

Ross on Wye Walkers are Welcome

Kings Cagle

A 5 mile circular walk through beautiful countryside on both sides of the winding River Wye, taking in a suspension bridge, 3 churches and other antiquities.

Parking: Park on the wide grass verges near Kings Cagle church. Grid Ref; OS 559288.

Maps: OS Explorer Map 189.

Distance: 5.1 miles. **Grade:** Leisurely. Stiles: 6

Note: After prolonged or heavy rain, the river Wye regularly floods over adjoining fields. In these circumstances part of this walk becomes impassable and extremely dangerous along the banks of the river from just beyond Sheildbrook to the Hoarwithy bridge.

1. Facing the church go right down the road, passing Kings Cagle Court and its dovecote on your left. At the crossroads go straight ahead past the quaint old "Sunday and Day School". Pass the village school on your left, turn right opposite the wooden finger post next to High House.



2. From the road keep ahead to enter a small orchard through a field gate or stile. Ignore the field gate in front of you and go just to the right to the far end of the orchard and leave through a kissing gate into a field. Go ahead down the field to join a road at a walker's gate. Turn right, past The Boat House and, where the road goes right, turn left at the finger post down the path into the trees and along the footpath to the footbridge over the Wye, which commands a fine view of the river.

After crossing the bridge, turn right underneath it and read the memorial commemorating its construction in 1895, which brought to an end the centuries-old ferry service between Kings Cagle and Sellack.

3. From the footbridge continue straight on, south towards the church of St Tysilio at Sellack, 350 m ahead and over a small wooden bridge, a stile, and another stile near the church. To visit the church, continue ahead to the gate in the churchyard.



Built in the 13th century, the church claims to be the only English church dedicated to a Celtic saint. Guidebooks are usually available inside.

4. Leaving the churchyard, turn right and, before reaching the stile you just climbed over, turn left and through a field gate. The path now follows the river for nearly one mile. Initially the footpath goes northwest towards the pond in the trees. The ground can be boggy, and it may be advisable to keep well to the left of the pond. Continue diagonally across the fields for 600 m to join the riverbank. Walk past the tree to your left and continue to pass to the left of a large tree on the riverbank. Continue along the riverbank towards the gates and stile. Climb over the stile and follow the track to the far end of the ridge, which rises steeply to the left. Turn left, walking away from the river and take the stile or gate onto the Ross/Hoarwithy road.

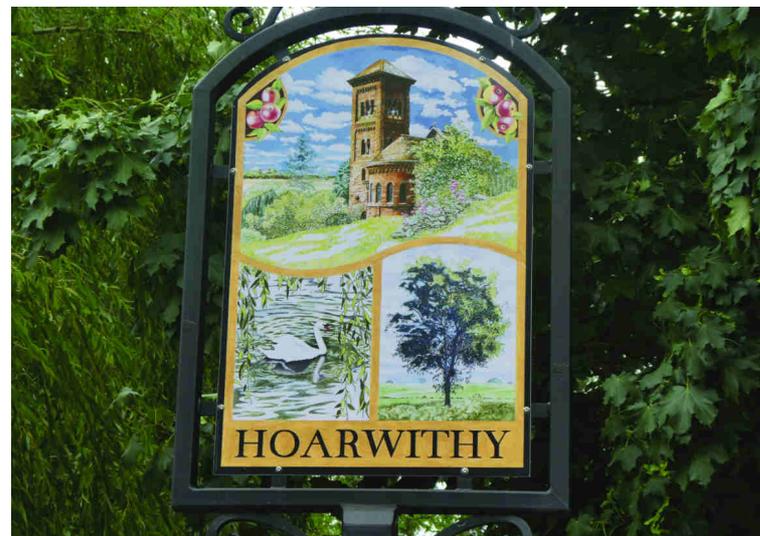
5. Cross the road and walk up the opposite road signposted to Kynaston and Hentland. Continue for 800 m until the road goes sharp left.

6. Take the track on the right signposted as a footpath and follow it for 220 m. Ignore the track to your left and walk straight on under the electricity wires, keeping the pylon on your left. The path bends slightly: ignore the field entrance on your right and follow the path for 150 m. Go through the kissing gate and follow the path with the hedge on your left. Continue along the hedge for 380 m, through a second kissing gate and then turn left through a third kissing gate to cross a track and through a large gap in the hedgerow opposite. Continue walking alongside the hedge on your left for 550 m, admiring the views across the River Wye to Capler Hill.

It is difficult to believe that in this tranquil area, northwest across the fields, a substantial college existed during the late 5th and 6th centuries. Known as the Hentland College, it was established by St Dyfrig at Llanfrother in the latter quarter of the fifth century. Remains of it have yet to be discovered.

The path and hedge curve to the left and descend, passing several electricity poles. Go through a kissing gate and straight ahead across a track and onto a path, with a fine stone-faced double garage for the house Quarry Bank on your right. Follow the curving wooded path down to the road.

7. Turn left and walk along the road into Hoarwithy, past the New Harp Inn and along to the Italianate church of St Catherine's.



The original chapel was built in 1840 by Reverend Thomas Hutchinson, curate in charge of Hentland parish. In 1870, Prebendary William Poole, vicar of Hentland, 'beautified' the property he considered an 'ugly brick building with no pretensions to any style of architecture' in Southern Italian Romanesque and Byzantine styles.

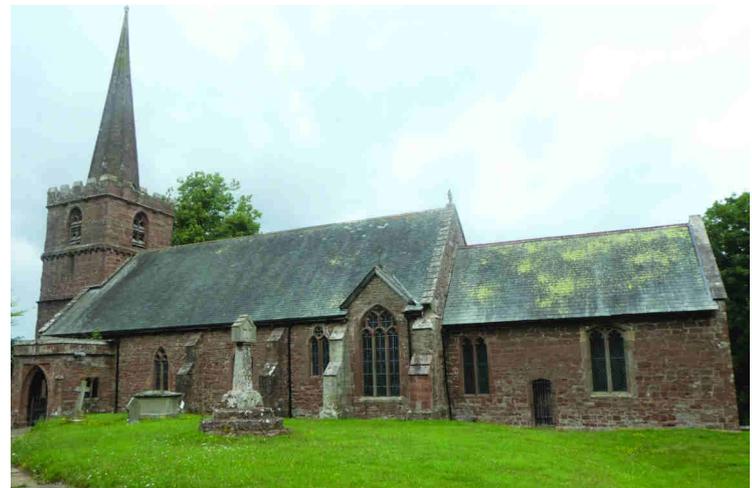


From the church take the road opposite, signed to Carey and Kings Caple. Ignore the next turning left to Carey and continue towards Kings Caple, past the toll house and across the road bridge over the River Wye.

The Hoarwithy Toll House which operated until 1935

After crossing the river, walk towards the Kings Caple sign. Just before you reach it, turn right onto the track indicated as a footpath parallel with the river

8. Go along the footpath for 200 m and then go left through a kissing gate into a field. Go straight up the field towards the prominent house and then go right through a (bypassed) kissing gate to another kissing gate in the corner and onto the road at Ruxton Farm. Go left on the road for 60 m and then turn right next to the white cottage, opposite the finger post. Go through the double wooden field gates and straight on to the far side of the field. Go over a wooden stile and cross the farm track in the field and continue ahead again. Leave the field at the



wooden stile and turn left on the road and walk 650m back the starting point at the church.

On your return you may enjoy a visit to the church and the tump.

The 13th-century, St John the Baptist Church at Kings Caple is one of the three remaining churches in Britain which continues to distribute Pax (peace) Cakes on Palm Sunday. The walk takes you close to all three churches at Kings Caple, Sellack and Hentland. This charity dole is believed to go back to a 15th century. On the stone wall, just outside the side gate to the church, is a 1681 stone plaque, which is currently illegible (2020), but apparently the message encourages tree planting. Interestingly, in the 1980's, this seems to have inspired parishioners to plant the trees behind you.

Opposite the church is Caple Tump, which includes the earthwork and buried remains of a motte castle. The castle was situated alongside an earlier Roman road called Capule Streete. There is a view from the top of Caple Tump over the Wye Valley to Ross-on-Wye, which is five miles away, or twelve miles by the winding river.



