

The Malvern Hills (Great Malvern Circular)			The Malvern Hills (Colwall to Great Malvern)		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
20 th July 2019			21 st July 2019		
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The Malvern Hills (Great Malvern Circular or from Colwall)

Start: Great Malvern Station or Colwall Station

Finish: Great Malvern Station

Great Malvern station, map reference SO 783 457, is 11 km south west of Worcester, 165 km north west of Charing Cross, 84m above sea level and in **Worcestershire**. Colwall station, map reference SO 756 424, is 4 km south west of Great Malvern, 25 km east of Hereford, 129m above sea level and in **Herefordshire**.

Length: 20.6 km (12.8 mi) or 18.8 km (11.7 mi), of which 4.5 km (2.8 mi) or 3.0 km (1.9 mi) on tarmac or concrete. **Cumulative ascent/descent:** 1078m or 820/865m.

For a shorter or longer walk, see *below* **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 8 out of 10 or 7 out of 10

Time: 6 hours 45 minutes or 5 hours 30 minutes walking time.

For the whole outing, including trains, sights and meals, allow at least 13 hours or 12 hours.

Transport: Great Malvern station is on the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Line from Oxford to Hereford, with a journey time from 145 mins from London. It is also served by trains from Birmingham to Hereford. Colwall is one stop further west towards Hereford. Split tickets are usually cheaper than through-tickets. A Network Railcard is valid up to Worcester (on the Cotswold and Malvern Hills line only).

Saturday Walkers' Club: Take a train no later than 8.30 hours.

OS Landranger Map: 150 (Worcester & The Malverns)

OS Explorer Map: 190 (Malvern Hills & Bredon Hill)

Walk Notes:

The Malvern Hills stand majestically above the Severn Plain in Worcestershire and the rolling wooded hills of Herefordshire, offering far reaching panoramic views across a variety of landscapes from a multitude of viewpoints. The area is famed for its steep dramatic hills rising out of flat vales and for the pure spring water that flows from them, but it also offers a rich cultural heritage of forts, castles and priories in a landscape of ancient woodland, rolling pastures and wild, open commons.

The circular route rises through the town past all important landmarks and ascends the famous 99 Steps to St. Ann's Well, but then heads southerly, mostly through ancient woodlands along the foot of the hills, to lunch. It then rises up through the mid slopes of scrub, grass, rock and bracken, first to the Herefordshire Beacon and then returns along the top of the ridge via the Worcestershire Beacon to Great Malvern, with its grassy commons maintained by livestock grazing, in places with Bilberry and Common Heather.

There are several walk options, and all in they cover all but four of the 22 notable hilltops in the range. The completist starts from Colwall and includes the two extensions, starting out along fields and through oak woods at the westerly base of the hills to then return north to Malvern along the top of the ridge.

Walk Options:

Great Malvern Circular:

Taxi from the station to Wyche Cutting/The Wyche Inn or The Malvern Hills Hotel/British Camp (£7/£12 resp., 50% more on Sundays, taxis usually on stand, else try: 01684 578 749 or 07730 573 738).

Bus 675 to/from Wyche Cutting (Mon-Sat, from outside The Mount Pleasant Hotel, 1.5 km into the walk).

Outward and return route are never far from each other (if mostly at much different height), therefore there are several ways to pick up the return route to Great Malvern earlier than described:

- at the Gold Mine stone dial (7.9 km/4.9 mi, 457m ascent);
- at the Wyche Cutting/The Wyche Inn (9.1 km/5.6 mi, 519m ascent);
- at The Malvern Hills Hotel (17.2 km/10.7 mi, 884m ascent)

Finish at The Malvern Hills Hotel after going up to British Camp (12.9 km/8.0 mi, 737m ascent). From there take a taxi.

Colwall to Great Malvern:

A Shortcut at the Silurian Pass cuts the tops south of British Camp and 5.2 km/3.2 mi and 305m ascent.

An Extension to the two most southerly tops adds 3.4 km/2.1 mi and 180m ascent.

An Alternative Route skirts around Swinyard Hill rather than going over the top.

Both: An Extension to the four northerly tops adds 2.0 km/1.2 mi and 111m ascent.

Elenvenses in Great Malvern (details last updated 22/07/2019)

Scene, Abbey Road Coffee, Mac & Jac's Café, Belle Vue Café, Gallery 36, The Bluebird Tea Rooms.

St. Ann's Well Café *St. Ann's Road, Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4RF (01684 560 285, <http://stannswell.co.uk/>)*. The St. Ann's Well is situated on the eastern slopes of the Malvern Hills, above the town. The building dates back to 1813 and houses an elaborately carved Sicilian marble spout and basin as well as the café. It is located 1.9 km from the start of the walk. Open 10.00-16.00 most days.

Lunch/Tea en route (details last updated 22/07/2019)

The Wyche Inn 74 Wyche Road, *Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4EQ (01684 575 396, <http://www.thewycheinn.co.uk/>)*. The Wyche Inn is a traditional pub, located 4.8 km/3.0 mi into the walk if starting from Great Malvern, and 4.1 km/2.5 mi from the end of the walk. Open 12.00-21.00 Mon, 12.00-23.00 Tue-Fri, 11.00-23.00 Sat and 11.00-22.30 Sun. Food served 12.00-14.30 and 18.00-20.30 Mon-Fri, 12.00-20.30 Sat (snacks only 14.30-17.00) and 12.00-15.30 and 18.00-19.30 Sun.

Café H2O at the Malvern Hills GeoCentre *Wyche Innovation Centre, Walwyn Road, Malvern, WR13 6PL (01684 252 414, <https://www.wyche-innovation.com/cafe-h2o>)*. Café H2O is located 4.8 km/3.0 mi into the walk if starting from Great Malvern, and 4.1 km/2.5 mi from the end of the walk. Open 09.30-16.30, but closed on Wednesdays.

The Malvern Hills Hotel & Restaurants *Wynds Point, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6DW (01684 540 690, <http://malvernhillshotel.co.uk/>)*. Open all day. Food served all day. Closed Xmas Day.

Sally's Place *Wynds Point, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6DW (07790 209 288)*. Sally's is a mobile café. Open all day. Food served all day. Closed Xmas Day.

The Malvern Hills Hotel and Sally's Place are passed twice: after 9.4 km/5.8 mi **and** 3.5 km later; **from Colwall** they are 2.7 km/1.7 mi into the walk with a short diversion or after 10.9 km/6.8 mi.

Tea in Great Malvern (details last updated 22/07/2019)

The Red Lion 4 St. Ann's Road, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4RG (01684 564 787, <https://www.redliongreatmalvern.co.uk/>)*.

Malvern Cellar 2 St. Ann's Road, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4RG (07970 123 808)*. Local cider by the glass; local beers, wines and spirits by the bottle.

The Unicorn 2 Belle Vue Terrace, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4PZ (01684 574 152)*.

The Foley Arms Hotel 14 Worcester Road, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4QS (01684 580 350)*. The Foley Arms is a Wetherspoon's pub.

The Mount Pleasant Hotel *Belle Vue Terrace, Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 4PZ (01684 561 837, <https://www.mountpleasanthotel.co.uk/>)*.

Pepper's 5 Church Walk, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2XH (01684 578 288, <https://www.peppermalvern.co.uk/>)*. Closed Mondays.

Anupam 85 Church Street, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2AE (01684 573 814, <https://www.anupam.co.uk/>)*.

The Fig 99B Church Street, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2AE (01684 569 909, <https://www.thefigmalvern.co.uk/>)*. Open for dinner Wed-Sat.

The Morgan 52 Clarence Road, *Great Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 3EQ (01885 490 505, <https://www.wyvalleybrewery.co.uk/the-morgan>)*. The Morgan is owned by the Wye Valley Brewery. No hot food, but tasty rolls are served in the evening.

Lady Foley's Tea Room *Great Malvern Station, Station Approach, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 3AU (01684 893 033)*. Open 09.00-18.00 Mon-Sat.

Notes:

Great Malvern

Great Malvern is an area of the spa town of Malvern at the foot of the Malvern Hills AONB, on the eastern flanks of the Worcestershire Beacon and North Hill, and is the historic and modern centre of Malvern. It is a designated conservation area in recognition of the special architectural and historic interest of the area. The growth of Great Malvern began with the founding of an 11th-century priory. The health-giving properties of Malvern water and the natural beauty of the surroundings led to the development of Malvern as a spa, with resources for invalids and for tourists, seeking cures, rest and entertainment. Local legend has it that the curative benefit of the spring water was known in medieval times. Only in the 19th century, especially after the arrival of the railway in 1860, though did it become a popular centre for hydrotherapy and swelled to include the bordering settlements of Barnard's Green, Malvern Link, Malvern Wells (South Malvern), North Malvern, and West Malvern, collectively referred to as *The Malverns*. Following the collapse of the spa industry, many of the hotels and villas became schools, and some have since been further converted to apartments, while some of the smaller hotels are now retirement homes. The River Severn runs roughly north-south about 6 km to the east of the town. There are many specimens of mature trees in Great Malvern due to Lady Foley, the widow of large landowner Edward Thomas Foley stipulating that all plots around the town centre should be planted with trees when she sold off parts of her estate in the 1800s.

The Malvern Hills

The Malvern Hills dominate the surrounding countryside and the towns and villages of the district of Malvern. The highest summit of the hills affords a panorama of the Severn Valley, the Cotswolds, the hills of Herefordshire, the Black Mountains and the Welsh borders, parts of thirteen counties (some say fourteen), the Bristol Channel, and the cathedrals of Worcester, Gloucester and Hereford. The range is about 13 km long but only about 1 km wide at its widest points. The hills are known for their spring water – initially made famous by the region's many holy wells, and later through the development of the 19th century spa town of Great Malvern, a process which culminated in the production of the modern bottled drinking water. The Malverns are formed from some of the oldest and hardest rocks in England, around 680 Million years old, from the late Precambrian. Being largely hard igneous rocks (mainly granite), they have resisted erosion better than those of the surrounding countryside and the result is the striking line of hills. The name Malvern is probably derived from the ancient British *moel-bryn*, meaning "Bare Hill".

St. Mary and St. Michael, Malvern (Great Malvern Priory)

Founded as a Benedictine Priory in 1085, it was a monastery for 450 years when the citizens bought it to save it from destruction in the dissolution. A parish church since then, it has retained its medieval stained-glass windows, some of Britain's finest, as well as a collection of medieval tiles and beautifully carved Monk's Stalls/Misericords.

Worcestershire Way

The Worcestershire Way is a 50 km (31 mi) waymarked linear Long-Distance Path, hugging the western edge of the County. It runs from the Georgian town of Bewdley to the Victorian spa town of Great Malvern, initially along the River Severn then via the Abberley Hills and the hills of Penny and Ankerdine and the River Teme and the Suckley Hills to cross the northern main Malvern Hills. The route over the northern Malvern Hills is waymarked with stone direction markers which can be difficult to find.

The Sabrina Way

The Sabrina Way is a waymarked 327 km (203 mi) new addition to the National Bridle-route Network, developed for The British Horse Society. It runs from Gloucestershire through five counties to Derbyshire, and provides a link between the Ridgeway and the Pennine Bridleway.

The Holy Well/Malvern Water

The Holy Well is set on the slopes of the Malvern Hills above Malvern Wells. The well is believed to be the site of one of the oldest bottling plants in the world. The Malvern spring water was first bottled on a commercial scale at the well and the building now houses a modern commercial bottling plant. Edward Popham of Tewkesbury was partially cured of his gout at the Holy Well in 1747 and as a vote of thanks erected a small bath that probably resembled a modest stone sink. In 1853 the Holy Well and nearby Bath Cottage were purchased from squatters by Thomas Charles Hornyold, who extended the building that housed the baths and spa at a cost of £400. The building was listed as Grade II and of Architectural Interest in the 1970s.

Malvern water has been bottled and distributed in the UK and abroad from as early as the reign of James I, with water bottling at the Holy Well being recorded in 1622. Various local grocers have bottled and distributed Malvern water during the 19th and early 20th centuries, but it was first bottled on a large commercial scale by Schweppes, who opened a bottling plant at Holy Well in 1850. As official caterers to the Great Exhibition of 1851, Schweppes introduced the water as Malvern Soda, later renaming it Malvern Seltzer Water in 1856. In 1890 Schweppes moved away from Holy Well, entered into a contract with a

Colwall family on the other side of the range, and built a bottling plant in the village in 1892. The Holy Well was subsequently leased to John and Henry Cuff, who bottled there until the 1960s. The Holy Well became derelict until 2009 when Schweppes' owner Coca-Cola shut down production and refused to sell on the rights to the name. Only after public pressure they relented and sold the Malverns brand to some local entrepreneurs, and with the aid of a Lottery Heritage grant, production of 1200 bottles per day of Holy Well Spring Water was recommenced by an independent family-owned company.

The quality of Malvern water is attributable to its source. The rocks are characterised by low porosity and high secondary permeability via fissures. Malvern water is rainwater and snow meltwater that percolates through fissures created by the pressures of tectonic movements about 300 million years ago when advancing sedimentary layers of Silurian shale and limestone were pushed into and under older Precambrian rock. When the fissures are saturated, a water table forms and the water emerges as springs around the fault lines between the strata. There are over 100 springs around the hills. Depending on rainfall, the flow can vary from as little as 36 litres per minute to over 350 litres per minute.

Shire Ditch

According to folklore, the Shire Ditch or Red Earl's Dyke was created in 1287 by the (red-haired) Earl of Gloucester, following a boundary dispute with the Bishop of Hereford. It was erected along the whole Malverns Ridge to separate his hunting forest from the one to the east, and in such a clever way, that deer could jump east to west across it, but not back to the east. Recent research has shown though that the Shire Ditch might actually be much older. Indeed, there is some evidence (namely that the ramparts of Midsummer Hill's fort, built 470BC, overlay the ditch) that it may have started life as a prehistoric trackway in the late Bronze Age, as a boundary earthwork running from Midsummer Hill fort to the Worcestershire Beacon, possibly dating from around 1000 BC.

Three Choirs Way

The Three Choirs Way is a 161 km (100 mi) waymarked circular Long-Distance Path between Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester through a countryside of hopyards, vineyards and orchards with a theme linking the walk to the ancient Three Choirs Festival celebrated annually for over 300 years in the three Cathedrals. Each year one of the three Cathedrals takes it in turn to host the festival.

Eastnor Park/Castle/Obelisk

Eastnor Castle lies at the foot of the Malvern Hills, surrounded by a deer park, arboretum and lake, and is the home of the Hervey-Bathurst family. It was built in the early 19th century, replacing an earlier building, aiming to look like a medieval castle. Wood was in high demand for shipbuilding for the Napoleonic Wars and therefore expensive, so the roof trusses and beams were made from cast iron. The Obelisk was erected in 1812 to commemorate four of the Somers Cocks family (maternal ancestors) and is listed Grade II*. <https://eastnorcastle.com/>

British Camp or Herefordshire Beacon

British Camp is an Iron Age hill fort located at the top of Herefordshire Beacon. The fort is thought to have been first constructed between 700 and 200 BC by the Dobunni tribe. A ringwork and bailey medieval castle, known as Colwall Castle, was built on the site much later. The extensive earthworks remain clearly visible today and determine the shape of the hill. There are around 100 generally round hut platforms on British Camp, which may well suggest a permanent occupation. However, Midsummer Hill fort is just a mile south of British Camp, and it is unusual to have two major hill forts so close to each other. The ditch and bank around the entire site cover three hills (those to the north and south are little more than spurs though), and with a perimeter of 2100m the defences enclose an area of around 18 ha. Ancient folklore has it that the British chieftain Caractacus made his last stand against the Romans at the British Camp. The story remains disputed, however, as Roman historian Tacitus implies a site closer to the Severn. There is therefore no evidence that Roman presence ended the prehistoric settlement at British Camp. However, excavations at Midsummer Hillfort, Bredon Hill and Croft Ambrey all show evidence of violent destruction around the year 48 AD. This may suggest that the British Camp was abandoned or destroyed around the same time.

Geopark Way

The Geopark Way is a 175 km (109 mi) waymarked linear Long-Distance Path from Bridgnorth to Gloucester, through Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. It was established as a Landscape and Geology walking trail through the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark, and explores 700 million years of geological history. <http://geopark.org.uk/pub/category/explore/the-geopark-way/>

WALK DIRECTIONS

After alighting from the train on Platform 2 in the splendid and well-preserved Gothic masterpiece of a Victorian station at **Great Malvern**, use the underpass to walk across to Platform 1 and follow it past the station building, housing **Lady Foley's Tea Room** and with an info panel on the wall, to *turn right* at the end of the building into the station forecourt. Cross **Station Approach** and walk through the opposite **taxi rank** and up some steps and *turn right* along a gravel path through the linear **Station Gardens**. Follow the path to the far-right corner, with the former **Imperial Hotel** (then linked by a tunnel to the station, now a school) on your left, and some of the surviving **100 historic gas lamps** in town on the right (out of more than 1,200).

In 80m in the far corner you pass the first of many man-high display-panels on the town, its history and '**The Way/Route to the Hills**', the route you will now broadly follow to the hills, by a kiosk on the right. There is also a town and route map. *Turn left* across **Imperial Road** and up along **Avenue Road** (although you may find the info panel a little to the right on the opposite road side and the building behind the wall – the **Edinburgh Dome** – of interest: a rare and listed 'parashell'). In 100m cross Tibberton Road, now with first glimpses of **The Malvern Hills** ahead, and in 70m pass a bus stop. In 60m you walk over a To-the-Hills marker placed in the pavement and cross Albert Road South.

[!] In 110m *turn left* along **Priory Road**, where the main road curves to the right. In 75m by a car park on the left, *turn right* across the road and continue along the short drive to '**Malvern Splash**', a public pool. In 10m *turn right* up a railed tarmac path into **Priory Park**. In 10m *turn left* with the path, ignoring the continuation ahead towards a large building (Park View, once home to the famous 'Water Cure'), and in 30m ignore a left turn. In 10m, at an info panel by a four-way path junction, you *turn left* towards a pond and in 40m *turn right* along an arched railed wooden bridge across the pond and in 30m continue in the same direction at a four-way junction to continue to the right of the **historic bandstand** (plaque on left). In 40m cross a broad tarmac path and head up some steps to the **Malvern Theatres**.

You walk through the building (if shut, skirt it around to the right), past its **Scene** bistro/café. Once through the theatre and cinema complex, *turn left* along **Grange Road** and in 20m *turn right* across the road to continue along a narrow tarmac path between stone walls. You have the **Priory Church** ahead and the ivy-clad **Abbey Hotel** to its left beyond it. The path *turns right* in 25m to go up through the churchyard along the right-hand side of **St. Mary and St. Michael, Malvern** (there is a side entrance just to the left). In the north east corner, by the church's main entrance gate, go up some steps to *turn left* by a medieval standing cross and go through the churchyard gate. You pass **Abbey Road Coffee** and reach Abbey Road at a T-junction. **Worth a detour** to the left are **The Priory Gatehouse** from c. 1480, now housing the **Town Museum** and – with the Priory Church – the only survivor of the monastic buildings, and **The Abbey Hotel** just past it (with **Mac & Jac's Café** this side of the gate).

Cross Abbey Road and continue up a flight of steps onto and through **Belle Vue Terrace**. This is a small terrace but well worth exploring (now or at the end of the walk), seeing that it contains numerous good info panels, the **Malvhina Spout** of Malvern Spring Water, an **Edward Elgar** statue, **Enigma Fountain** and some seasonal outdoor seating of the **Belle Vue Café** (situated on the road above). Also found around the terrace: **Gallery 36** and **The Bluebird Tea Rooms**. Cross the upper road at a set of lights and *turn left* along the pavement. You pass the Masonic Hall and a Lloyd's Bank and then in 50m **The Mount Pleasant Hotel**.

In 40m, just before a **bus stop for services from/to the Wyche Cutting and from British Camp**, *turn right* with a signpost on the other side of the road ('99 Steps to St. Ann's Well') through a double metal gate or a gap to the left into **Rosebank Gardens**, i.e. ignore another private path a little to the right of the gardens to the Orangery. You walk steeply uphill along the right-hand brick wall, not ignoring the splendid views in the back, across the Abbey Hotel and Priory into **The Severn Plain** and to **Bredon Hill** (SWC Walk 323 Evesham to Pershore via Dumbleton and Bredon Hills). In 50m commence the **99 Steps** by a memorial plaque for **C. S. Lewis**, the scholar and author, on the left. At the top of the steps by a house on the left, you *bear right* with the tarmac drive and in 30m reach **St. Ann's Road** at a T-junction by a footpath signpost. [The HQ of the **British Association of Dowsers** is somewhere along the road.]

Turn right along the road and in 10m *turn hard left* with a To-the-Hills signpost up a tarmac drive. In 30m ignore a left forking gravel path and continue steeply up to the **St. Ann's Well Café**, whose fenced garden you reach in 200m by a toilet block away on the left. There are some benches to the right, the sculpted well and an informative display in the right-hand side of the building, the café on the ground floor and a function room (Octagon Bar) on the top floor. The path continues as a car wide gravel track and you **[!]** *turn left* immediately, by a blue marker for the **Worcestershire Way** (green pear waymark, it finishes on Belle Vue Terrace), signed on the right-hand side to 'Wyche Road', along a shaded level earthen path cut into the steep wooded slope (95° initially).

In 270m ignore a left fork down towards the audible **Wyche Road** and *fork right* gently uphill with a red MTB Route marker post. In 70m ignore a steeply rising right fork and in 100m you cross **Rushy Valley** by a memorial bench and a break in the trees on the left. In 130m you pass another break in the trees just before a memorial bench and the path starts to gently descend. In 70m ignore a left fork downhill and in 100m pass another memorial bench by a break in the trees, through which you can see the **Malvern Technology Centre** and **Bredon Hill**. In 30m ignore a right fork, rising steeply uphill and follow the path to the left and in 40m *turn right* with it. In 20m continue in the same direction at an oblique crossing with a path from down below. In 170m you pass another break in the trees by a memorial bench and in 50m ignore a narrow path on the right. In 100m, just before meeting the road by a memorial bench on the right, you *fork up to the right* with a red MTB Route marker post along a gravel path away from the road, signed 'Wyche Cutting'.

You get first views of **The Cotswolds** to the right of **Bredon Hill**. The path rises steadily amongst trees and in 350m finally turns right away from the road below. In 40m you pass a sign for St. Ann's Well pointing backwards and emerge at a T-junction with a wide gravel track in a grassy area. *Turn right* with the track and then *turn left* with it by a bench away on the right and in 40m pass an info panel on **Earnslaw Lake** to follow the gravel path to the lake, an ex-granite quarry now filled with spring water. The path peters out in about 100m and you return to the grassy area (where **Earnslaw House** stood, until demolished in 1936) to follow the gravel path, past the ascent route from St. Ann's Well, so effectively turning left from the previous direction (250°).

In 30m you pass a sign for 'Earnslaw Car Park' and **[!]** *fork up right* (200° initially) along a broad footpath with a red MTB Route marker post, where the wider drive to the car park curves to the left. In 30m fork either way, the two paths reunite in 400m. **If on the right-hand path:** in 230m you have a low concrete wall on your left, in 20m you have open views again just before a path joins from the right behind, in 125m you pass a sign on the right for the 'Quarry Walk' pointing backwards, in 10m you reach the top of the rise, and for the first time, **you are on the Malverns Ridge!** (albeit at one of its lower points, at 308m above sea) at the **Gold Mine stone dial**. **If on the left-hand path:** near the top *fork steeply right* and *turn right* to the dial.

There is a tarmac path 10m ahead (the return route), [!] but you ignore all directions shown on the dial, and *turn left* up some steps and along the unsigned gravel path along the ridge. In 20m, ahead you can see the top of **Perseverance Hill**, one of the range of hills beyond the **Wyche Cutting** (your next target). In 110m fork either way. In 120m the two paths re-join and in another 25m, by a little rockface, *turn right* with the gravel path and in 20m *turn left* with the path. In 50m continue in the same direction along a gravel drive towards some houses, ignoring a tarmac lane 10m parallel to the right below, this side of a car park (the return route). In 30m the drive continues as tarmac (with the **Herefordshire Beacon/British Camp** visible away to the right for the first time) and you continue between houses before dropping down steeply (this is reputedly **England's second steepest road** – check the wall chart in the Wyche Inn).

You continue along a tarmac path which in 40m meets **Wyche Road** at a sharp bend (with some fast-flowing traffic). The **Wyche Cutting** through the Malvern Hills is off to the right, as is the **bus stop for services from/to Malvern**, about 200m away. **The Wyche Inn**, the early recommended lunch pub, is away to the left. It has two bars, the nearby one has carpet floors and no piped music (no dogs allowed), the far bar has paved floors and piped music (dogs allowed). It also has grand views of the Severn Plain from its terrace.

For the continuation of the walk, cross the road carefully and continue briefly to the left down **Old Wyche Road**, but immediately *turn right* along a signposted gravel bridleway (marked as **The Sabrina Way**) to the left of **Rock Cottage** (165°). In 100m you pass a memorial bench (Cotswold views on the left) and in 270m you turn left with the path around a rocky outcrop and in 40m turn right again with the path, now through a steep wooded slope, with the drop on the left. In 220m ignore a right turn uphill and descend gently with the path. In 180m at a three-way fork you continue in the same direction along the middle path on the level, signed '**Holy Well**' (due S initially). In 150m you pass a metal green bench and in 80m a wooden fence and a path join from the left below. In 140m where the fence and path fork down to the left, you *fork to the right*, still on the level. In 70m pass another metal green bench and in 40m a wooden bench by a break in the trees. In 125m a path joins from the left below and behind at an oblique crossing by another metal green bench.

Ignore the right fork and continue in the same direction for 100m to **The Holy Well**, the original source of the famous **Malvern Water**, in a Grade II listed building restored in 2009, and with several info panels. It is believed to have been **the first bottling plant in the world**. Re-trace your steps for 100m to the oblique crossing by the metal green bench and *turn up hard left* (245° initially) to ascend the steep wooded slope. You zig to the right and zag to the left and then continue in the same direction at a junction with another path from above and behind by a green metal bench. In 160m the path curves to the left and in 80m a path joins from the right and above by a green metal bench. In 300m – in a bend – a path joins from the left below. The path winds its way along the slope, initially through trees, then in 100m at a right turn through bracken in a more open area and in 120m you have brief views of **Black Hill North** ahead and again in 200m. In another 190m – just after a wooden bench and a sign pointing backwards to 'Holy Well' – you *fork down to the left*, ignoring an uphill right fork.

In 220m by a wooden bench on the right, a narrow path joins from the left below and behind, and in 180m you reach the scenic **Berington's Quarry**. *Turn left* with the path and in 230m at an oblique four-way junction you *fork up to the right*, signed 'Black Hill' (due W). In 250m you reach the ridge again, for only the second time, and again only for a short while. *Turn left* along the ridge, following the line of the **Shire Ditch**. You are now sharing the route of the **Three Choirs Way** for a while.

In 120m you go over a grassy hilltop (ahead you can see the multi-tiered top of the **Herefordshire Beacon/British Camp**, one of the most impressive **Iron Age Hillfort** sites, scaled after the drop down to the road cutting and have grand views back to the tops along the stretch to The Wyche Cutting, i.e. the return route). In another 70m go over another minor top, from which you have good views down to the left to **Little Malvern Priory Church, Court and Gardens**, home of the Berington family by descent since the Dissolution of the Monasteries. In 80m ignore a right running grass path to a car park visible below and continue in the same direction along a gravel path. You pass an Elizabethan house and in 150m at a T-junction, with the grassy top of **Black Hill South** ahead (270m above sea), you *turn right*.

You pass a few benches (grand views to the right of the hills between here and the Wyche Cutting) and a memorial stone for Sir Barry Vincent Jackson, pass a sign for 'British Camp' and follow the gravel path steeply downhill to a road. In 130m from the sign cross the road and *turn left* along the pavement starting opposite. In 50m you pass **a disused bus stop** and in 50m reach the **A 449, by the Worcestershire/Herefordshire border**, with the **Malvern Hills Hotel and Restaurants** on the left and **Sally's Place**, on the right. Cross the A road by a traffic island and continue to the right of the large car park by an info panel on the **British Camp/Herefordshire Beacon** along a tarmac path through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and rise steadily with the path, passing an old plaque from the **Malvern Hills Conservators**.

In 40m ignore a right turn uphill, signed 'British Camp' (the return route) and continue in the same direction with a 'Pink Cottage' sign. The path continues as gravel and in 90m another path joins from the left below and the path continues as tarmac. In 40m continue in the same direction, ignoring a right fork uphill, now again on gravel. In 150m you pass a wooden bench on the right just before emerging from the trees. You now can see the **British Camp Reservoir** below on the left, as the path skirts the hill on the level, with some of the ramparts near the top visible from this position. In 250m you pass some steps leading down to the reservoir by another bench and in 400m you walk through a gash in the **Shire Ditch** and reach a saddle by a large stone dial at a six-way path junction. Ahead is **Swinyard Hill**, the next hill along the ridge to the South. On 215° half-right you have the **Obelisk** on the **Eastnor Estate**.

The onwards route will go up to the Beacon on the right but not before a very short loop **via Broad Down, Hangman's Hill and Clutter's Cave**. *Turn left* along a gravel path and in 20m continue in the same direction along grass with the Shire Ditch on your left, where the gravel path turns right. In another 40m *turn right* with the Shire Ditch along **Broad Down** (292m above sea). In 400m – on **Hangman's Hill** (276m above sea) – *turn down to the right* with the Shire Ditch and in 75m *turn right* at a T-junction with a gravel path. This path comes up from the **Silurian Pass** and the Colwall Start options join along it. In 230m ignore a right fork and continue towards '**Clutter's or Giant's Cave**', 90m ahead (man-made from pillow lava) and in 120m reach the large stone dial again, with **British Camp Reservoir** to the right below and **British Camp** up ahead.

*) *Turn left* along a clear path towards **Millenium Hill**. In 75m this continues as a stepped engineered path and then zig-zags uphill for a while. In 100m and in another 25m you walk through the first ditch and bank ramparts of this large Iron Age hillfort site: **British Camp or Herefordshire Beacon**. In 150m you cross **Millenium Hill**, at 327m above sea a subsidiary top of the Herefordshire Beacon. From it you can see **Little Malvern Priory Church** (Grade I listed) and Court on the right below. Descend to a saddle 180m away, where a path crosses from the left below to go down to the reservoir on the right. Re-ascend on the other side **to the summit plateau of British Camp**, reached in 200m, with the grassy summit at 338m above sea off to the right.

As the **Herefordshire Beacon** is slightly pushed out to the West from the otherwise straight North-South axis of **The Malvern Hills** ridge, you get the most complete view of the ridge from here to the North and South. The views into Herefordshire to the left are stupendous and include **Colwall** – the alternative start – to the left of the ridge ahead. You can also clearly see the five ramparts around this former camp. Continue in the same direction along the clear path to descend from the top **to the A 449**: In 300m ignore a right turning concrete stepped path and in 50m just before another rampart, *turn down to the right* along a gravel path. In 10m *turn left* along a tarmac path at a T-junction (this is grassy to the right). In 140m the path turns sharply to the right and in 10m you *turn left* at a T-junction with a tarmac path. This runs to the left of a large car park, passes a plaque giving a rough history of camp and hill and goes through a wooden gate to meet the **A 449, by the Worcestershire/Herefordshire border**, opposite **Sally's Place** and **The Malvern Hills Hotel and Restaurants** to the right.

Cross the road carefully by a traffic island and continue in the same direction along **Jubilee Drive** (the B 4232) to the left of the hotel and restaurant; in 30m ignore a left forking footpath by a toilet block, and in another 20m pass a **disused bus stop** and in 50m where the pavement finishes, cross the road to the right and take **[!]** the middle of three gravel paths to the right of the road, gently ascending the hillside (45°). In 100m ignore a grass path turning steeply up to the right and descend through a grassy slope. In 50m you *turn right* through a line of trees and walk through a grassy area to a tarmac drive 50m away. You go through a car park by the Elizabethan house on the right, seen earlier (on the circular walk) on the outbound route, and pass an info panel on the Blackhill and leave the car park along either of two paths (they join shortly after). Gently ascend the hillside on a bearing of 20° and in 100m pass a one-seat memorial bench. In another 35m a break in the trees offers views of the Herefordshire plain and some rolling hills.

In 75m *fork right* fork to the multi-path junction where the circular walk ascended to the ridge much earlier out of the trees. *Turn left* to continue along the ridge, following the course of the **Shire Ditch** again, in 140m either on a rough gravel path over the tops, or along the left-hand gravel path which avoids the tops (**all the tops** on this stretch to the Wyche Cutting **can be skirted**). In 90m the two paths join and in 350m you reach the top of **Black Hill (North)** at a fence corner on the right (with **Berington's Quarry** behind the fence) at 308m above sea. You descend steeply and in 80m are on the level again. In 100m ignore a right fork by a marker stone and soon start the ascent to **Pinnacle Hill**. In 300m the gradient eases by an area of gorse bushes on the left and in 100m you go over its subsidiary top at 345m above sea. With views ahead of the **Worcestershire Beacon**, and Malvern Wells and Great Malvern to the right below, you go through a slight dip and in 270m reach the top of **Pinnacle Hill** at 358m above sea (the noticeable round earth works are two possible Bronze age round barrows). The next two tops, **Jubilee Hill** (327m above sea) and **Perseverance Hill** (325m above sea) are now visible, before the dip down to the Wyche Cutting.

In 260m you join up with the skirting path and in 40m ignore a right forking grassy track. In another 10m you *fork right* off the broad gravel track to ascend **Jubilee Hill** along a narrow gravel path. In 110m go over its top at 327m above sea and in 170m re-join with the skirting path. In 150m you *fork right* away from the skirting path to go up **Perseverance Hill**, reached in 240m. From here you can see some houses on the other side of the Wyche Cutting, and the **Worcestershire Golf Club** down on the right below, with the **New Pool** identifiable beyond it on 45° (both on the OS map). In 70m there are gravel paths either side of the narrow ridge. In 125m you can see the railway line down below on the right. In 90m you re-join the skirting path and in 350m you walk down a stepped section and *turn left with the path and then right* to a B road-junction by a bus shelter and toilet block on the left.

The Wyche Inn is 150m away to the right. The **Café H2O at the Malvern Hills GeoCentre** is 120m away to the left, a **bus stop for services to Malvern or Ledbury** a little to the left. Cross the road carefully and *bear up right* along **Beacon Road**, ignoring the level continuation of the B 4232. In 90m you pass a car park on the left (the outbound route on the circular walk from Malvern runs 20m away to the right) and in 20m you pass a 'The Beacon'-sign. In 200m you leave the **Upper Beacon Car Park** behind and pass 'No Cars' and 'No Motorbikes'-signs. In 65m ignore a left forking gravel drive and in 70m you reach a multi-path junction by the large '**Gold Mine**' stone dial, passed much, much earlier on the outbound route from Malvern up from the right. Continue in the same direction, still on tarmac, in 15m passing a bollard.

In 20m *fork right* along a gravel path (unless you want to skirt the tops, in which case stay on the tarmac). In 250m by a bench on the left, (on a good day) you get good views due W of a far-away table top mountain range with a sharply dropping nose on the right-hand side, this is **Hay Bluff**, the northerly end of **The Black Mountains** in the Brecon Beacons National Park, 53 km away, and also have grand views back to the Herefordshire Beacon. In 100m by another wooden bench where the tarmac path forks left, you continue in the same direction along gravel to the top of **Summer Hill**, reached in 200m at 382m above sea. In 50m the paths run parallel again and in another 60m you continue uphill where the skirting path forks right. In 60m ignore a left fork and commence to the top of the **Worcestershire Beacon**, reached in 350m.

At 425m above sea, there is a **trig point**, a **memorial to Queen Victoria** (for whose visit the precursor of the tarmac/gravel path was built) and a **toposcope** on top of the memorial. On a clear day parts of as many as 13 counties (some sources say 14) can be identified, as can be **three of the four most northerly tops** of the Malvern Hills (left-to-right): **Sugarloaf Hill**, **Table Hill**, **North Hill** (the fourth – **End Hill** – is hidden behind Table Hill). A café that had existed on the summit for many decades was destroyed by fire in 1989. Descend on the northerly side (still on the line of the Shire Ditch) on any of several paths to the obvious saddle 450m away, where there is a clear multi-path junction.

At this nine-way junction (!) by a large stone dial you have a choice:

For an extension over the tops of the northerly hills, continue half left on 310° gently ascending the nearby Sugarloaf Hill, ignoring the two gravel paths skirting it to either side, and pick up the directions below under **Northerly Hills Extension**.

For the Main Walk back to Great Malvern, you pass the dial and immediately *bear right* along a grassy path, your signed direction: '**Great Malvern**', and in 10m *turn left* along a narrow grassy path down a green valley (20°), ignoring the continuation of the level grassy path on 70°. In 170m you *turn down to the right* at a T-junction with a wide gravel path. In 300m a path joins from the right out of the trees and in another 30m you reach a clearing at a path T-junction with a large grassy picnic area ahead. The path down to the right leads to the **St. Ann's Well Café** in 90m (which usually closes at 16.00). **[!]** *Turn left* on a bearing of 285°. In 125m at a T-junction the **Extension to the Northerly Hills** joins down from the left and you *turn hard right* down the **Happy Valley** (on the OS map as 'Green Valley'), on tarmac and with a stream on the right.

****)** Ignore all ways off and in 300m you pass a low wooden shed on the left: this housed the donkeys used by early tourists for the hill ascent. In 60m at a bend of **St. Ann's Road** by **Happy Valley Cottage**, you *veer left* down **into Great Malvern**. In 90m you pass **The Red Lion** pub and Thai Restaurant and in 20m the **Malvern Cellar** on the left, then in 20m **The Unicorn** on the right, by a T-junction with the **A 449 Worcester Road**. **The Foley Arms** is 40m away to the left. *Turn right* along the road.

In 40m a left turn 120m down **Edith Lane** would get you to a large **Waitrose** (open to 21.00 Mon-Fri, 20.00 Sat). Italian chain restaurants and **The Mount Pleasant Hotel and Restaurant** are further ahead along the road.

[!] For the station, *fork down* to the left of Belle Vue Island along **Church Street**. Continue downhill – en route passing in the lanes on the left the recommended restaurants **Pepper's**, **Anupam** and **The Fig** – and in 330m *turn right* along **Avenue Road**, signed for the railway station and ignore all ways off for 500m back to the **Station Gardens**.

- **For London bound trains**, *bear right* to the near platform.
- **For another supermarket** (open to 23.00 daily), follow Avenue Road 500m further down and then *bear right*.
- **For the recommended pub**, the Wye Valley Brewery-run **The Morgan**, follow Imperial Road to the right of the gardens and in another 80m *turn left* along Clarence Road for 200m.

Northerly Hills Extension (add 2.0 km/1.2 mi and 111m ascent)

You reach the top of **Sugarloaf Hill** in 170m at 368m above sea and continue in the same direction. The buildings you see down on the left are in **West Malvern**. In 150m by a bench on the right, the path skirting around the left-hand hillside joins and you go over a minor top in 75m. You now head for the obvious path junction a little to the right and in 170m pass a bench by the crosspaths in the saddle and in 30m at a three-way fork, you take *the left path* on 345°. The path ascends the flank of **Table Hill** and reaches the (not very exciting) top of it in 250m at 373m above sea. Descend in the same direction towards a gravel path at a T-junction 10m by a wooden bench in 160m and continue down a clear grassy path to the saddle between Table and End hills, with a pretty valley on your right and **North Malvern** below.

In 130m reach the saddle and in another 110m the top of **End Hill** at 329m above sea. You can see **Worcester** and its cathedral on 45° and **Malvern Link** to the east. Return to the gravel path 240m away and cross the path to *fork left* up along a clear grassy path (155°) and in 160m *bear right* with another grassy path, still uphill. In another 40m you *turn up left* at a four-way junction right in the saddle between Table Hill on the right and North Hill on the left. It is 160m to the top of **North Hill** at 397m above sea. From the top *turn right* from the ascent route and in 30m *bear to the right* (215°) aiming to the right of Sugarloaf Hill. In 200m you continue through an area of bracken where another path joins from the left and then *bear right* with the path, nearly converging with a gravel path below (the **Lady Howard De Walden Drive**).

In 50m *turn left* to cross the gravel path and descend through a grassy valley along a clear path (160°). In 150m a gravel path joins from the right behind and you continue downhill between trees along an earthen path. In 200m you have the beginnings of a stream on the right and in 110m ignore a left fork. In 20m you reach a tarmac path at a bend. The Main Walk comes down it from the right.

Continue in the same direction and pick up the text above at the double asterisk **).

Colwall Start (cut 1.8 km/1.1 mi and 231m ascent)

Note: The only pub lunch option is [The Malvern Hills Hotel](#), either early on a map-led 500m diversion, reached after 2.7 km/1.7 mi, or after 10.9 km/6.8 mi (food all day).

After arriving on the single platform at **Colwall Station**, leave into the car park and **[!]** *turn left* immediately **[!]** to a footbridge over the railway line. Go up the footbridge with a footpath signpost ('To **Malvern Hills** 1 mile') and a **Geopark Way** marker, cross the line on the bridge (you get first views on the left of several of the tops walked along later) and on the other side follow a path to a bend in a car wide gravelly track and continue in the same direction to the left of the small fenced **Charlie Ballard Nature Reserve**. In 30m go through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate into a large pasture and *bear right* across it towards a metal kissing gate in the opposite boundary hedge 75m away (170°). Follow the right-hand boundary of the next field, with the tiered edge of **British Camp or Herefordshire Beacon** visible ahead.

In 180m leave the field through a hedge gap and continue in the same direction along the next field's right-hand boundary. In 210m in the far-right corner go through a hedge gap and *turn left* along a grassy field boundary (there is a footpath marker post half-hidden in the hedge on the left). In 80m go through a narrow hedge gap and *bear right* across a large arable field on a usually clear path (due S), aiming a little to the left of a solitary large oak tree. In 300m – 40m beyond the oak tree – *turn left* through a metal kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate and *turn right* along the right-hand side of a pasture. In 120m go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate and continue in the same direction along a gravel drive, by **The Old Meadow** (cottage) on the right.

In 110m you **[!]** *turn left* over a stile to the left of a metal field gate into a pasture with a yellow marker and *turn right* immediately over another stile, with a metal gate attached to it on the far side, into a belt of trees and then diagonally across a small field. In 70m go over a wobbly stile in a fence into some trees and in 20m over another stile to *turn left* along a path towards a road. Cross the road by a two-way footpath signpost and go over a stile to the left of a wooden gate ('**The Hartlands** – Private') and walk through a lightly wooded grassy area. In 35m ignore a plank bridge on the left across a stream and in 25m go over a two-railed wooden footbridge over the stream. In 10m go over another stile and then a raised boardwalk which crosses another stream and ends in a pasture. You *turn left* along the left-hand field boundary and stream.

In 100m by a pond on the left, *turn left* over a crumbling stile to the left of a tree to the left of a metal field gate. *Turn right* in this field, broadly along the stream now on your right but veering away from it on a bearing of 125°, aiming towards a gap between a field fence corner and a large oak tree. In 200m pass the oak tree to its left and in another 75m in the far-left field corner pass a signpost and walk along a boardwalk and go over a stile to cross a stream on the boardwalk. **[!]** **Do not** continue in the same direction towards a stile ahead but *bear right* in this field to its far-right corner (210°). In 140m leave the field over a stile to the right of a metal field gate and continue uphill along a car wide farm track, with a barbed wire fence on the left. In 70m continue in the same direction along the fence, ignoring the farm track turning right through some trees. From this path you have good views back to four different tops on the Malverns Ridge. In 140m go over a stile a little to the left of a metal field gate into a grassy slope.

In 25m you have a choice:

For a 500m each way out-and-back to [The Malvern Hills Hotel](#) for lunch, *bear left* to a signpost in 25m and follow the footpath signed 'British Camp Car Park**'.**

For the continuation of the walk, *veer right* with a car wide track towards a hanging wood (due S) and in 40m *fork right* (200°) with an earthen path uphill, away from the car wide track. In 100m enter the wood (**Headfield Coppice**) over a stile. Ignore a right turning footpath and head straight up through the wood. In 80m *turn right* further uphill along a gravel car wide drive at a T-junction and in 75m this turns to tarmac by a house on the left. In 50m cross the **A 449** opposite **Beacon Lodge** and *turn left* with a footpath marker post along the opposite narrow grassy verge. In 50m you *turn right* along a car wide gravel track, a signposted footpath. The track now skirts along **the base of the Herefordshire Beacon** for 1.3 km.

In more detail: you pass a few cottages and then walk through a hanging wood, steadily rising. In 130m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate and in 100m, where the track levels out, you have partial views on the right across the **Herefordshire plain**. In another 100m the track turns grassy by a last house on the right. In 270m ignore a wide path curving left up the steep slope and in 40m go over a stile and continue in the same direction along a car wide forest track (160°). In 100m cross a track steeply up from the right and continuing steeply up to the left and again in 160m. In another 150m you come to a **concrete reservoir** (on the right) by **Walm's Well** (on the left) and go over a stile to the right of a metal field gate. Continue in the same direction with the track and in 20m *turn right* uphill with it by a marker post, ignoring a hard-right turn. In 130m a narrow footpath turns up left with a marker on a fence post on the right. It leads in 130m to the **Silurian Pass**, a five-way path junction.

This is a shortcut to the ridge (cut 5.2 km/3.2 mi and 305m ascent): *turn hard left* (20°) at the junction and pick up the directions at the **double asterisk ****) below.

For the Main Walk, you continue in the same direction and soon the tree cover subsides on the left-hand side and the slope is filled with bracken. Ignore all ways off the car wide track for 700m and pass a marker post and cross a cattle grid to the right of a wooden field gate. In another 350m you pass a marker post with a **Three Choirs Way** marker while the track descends gently and you pass the large grounds of **Peacock Villa** (a holiday cottage) on your right. In 200m walk through a gap to the right of a metal gate within a metal field gate and reach a major track junction, an unmarked four-way footpath junction. Ignore the right turn over a cattle grid into **Eastnor Park** (and the Geopark Way with it) as well as a sharp left turn down into a wood, and *turn left* along a rising car wide track to the right of a wood.

In 230m walk through a gap to the left of a metal field gate, as you now get intermittent views on the left through the trees of the Worcestershire Plain/the Severn Valley, and on the right over the hedge of the ornamental **Obelisk** in **Eastnor Park** (on the OS map), a recurring feature of this walk for the next hour or so. In about 350m the track continues as a tarmac drive, 50m before a yellow painted cottage on the right (Castle Copse Cottage), as you have the grassy flanks of **Midsummer Hill** on your left. Eventually the drive turns further down to the left to descend to a major road, now with **Ragged Stone Hill** ahead. Go over a stile to the right of a wooden field gate to the right of a cattle grid just by the **A 438** with a car park to your left.

Here you have a choice:

For an extension over Ragged Stone Hill and Chase End Hill (adds 3.4 km/2.1 mi and 180m ascent), *turn right* along the **A 438** and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Southerly Hills Extension**.

For the Direct Route to Great Malvern, *turn left* into the car park and *left again* through a metal gate and up the grassy slope of **Midsummer Hill**.

***)** Take the left of two clear paths and soon enter a wood and steadily rise through it. You ignore a faint right turn and higher up *bear to the right* with the path, still under trees, and then emerge above the tree line and follow the straight path to the top of the hill. In 200m the gradient increases as you walk through the ramparts of this **former Iron Age Hillfort** and in 120m reach the top of **Midsummer Hill** at 284m above sea, by a large info panel on the roof of a sheltered memorial bench. This is an unusual and large hillfort site as it also encompasses the neighbouring **Hollybush Hill** away to the right and the intervening valley and its spring. The rampart and ditch were built around 390 BC and it is thought that the settlement was occupied by 1500 people until it was destroyed by fire in AD 48 (likely during the invasion by The Romans).

Continue in the same direction to descend from the hill, with splendid views ahead of some of the northerly tops of the ridge and in 180m, **[!]** **just before** walking through the northerly gate of the hillfort site (after which a wide gravel track curves downhill to the left), you *turn hard* right along a grassy path (160°). In 130m, just before an info panel mounted on a tree stump, *turn left* down a narrow path (30°) into the trees. In 70m you cross a wider grassy path (the remnants of the hillfort ramparts) and continue in the same direction through trees. In 100m **[!]** *fork left* along the minor of two narrow paths (340°; in high summer this can look overgrown at this end), steeply down through the wood. In about 300m at a T-junction with a forest path *turn right* and in 20m a path turns left to a stone wall around a spring-fed lake in the **Gullet Quarry**.

Here you have a choice:

To avoid the route up and over Swinyard Hill, continue in the same direction along the path and in 20m *fork left* (65°) along a gravel path towards a wooden fence. In 25m walk through large round stone barriers and in 120m pass an info panel on the quarry and the geology of the area. *Bear right* with the gravel path and continue along a tarmac lane past **Ruffz Refreshment Kiosk** (open 11.30-16.30 weekends and holidays) by a cottage on the right. In 280m, just before a road, *turn hard left* along a car wide gravel track (285°). In 80m the track curves to the right and you avoid all routes off, walking along the bottom of the flank of **Swinyard Hill**. In 900m you reach the '**Silurian Pass**' at a five-way path junction. The route over Swinyard Hill joins from the left. *Turn right* (20°) and pick up the directions below at the double asterisk ******).

For the route up and over Swinyard Hill, *turn left* towards the quarry and in 20m *turn left* along a narrow path soon rising into the wooded slope (take either fork, they unite in 40m). In 40m you emerge from the trees with a fence around the quarry site 10m away on your right. In 50m *fork left* up the middle of three paths and in 40m enter the wood again by bearing a little to the right. Ignore a couple of minor right turns and in 80m the path briefly levels out. In 110m **[!]** you *turn right* over a stile, still through the wood. In 130m leave the wood and *turn up left* at a T-junction with a sandy track up **Swinyard Hill**, with the Severn Plain on the right below. Following the course of the **Shire Ditch**, in 190m you pass a stone dial on your left (the **Three Choirs Way** joins from the left) and in 150m reach the top of this hill at 271m above sea. Descend in the same direction and in 450m reach the '**Silurian Pass**' at a five-way path junction. The Shortcut joins up from the left. The alternative route joins from the right.

****)** Continue (20°) along a gravel path uphill through trees past a sign for '**Giant's Cave/British Camp**' and in 60m ignore a right turn ('**Hangman's Hill/Broad Down**') and in 230m ignore a right fork. You continue towards '**Clutter's or Giant's Cave**', 90m ahead (man-made from pillow lava). In 120m reach a large stone dial at a six-way junction, with **British Camp Reservoir** to the right below and **British Camp** up ahead.

Pick up the directions above **in the Main Walk text** at the single asterisk ***)**.

Southerly Hills Extension (add 3.4 km/2.1 mi and 180m ascent)

In 75m you pass a disused bus stop on the left and in another 60m *turn left* across the road and walk through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a wooden field gate with a **Geopark Way** marker into a rising wood (**Ragged Stone Common**). *Fork right* immediately (210°) along a narrow path and in 75m *bear right* at a T-junction (260°), along an initially rising then contouring path. You can see and hear the A road to the right below until the path curves to the left in 50m, now running due S. In 340m pass a cattle trough (inside the wood) and in 125m take either fork. **At a second fork**, 240m further along, **[!]** *fork right* downhill (150°) to the right of two trees standing close together and in 120m leave Ragged Stone Common through a metal gate to the left of a metal field gate and in 30m *turn left* along a car wide gravel track by a metal field gate 15m away to the right. In 70m reach a tarmac lane in **Whiteleaved Oak** hamlet by the (modern replacement) stocks (see the 'List of Misdemeanors' in the parish display box on the right) and *turn right*. In 40m *turn left* along a signposted footpath with a Geopark Way marker, a car wide gravel drive to a cottage.

In 30m pass **Cider Mill Cottage** and continue in the same direction along a narrow earthen path between trees and in 170m go through a wooden gate and *veer left* with the markers, ignoring a right turn. In 100m you get far views on the right and in another 160m emerge by the trigpoint on the top of **Chase End Hill**, the most southerly top of the Malverns Ridge, with a height of 191m above sea. On a good day, the views from here encompass: **Cheltenham and Gloucester** in the southeast, about 20 km away; the **Severn Estuary and Bridge** in the south west; the pointy **Sugarloaf** by Abergavenny, the southerly end of **The Black Mountains** in the Brecon Beacons on 250°, about 50 km away; **Eastnor Castle** (300°) and the **Obelisk** (340°) in the grounds of **Eastnor Park**; **Ragged Stone Hill** (just skirted) to the North; **The Severn Valley** to the East; **Bredon Hill** 20m km away on 75°, the **Cotswolds** to the right of it.

From the trigpoint re-trace your steps to the tarmac lane in **Whiteleaved Oak** hamlet, down the steep left fork of the two descent routes in a broadly northerly direction. *Turn right* along the lane and in 40m ignore the car wide track you arrived down from. In 50m *bear left* along a car wide gravel drive (80°) and in 50m walk through a wooden field gate with 'MHC' (Malvern Hills Conservators), 'No Cars' and 'No Motorbikes' signs. In 40m pass **Elsie's Cottage** on the right and in 10m *turn left* with the car wide track. **[!]** Immediately *turn up to the left* (320°) along a steep narrow path signed 'Ragged Stone' into **Ragged Stone Common** and follow the path uphill through the wood, ignoring the continuation of the track on the level and due North. In 180m the path levels out for a while and in 40m you *fork right* to pass a footpath marker post in 10m. The path now rises through the wood in a straight line (335°), soon as a wide sunken track, emerging from the trees into the open by a 'Whiteleaved Oak'-sign.

Just after this the track (part of the **Shire Ditch** earthworks) cuts through a rock and then you *fork left* off the track up to the grassy top of **Ragged Stone Hill**. There are two tops to this hill, and the left-hand one is higher by 4m, at 254m above sea. **Hay Bluff**, the northerly end of **The Black Mountains**, is visible on a clear day about 50 km to the west. In 50m you can clearly see the next hill in the chain (Midsummer Hill) ahead, with **two large disused quarries** at the bottom of it. Continue in the same direction, broadly northerly, aiming to the right of the **Obelisk**. In 100m the path bears left along an area of bracken on the right and in 290m enters trees and veers left towards the **A 438**. Ignore a left turn in 10m and in 50m leave the wood through a wooden kissing gate to the right of a wooden field gate and *turn right* along the road. In 140m at the top of the rise *turn left* into a car park to the right of a tarmac lane (your outward route). You walk through a metal gate and up the slope of Midsummer Hill.

Pick up the directions above **in the Colwall Start text** at the single asterisk *).