Sunday of the month at 2.00pm. For more details about walking, including our Walking Festival, visit www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk.