



Ross on Wye Walkers are Welcome

Beside the Wye

A mostly flat walk, with a gentle and a short sharp climb following the river Wye through riverside meadows with fine views over Ross and towards May Hill and returning via Brampton Abbots.

Start: The Bandstand, Wye Street, Ross on Wye.

Parking: Park in the road at start or in the Wilton Road Car Park, Post Code HR9 5JA, **Grid Ref:** SO593240.

Maps: OS map; Explorer 189

Distance: 5.6 miles.

Grade: Leisurely, 1 stile, dog friendly



Public Toilets: In Wye Street near the start.

1. The walk starts from the riverside bandstand, in Wye Street.

Wye Street was the main route into Ross from Hereford before the current road that passes below the Gazebo Tower Built in the 1820s.



2. On reaching a large grassy area known as The Ropewalk you will see a superb metal sculpture.

This was made by the internationally renowned local sculptor, Walenty Pytel, and is entitled "Swans in Flight".

The path eventually bears right and meets the road leading into the grounds of Ross-on-Wye Rowing Club.

3. Cross the road and continue over the bridge that crosses the Rudhall Brook. Bear left, round the perimeter of the rowing club, following the direction markers for the Wye Valley Walk. Shortly after re-crossing the Rudhall Brook, the path bears half-right and rejoins the river bank.

As you head towards the bridge that takes the main A40 dual carriageway across the Wye, don't forget to look back to see the world famous view of Ross. Across the river, to the left the restored ruins of Wilton Castle can be seen.



4. Pass beneath the bridge and continue alongside the river, enjoying the views to the left towards Wyelea and Ashe Ingen Court. About half a mile beyond the bridge follow the Wye Valley Walk markers as the path bears right, away from the river, and then left onto the path of the dismantled Hereford to Ross railway line. Continue along the old railway line for about half a mile, then look for a gate down a short flight of steps on your right. Go down the steps, through the gate and walk along the edge of a field until you reach the river bank once again at a point with a wooden bench where the path meets a farm track.

5. The route of the walk follows this track to the right but it is worthwhile walking a 0.4 mile deviation to the left and back.

If you do so you will see a memorial on the right, made of cast iron, which commemorates the Reverend Helier Evans, vicar of nearby Brampton Abbots, who died tragically in 1904 having just saved the life of his son who got into difficulties while swimming.



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6. A little further are the splendid pillars of Backney Railway bridge which originally supported six spans of timber, that were removed when Beeching closed the line in 1965.



The Ross and Gloucester Railway opened on June 1, 1855 to a fanfare of trumpeting and cannon fire. A special train ran from Gloucester to Hereford carrying representatives of the Great Western Railway watched by 5000 spectators in Ross on Wye.

Return to the junction of the path and continue along the track for 150 yards. The Wye Valley Walk goes off to the left but we go straight on along the track towards a small group of farm buildings known as "The Cott". The track rises gently until it reaches Townsend Farm. Turn left and walk between the farm buildings until you reach a lane. Turn right and follow the lane past several cottages and a very old orchard. After passing the orchard, the lane turns sharply to the left, but continue straight on to a gravelled drive and alongside a high brick wall.

7. Go through a wooden five bar gate and continue towards St Michael's Church.



St Michael's was closed in September 2008 ending 800 years of worship on the site as the roof was unsafe.

Walk down the path from the porch and go through a gate into a field.

There are lovely views across to May Hill in the east, Ross to the south and down the Wye Valley to the south west.

Follow the path straight down across the next two fields towards Netherton. At the end of the field go through a gate down onto a narrow lane and continue straight on.

The lane drops down into a small valley, known locally as "The Dingle".

In the bottom of the valley a small lake on the right is a haven for wildlife and swans can be seen.

Continue along the lane and up the short, steep climb to reach a slightly wider lane, Brampton Road. Take the high level pavement on the right and walk in front of the houses to reach the bridge over the main A40 dual carriageway. Do not cross the bridge but turn right to walk downhill, parallel to the dual carriageway.

This area of the town is known as Greytree.

Pass a succession of roads to your right, named First Avenue to Sixth Avenue and bear left to pass beneath the dual carriageway. Carry on until you reach the entrance to a car park, on your right. Go into the car park and cross slightly towards the left to a bridge over the brook.

As you cross the bridge on your right you will see a large grating that is part of the Ross flood alleviation scheme.

You have now arrived back on the Ropewalk on the opposite side to the swans sculpture.

This is where ropes used to be made alongside the river bank, and where wicker baskets were woven using willows from the withy beds that could once be found in this area.

8. Keep to the left hand tarmac path and you will pass a house perched high on the bank to your left, marked with a circular blue plaque.

This is Thrushes Nest, the home of Sir Frederick Burroughs, a native of Ross who started work as a porter at Ross railway station and rose to become the last British Governor of Bengal. He was reported as saying at the time of his investiture: "I know more about shunting and tooting than hunting and shooting". As you continue along the path, remains of the old town wall can be seen on your left.

At the end of The Ropewalk swing right back towards the river to join the tarmac path; turn left and walk downstream to your start point at the Bandstand.

