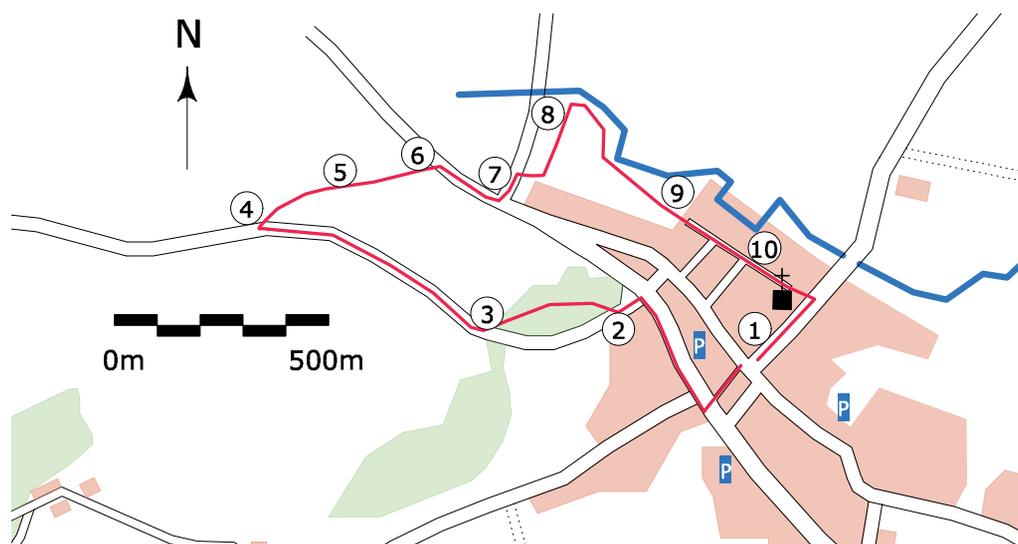


The Warden (site of Presteigne Castle), Went's Meadow and the Withy Beds



Distance: 2 miles / 3.2km

Time: 45 minutes

Points of note: A moderate walk, with some uneven ground. Reasonably dog friendly, but a number of stiles to cross and need to have dog on lead for some sections. Public car park short distance from start. Use in conjunction with OS Explorer Map 210, *Knighton & Presteigne*.

The walk begins in Presteigne at the corner of Broad Street and High Street and follows Green End (1) up to the underpass which leads to Slough Road. Turn right, and back on yourself to join the bypass. Follow the bypass westwards for 300m to a footpath on the left that leads to Warden Road. Cross the road and walk a short distance to a gate (2) on the right that leads into the Warden. This is the remains of a motte and bailey castle, reputedly levelled by Llywelyn in 1262, but was again mentioned as 'castle ditch' in 1337; the whole area was landscaped in the 19th century, and is maintained by volunteers.

You can either follow paths around the Warden to complete a full circuit of the monument or follow the path either straight ahead or to the left, up some steps to cross through the castle remains. The trees include beech, sweet chestnut, oak, larch and birch. There are seats and picnic tables here where you can enjoy a rest and admire extensive views to the north and east, taking in Norton village, Stonewall Hill, Hell Peak, and Stapleton and Coles hills.

The paths will lead to the western side of the Warden where there is a gate (3) that takes you back onto Warden Road. Go through the gate and turn right along Warden Road for 400m. As the road starts to descend there is a stile and footpath on the right (4) (if you are on the road and have crossed a stream, you have gone too far). Cross the stile and head north-east across a field to a stile in the northerly field boundary, immediately followed by another stile (5). The stream is on the left, follow it for 20m, then drop down a steep bank to the stream and follow it to a small wooden footbridge, cross the stream and immediately turn right, crossing a stile then follow the stream down on its left-hand side. Emerge on to a road and turn right (6), at this point there is no footpath and no flat verge, so be mindful at this point that there is room only for one line of traffic to pass walkers.

In 100m there is the junction with the B4356 to Norton and Knighton on the left (7). Rather than turn into this road immediately remain on your side of the road, cross Warden Close, then cross the main road at the refuge. Turn back on yourself and right onto the Norton road. In 10m turn right into a small car park, with outside exercise equipment in front of you. Turn diagonally left to pass the Scout Hut on your left. Head downhill with a skateboard park on your left into Went's Meadow and the Community Orchard. At the bottom you cross a small stream (8) (a leat for the watermill) with the River Lugg in front of you. Turn right and follow the footpath and after a short distance you can either turn left and follow the trackways through the Withy Beds, maintained by the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, or keep straight on the path. At the top of some steep steps the path emerges on to a small road (Mill Lane) with a privately owned watermill on your left (9). Follow Mill Lane, passing the junctions with Pound Lane and St David's Street on the right and veer left on to Church Street. Enter the graveyard around the parish church (10) and follow the footpaths through the graveyard, either carry straight on or veer right to visit the church. St Andrew's is a fine medieval church with elements of Saxon and Norman architecture, and a wonderful Flemish tapestry. Both exits emerge on to Broad Street, turn right and follow the street slightly uphill to return to the start (1), passing the Judge's Lodging on the left.

NOTE – Please follow the countryside code: especially being careful around animals, leaving all gates as you find them, and putting your litter and dog poo in appropriate bins or taking it home with you. All times and distances are approximate.