

## About Yarpole & Bircher

St. Leonard's Church in Yarpole is one of six Herefordshire Churches having an unusual, but county-distinctive, detached bell tower dating back to the 1332 Century. These towers are often strongly built with thick stone walls and are thought by some historians to have doubled up as places of refuge or safety when the village was threatened.

On the southern side of Bircher Common there are three large enclosures, this route takes you to the east of these. They are thought to represent stock and farmstead enclosures dating from the Iron Age indicating that this area has been farmed for over 2500 years.

Within the wooded areas of Oaker and Bircher Coppices and Lyngham Vallet there are remains of circular, levelled platforms once used for charcoal burning. Charcoal making was a widespread local industry from the medieval period through to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Charcoal was made from carefully managed coppice woodlands and involves 'burning' wood under managed conditions and using a minimal amount of oxygen. Charcoal was used as a fuel in many other industries including iron making and firing pottery kilns.

Coppicing is a sustainable woodland management technique practised ever since our ancestors could first cut trees down. Most native broadleaf trees will regrow from the base or 'stool' when cut down. Coppicing utilises this and by rotational cutting on different length cycles the resulting material can be used for many different purposes. Coppicing also revitalises the flora and fauna that a woodland can support and is being used more and more as a method of helping conserve native wildlife such as dormice, butterflies and orchids.

## Parking

There is limited on street parking in Yarpole (however please ensure there is enough space for farm vehicles to pass through the village). There is also parking (charged) at Croft Castle when open.

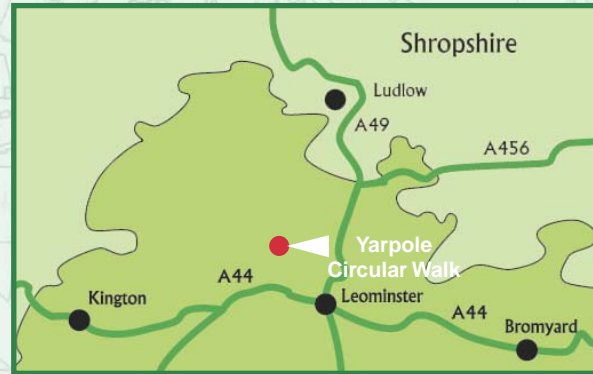
## Refreshments

Refreshments can be obtained from Yarpole village shop, situated at The Bell Inn, as well as Croft Castle tea room (seasonal opening times vary).

## Walk Information

This leaflet has been designed to tell you all you need to know about the route **before** you set out.

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Stiles         | 6  |
| Gates          | 3  |
| Steps          | 0  |
| Narrow Bridges | 0  |
| Slopes         | Many steep, undulating between 4 & 5 and 10 & 11 |



Always follow the Country Code. Enjoy your walk!

This leaflet is available in large print from Tourist Information Centres and libraries throughout the County. Also available at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/circularwalks](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/circularwalks)

This route is managed by Amey Herefordshire  
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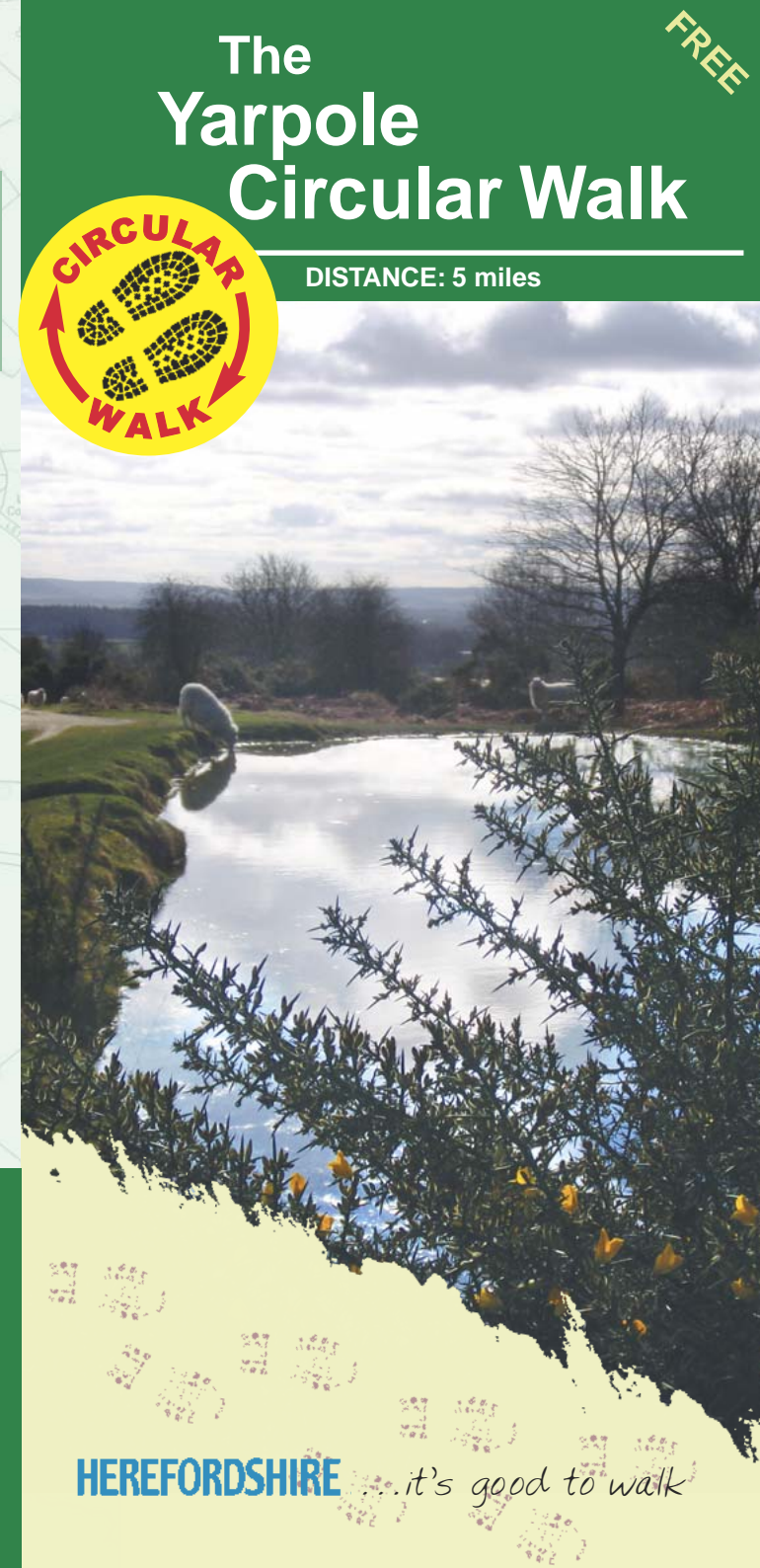


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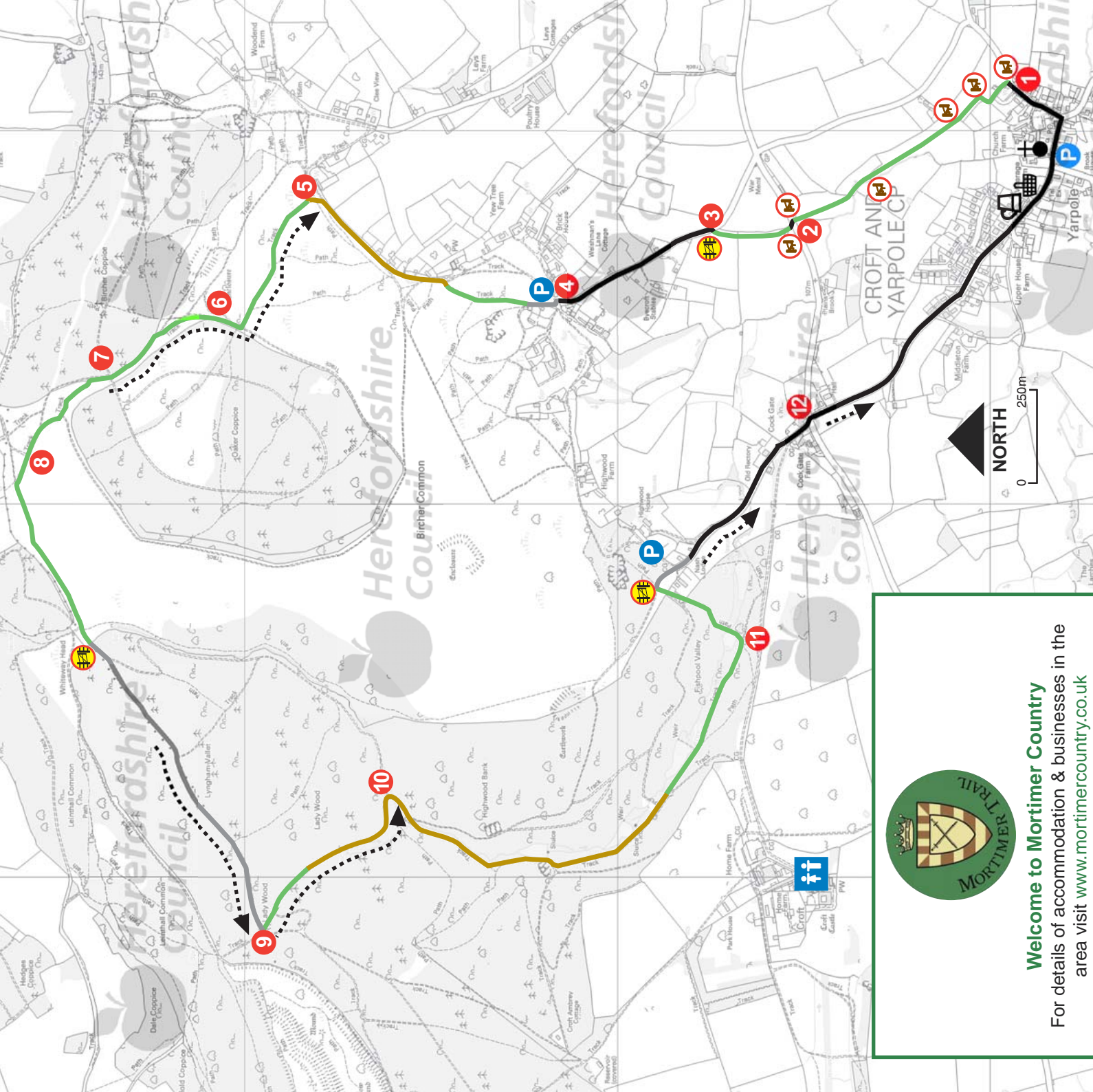
# The Yarpole Circular Walk

DISTANCE: 5 miles



HEREFORDSHIRE ...it's good to walk

FREE



Stile  
 Gate  
 Steps  
 Tarmac/road **⚠ please be aware of traffic**  
 Natural surfaced track  
 Smooth stone surfaced track  
 Uneven stone surfaced track  
 Parking  
 Location Point Number  
 These points are to help you identify where you are on the ground in relation to the map.  
 Steep Incline (arrow points down the slope)  
 Public Toilets

**Welcome to Mortimer Country**  
 For details of accommodation & businesses in the area visit [www.mortimercountry.co.uk](http://www.mortimercountry.co.uk)  
 For events & local churches links [www.kingslandgroup.org.uk](http://www.kingslandgroup.org.uk)

If you are planning a walk and intend to visit an inn/cafe – always ring ahead to check opening times

**The Bell, Yarpole 01568 780359**  
**Yarpole Community shop**

Refreshments also available at **Croft Castle**

For general information  
**Leominster Tourist Information centre**  
 01568 616480

**Other places to visit in the area**  
**Berrington Hall (NT)**  
**Mortimer Cross Mill (English Heritage)**