

Weston under Penyard – Ross on Wye

A 6.2-mile circular walk from the village of Weston under Penyard over meadows to Ross and return over Penyard Hill.

Start from the Village Hall on School Lane in Weston under Penyard.

Grid reference SO 633 231.

Grade: Medium. Short but steep ascent onto Penyard Hill from Ross. 9 stiles.

1. Starting from the village hall, go back towards the main road, but opposite the primary school go left up a stony track to the left. Enter the churchyard and keep right to emerge onto a concrete path down to Church Lane and turn right down to the centre of Weston village. Carefully cross the busy main road at the central reservation into the road opposite alongside the Weston Cross Inn.
2. About 130m beyond the pub, turn left at the wooden finger post down a narrow footpath. This short section, marked by blue arrows, is a courtesy diversion around the grounds of "Stonewold". On re-joining the normal footpath at a steel field gate turn left and taking care to stay on the footpath, go straight ahead through the horse paddock (the electric fence can be opened) and over a stile (WP25/5)¹ into the fields surrounding the Penyard House Hotel. Go straight ahead again through the field and through a footpath gate. The path hugs the fence on the left for about 70m (note the late 16th century Weston Hall on the left) and then goes half-right across the field to join the road at a stile (WP25/7).
3. Turn left down the road for about 100m, over a stile (WP24/1) on the right and to the top of field where the route of the old Gloucester-Ross railway line can still be seen. Go through a kissing gate (WP24/2) into the apple orchard. Turn left and then right, keeping the hedge on your left. Near the top of the orchard, find a stile (WP24/3) in the hedgerow through to a field.
4. Go straight ahead down the field and over a stile (WP22/3) into another field. Go half left and head to a marker post in the far hedgerow to the left of the barns. Turn left, keeping the hedgerow on your right for about 350m (views to Ross and The Skirrid). At the end of the hedgerow go across the wooden bridge to the field on the right. Turn left and keeping the hedgerow on your left, continue through three fields, over two stiles (WP23/3 and WP23/4) and then through a wooden gate onto a farm track.
5. Cross the track and go through a steel kissing gate slightly to the left to enter the next field. Cross the field, through a wooden kissing gate and across a field down to a wooden bridge. Bear left around the barn and then diagonally across a field to a stile in the hedgerow. This will take you down a very narrow footpath between two gardens and straight ahead onto a track and an estate road to the Hildersley roundabout on the A40.



This is a good point to consider a short detour for tea and cakes at the Engine Shed café.

¹ Note: It may help route finding to note that the stiles and gates in the parish of Weston under Penyard are uniquely labelled by their footpath number and stile number e.g. WP25/5 – Stile 5 on footpath 25.

- Carefully cross the road and go left for about 50m to turn right onto the signposted Town and Country Trail. After ½ mile turn left onto the road (Penyard Lane). Passing the PGL office at Alton Court, keep left through a kissing gate onto a footpath until it emerges at a field. Go immediately right steeply up the field and leave the field through a FP gate at the top right-hand corner. Enter Merrivale Wood nature reserve through a second FP gate and quickly followed by a third FP gate. Follow the rising path through the woods to reach a field with a fence in front of you.



- Keeping the fence on your right, continue uphill to cross a stile into Penyard Park. Turn right to follow the main forest track slightly uphill for 300m and take a footpath forking left into the woods at a waymarker post.
- After 70m the path reaches a steel field gate. Ignore the path to the left and continue straight ahead with the fence on your left. At a significant fork in the path keep left to the fence on your left. Keep to the fence line for about 400m and pass through a steel kissing gate (RR6/4) onto the open meadows of Lawns Farm.

Please keep dogs on a lead from here until clearing Lawns Farm. The meagre remains of Penyard Castle can be sighted at the bottom of the field, but to respect the privacy of the farmland it should not be visited from here.

- Keep to the top of the field to pass through a kissing gate (RR6/3) onto a farm track and continue straight ahead on the farm track through a steel field gate with the farm building to your left. Leave the farm at a farm gate and wooden pedestrian gate (RR6/1).

- Continue downhill on a forest track turning left steeply downhill after 150m and then turn right after another 80m, ignoring the steel gates on the left. Follow the track, eventually passing through a pedestrian gate (WP14A/2). After 90m turn right, up the path and through the churchyard onto the stony track. Turn immediately right through a wooden kissing gate (WP11/2) across Church Fields and over a stile. Follow the left boundary of the field and leave through a small wooden gate (WP11/3) and then follow the track back to the village hall.



