

Hereford Cathedral, Castle Green, riverside and city centre.

Distance and time 2.7km, including city centre (1–1.5 hrs)

Brief description of the walk, path conditions and facilities

This is an all ability circular walk on tarmac paths and pavements on the southern side of the city centre. Most of the paths are traffic free, but *you will need to negotiate some narrow pavements and road crossings, depending on your choice of route. There is one short section of tarmac path approaching the Castle Green from Victoria Footbridge of 20m in length with a gradient of approx 1:12. Benches are available at the top of the slope.*

Hereford grew up around an ancient river crossing, which explains its name – meaning ford of the army. Sites of interest include the Cathedral and the Mappa Mundi, a 13th century world map, now housed in a purpose built building along with a medieval chained library. Bulmers cider makers are based here and their cider museum is open to the public. There is also a waterworks museum which is situated just off the Wye Valley Walk at Broomy Hill. The museum is based on a Victorian water pumping station.

Also the well established Three Choirs Festival rotates annually between Hereford and the cities of Worcester and Gloucester.

Start point for the walk

The recommended start point is the large pay and display car park next to Hereford Leisure Pool on the south side of the river, off St Martins Street. This is close to the large gyratory roundabout on the main road A49. Coming from the south you will have to turn right at the roundabout to enter St Martins Street and the car park and Leisure Pool is on your right. Coming from the north you will cross the river on Greyfriars Bridge (dual carriageway) and then turn left into St Martins Street just before the big roundabout.

For persons wishing to use the Hereford Shopmobility scheme, an alternative starting point is the Maylords Orchard underground car

park in the city centre. This is somewhat difficult to find, because access to the car park can only be gained by west bound traffic using the dual carriageway along Blueschool Street. If you come this way look out for the Shopmobility signs. Parking in Maylord Orchards car park is limited to 5 hours with the first 3 hours free to disabled badge holders. If you wish to hire a mobility vehicle (manual and battery operated wheelchairs and scooters) you are advised to pre-book by telephone or writing to ensure that a suitable scooter or chair is available for you. The Information and Booking line is 01432 342166.

Relevant OS Maps

Explorer Map 189 – Hereford and Ross-on-Wye

Perhaps more useful for this walk are the freely available street maps of Hereford, either the Hereford mini map or the Hereford City Centre shopping and leisure map, both of which are pocket size.

Detailed Walk description

From the Hereford Leisure Pool car park (pay & display) follow the tarmac path away from the car park along the avenue of beech trees in Bishop's Meadow to reach Victoria Footbridge (400m). This bridge was originally built in 1898 in memory of Queen Victoria's 60th Diamond Jubilee of her reign 1837 –1897, and it was reopened in September 2006 after major maintenance and repair works. Cross the bridge keeping directly ahead and in 80m, turn left up a broad tarmac ramp which is moderately steep (approx 1:12 for 20m at its steepest). Arriving at Castle Green either bear right up the rampart path or take the alternative lower, level route.

The present Castle Green is the bailey of the original castle, first built in the early 11th century, but soon destroyed by the Welsh in 1055. It was later rebuilt by the Earl of Hereford as a motte and bailey. The ramparts are nearly 10m high and the promenade inside was set out as early as 1746. Note that there are toilets on the west side of Castle Green. The separate disabled WC does not require a Radar key.

Turn off the ramparts to pass Castle Pool (part of the original moat) on the right, now a duckpond and join Castle Street. Note the delicate

Georgian cast iron balconies on the houses opposite. Turn left along Castle Street, passing the Cathedral School, to reach the Cathedral precinct.

You now have various options, including a visit to the Cathedral. Note that Hereford Tourist Information Centre is located on the street corner opposite the western end of the cathedral. To reach the city centre turn right out of the precinct into Church Street. Keeping straight ahead, you will reach the central area known as High Town, a pedestrianised market place dominated by the black and white Old House.

Having explored the city centre and, to continue the walk, you need to return to the Cathedral either the way you came (along Church Street) or else by High Street and Broad Street. The library, museum and art gallery are on the right side of Broad Street as you head back to the cathedral.

Now turn right into King Street and then left into Bridge Street. You will pass the Left Bank Village complex on the left just before reaching the six arch Wye Bridge. Continue along St Martins Street to return to the Leisure Pool car park.