



Ross on Wye Walkers are Welcome Kilpeck and Coles Tump

A glorious circular walk beginning at one of Herefordshire's most famous churches and taking in one of the best viewpoints in the county.

Parking: Next to the Church. GR SO 445 305.

Map: OS Map 189

Distance: 6.8 miles

Grade: Moderate. Steady climbs but not too steep. 16 stiles.

Refreshments: Kilpeck Inn

1. Walk away from the church to the Kilpeck Inn, turn right and follow the fork around to the right. Take the first stile on the left (marked "Herefordshire Trail") and turn left to follow the edge of the field and then through a field gate on the right, just past a cottage. Go diagonally across the next field and through a steel kissing gate in the corner, next to two field gates. Walk along the right-hand edge of the next field and over a stile and small bridge. Head across the field towards the house in front and leave the field through a walker's gate onto a track just to the left of the house.



Turn left down the lane and over a stile (or through the gate) and across a little bridge over the stream into the wood. The path goes right to cross the stream again. Go left to a stile opening out into a field. Cross the field with the brick house to your right and down to a stile onto a tarmac track.

2. Turn left to take the track on the left and over a stream. Go past Two Brooks on your left and continue up the farm track for about 500 m. At Grafton Oak go left through the field gate. Keep left, through a field gate on the left and continue straight ahead with the fence on your right. There is a stile in the fence at a crossroad in footpaths but ignore the stile and continue diagonally down the field to a stile in the hedge. Go over the stile, or the nearby field gate if it is open (ignore the stile in the bottom right-hand corner of the field). Continue along the lower edge of three fields, passing through two field gates. About 100 m into the third field go over a footpath bridge across a stream on your left.

3. Go diagonally uphill to cross a stile in the hedgerow and then straight ahead with the fence on your right. On the left is a first view across to Coles Tump.

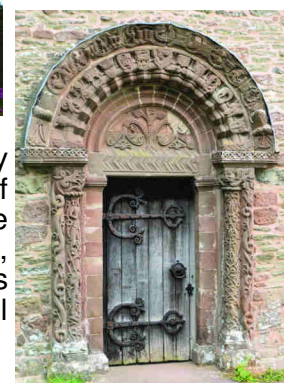
Kilpeck Origins

The origin of the name Kilpeck is unclear. It could be formed from 'Kil Peddeg' meaning the cell of the Christian hermit Pedic or it could be Welsh 'cil', corner or nook, retreat, of/for the sinner Welsh: 'pechadur'. However, what is now a mere village has been a busy area for centuries. A church has been on the site since at least the seventh century. The village was abandoned after the Black Death of 1349, as were many villages in England at that time.



Kilpeck Church

This church makes the village famous. It is a simple Norman two-cell construction with a rounded apse, renowned for the wealth of ebullient



carvings left by the 11th century masons; there are dozens of amusing, grotesque, and intricate carvings around the doors, windows, and roof line of the church. It is reputed to be one of the finest small Norman churches in Britain.



Near a corrugated steel barn go right through a walker's gate into a small field with a caravan at the top. The footpath has been diverted here and so head into the trees to the left of the caravan and follow the winding path through the trees to emerge through a second walker's gate into a field and back onto the correct route (note that it is easier to ignore this section and keep straight on at the first gate and follow the right-hand edge of the field back onto the correct route at the second gate). Go straight across to the far right hand corner of the field.

Huge views are now appearing, with Garway Hill to the south. Views of the Black Mountains 12 miles to the west, and many other hills including Titterstone Clew Hill 20 miles to the north.

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Go through the field gate and immediately left through the stile into another field (do not follow the farm track). Go diagonally across a first field and through a field gate and straight ahead through a second and third field with a superb view to the right to The Skirrid and Sugar Loaf. Leave the field through some makeshift gates onto the road.



4. Follow the road for about 1.4 km (0.9 ml) with views to the Malverns, passing a small bungalow Harleen on the left. Turn left at Butts Bungalow onto a bridle way and through two field gates close together.



5. Turn right up a steep track in the field with the beech trees of Coles Tump towering over you. Go through a gateway into a field and follow the contours to the far right hand corner and through a field gate onto a footpath. Follow the bridleway path to the left and turn left at the dilapidated finger post and over a stile into the field. Go straight ahead over the rise in the hill and then steep down. Take care to find a descending double stile system which can be well hidden in the trees on the edge of the wood.

6. Go immediately left on the woodland path until it joins a tractor track on a sharp bend where you should take the track gently downhill to the right. Join another forest track going left at the way marker. Continue on the track through a field gate, past a small stone cottage on your left and then through a second field gate, where you should stay on the track, ignoring the footpath forking right into the field. The track brings you back to the gate where you entered from the road (point 5).

7. Turn right the way you came for about 60m and then fork right down the road. After 450 m at Primrose cottage go straight ahead onto a smaller road with a no through road sign. Go through the gateway into Saddlebow Farm keeping to the right of the long barn.



8. After the barn take the grassy track into the trees in the centre. Emerge from the trees to pass through a steel field gate and continue along the right-hand side of the field. Go through the gate and turn right and then left, keeping the hedgerow on your right. Go through an old wooden field gate and straight ahead, with the hedgerow now on your left. At a point in the fields where four hedgerows meet, turn 90° left using the field gate, or stile. Keep to the fence on your left as you approach New House Farm.

9. Go over the stile and through the large farmyard and then admire the beautiful farmhouse with its well laid out gardens incorporating a wide variety of trees. Continue down the tarmac road for 500 m, pausing at the gateway on the left to enjoy the view again. Join another road at a bend and take the road straight until you reach a group of houses.

10. Opposite Sizecroft Cottage take the footpath to the left through a field gate and straight ahead down the field. At the bottom of the field find a gap leading into the trees with a marker post. Leave the trees over a stile into a field and go straight ahead and locate a stile through the hedgerow with a planked bridge over a ditch. Head to the trees in the far right corner, over a stile. Continue ahead with farm buildings on your left and then down a tree lined driveway to the road at Kilpeck. The road opposite takes you back to the car park at the church.

