



Walking with Offa 2

Food, drink and accommodation

Imagine patrolling the border without a decent pub. How would Offa's Dyke have been built without them? Over a thousand years later, keep up the tradition and stop for a drink and a bite to eat at **The Stables Inn, Hopesgate**. You will be

welcomed by Chris who serves excellent local beers as well as a range of wines, soft drinks and meals. Earlier opening in the week can be arranged for groups by prior arrangement.

Opening times are:
Monday-Friday 7-11pm,
Saturday & Sunday
12 noon until 11pm.
Contact Chris on
01743 891344.



Find accommodation listings on
www.ludlowandtheshropshirehills.co.uk

Bentlont Post Office Stores at Bentlawnt is an excellent village shop where you can buy a range of snacks and drinks to help you on your way! They are open 9am to 5.30pm Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri (lunch between 1 and 2pm), 9am to 1pm Weds and Sat. Contact them on 01743 891301.

Getting there:

You can find public transport options throughout Shropshire through the Travel Shropshire website - www.travelshropshire.co.uk.

Or contact Traveline on 08712 002233.

By bus: There are regular buses (numbers 552 and 553) along the A488 between Shrewsbury and Bishop's Castle, alight at Hope Church and start the walk at point 10. It is possible to reach The Stables from surrounding areas by Shropshire Link. Journeys can be booked up to seven days in advance or with as little as 24 hours notice. Bookings are handled on a first served basis so where possible, book early. Call 0345 678 9068.

By car: Car parking is available at The Stables Inn, SY5 0EP.

To get the best from your walk we recommend comfortable walking boots, waterproof jacket and overtrousers, warm clothing, gloves and warm hat or sun cream and sun hat (depending on the season!), a mobile phone and something to eat and drink. Sheep and cattle are often in the fields on these routes – dogs must be kept under close control or on leads at all times.

Walking with Offa *Promoting the Welsh English border as a great place to get your boots on, enjoy the beautiful countryside and indulge in some fabulous food and drink.*

For more details contact the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership on **01588 674080** or see www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk



Many thanks to Dave Croker from the Hope Valley for developing this walk.



There are twelve pub walks in this series and four 'Days Out'. Download, including podcasts, from www.shropshirewalking.co.uk/walking-with-offa. Turn your Smartphone into a complete outdoors GPS. Download an app: www.viewranger.com and search for 'Walking with Offa'. A guide featuring all twelve walks is available.

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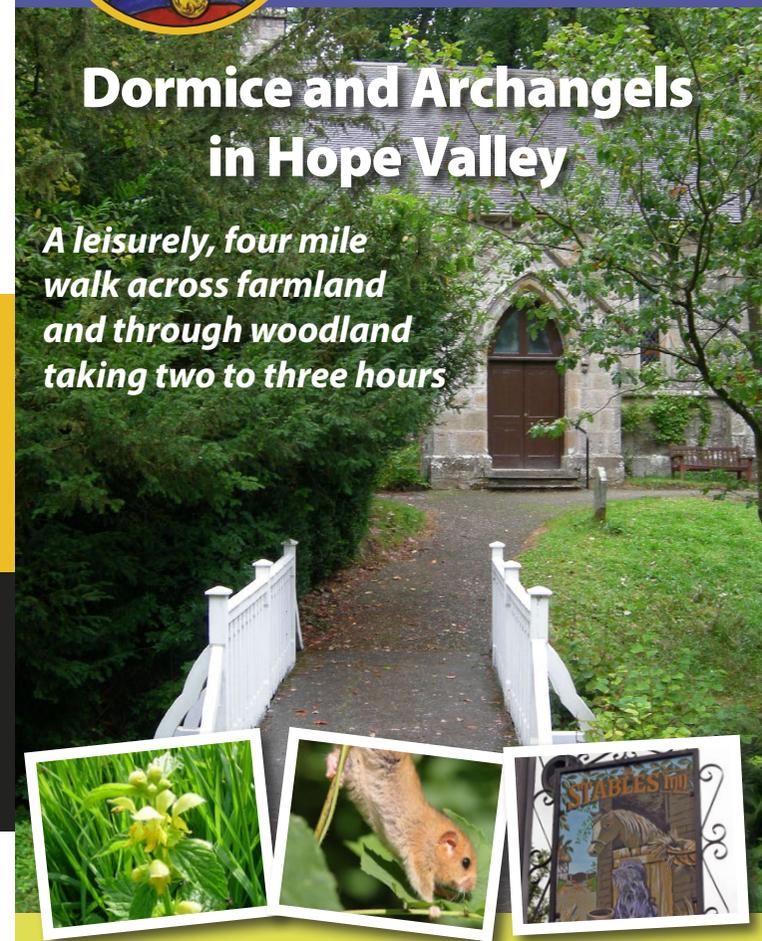
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Walking with Offa 2

Dormice and Archangels in Hope Valley

A leisurely, four mile walk across farmland and through woodland taking two to three hours



The Welsh English Border - where King Offa met his match!

One of a series of walks with spectacular views and glimpses of history, wildlife and archaeology.

in the Shropshire Hills



Start at The Stables Inn, Hopesgate, SY5 0EP

- ① From car park opposite the pub, turn right along lane and cross stile next to the gate on the right. Take the right path aiming towards the right of the large red brick house in the woods and as you cross the field bear right to cross the now visible stile/gate. Go straight on downhill to cross another stile/gate. Bear left and down towards woodland to reach a waymarked stile (ignore unmarked stile up to left).
- ② Walk through a short section of woodland and head over the field in the direction of the farm. After the stile, do not enter the farm but turn sharp left on track. Soon this emerges at a field edge. Continue straight bearing slightly right to cross the field (may have crops growing) and soon you reach a gate and exit onto a tarmac lane.
- ③ Turn left and up the lane to take the track on the right immediately after 'Lordstone' Cottage (plaque on frontage). Shortly along the track enter the field via the stile on the left and continue in the same direction along field and slightly uphill to a stile visible in far hedge.
- ④ Cross lane/stiles and straight on over to cross the footbridge & stile, then on to enter the woods at next stile. Walk through woods to emerge via stile onto a driveway, turn left and follow this concrete track up to a T-junction.
- ⑤ Turn left steeply up lane to take the concealed stile in hedge on right shortly after gate. Continue with hedge on left to the top left corner of field. *Bromlow Callow* is clearly visible to the right, featured in 'Walking with Offa' leaflet No.3. Pass through two gates that take you into the farmyard. Turn left to go up through yard and double gates onto the concrete access drive. Continue uphill to exit the drive out to a junction of roads.
- ⑥ Go down the second road on left past 'Bentlawnt' village sign. Take the first wide track on the right, before the village (fingerpost in hedge) turning slightly back at the start. Continue on this track for ½ mile, ignoring all turnings off, and eventually turn left at the T-junction.

- ⑦ Pass houses on your right and continue straight on through gate to field. Ignore bridleway on left and enter the woods via a stile, left of the metal pedestrian gate. This path gently climbs to follow the crest of Oakedge for just under ½ mile.
- ⑧ When path descends, look for steep path down and left to wider track with open field beyond. Turn right along track to right hand bend, and turn left into field at waymark, with partial hedge line on right. Cross the field aiming to the right of the lower right telegraph pole and go into a cluster of Oak Trees. *These woods include The Hope Valley Nature Reserve, owned by Shropshire Wildlife Trust. They are home to a colony of dormice, first discovered here nesting in a bird box. Sleepy the dormouse certainly is, but when awake, it climbs to the tops of trees, travelling from one to the next where the outmost twigs of one overlap with its neighbour. This aerial route makes it possible for the dormouse to forage on both sides of the road in Hope Valley. Curiously, they have been found in the remaining areas of conifers too. Blocks of these will be retained, though with glades cut in for light. Conifers have their uses: goldcrests live among them, tree-creepers scuttle up their trunks finding food and they can also make good nesting sites. Yellow archangels and purple orchids can also be seen in these woods.*
- ⑨ Before the woods is a small stream; find the lower steep path that descends to cross this. Once carefully over the stream, bear right and cross stile, and then bear right again to take the path that runs above the stream (this section can be muddy). Follow this to cross the stream at a small wooden bridge (can be slippery) and follow the track to join the A488, watch out for traffic on this very busy road! Turn left and walk single file keeping well into the verge/footpath and on to Hope Holy Trinity Church.
- ⑩ Enter church yard, cross the bridge and turn left at the church to leave via a gate, turn right uphill on a

sunken lane out to the road. Turn right down road for a short distance and then left over stile into field. Go uphill, keeping to right of large ash tree, ignoring gate to left follow the left boundary on to cross stile ahead, continue to keep left across next field to exit via a stile/gate. Turn right back to the starting point.

