

Penyard Park and Penyard Castle

WALKS IN AND AROUND WESTON UNDER PENYARD

Penyard Park – A choice of a 5.9 mile or a shorter 3.2 mile circular walk around Penyard Hill. For those who do not like stiles these are both “*Miles Without Stiles*” walks. Most of the route is not on the usual public rights of way but the owner of the eastern section of Penyard Park allows the public to walk freely and the western section is “Open Access” land for the public (excluding the MOD “Danger Area” on the north side).

The meagre remains of Penyard Castle are on private farmland and not accessible to the public, but this walk will show you how to reach the ruins of the once impressive house apparently built using the stone from the castle and the castle itself can be easily viewed from here.

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

Grid reference SO 633 231. Grade: Medium. No stiles. Steep initial ascent onto Penyard Hill.

1. Turn right out of the car park. Opposite the school, go left up the steps and take the track up to the church. Enter the churchyard and follow the path, leaving the churchyard through the steel gates, down the slope and turn left up Church Lane. At the fork in the track go right through the farm gate. After ¼ mile ignore the steel gates on the left and keep straight ahead on the track. After another ¼ mile turn left, steeply uphill.
2. Turn left at the T-junction at the top of the steep hill and immediately go steeply downhill ignoring other paths to the left and right. Soon the path then swings right, into a lovely wooded descending valley. After about 500 m take the right-hand fork with the path now rising slightly.

Alternative Shorter Walk. For the shorter 3.2 mile walk, take the left hand-fork and continue down the valley to re-join the main route at location 5.

3. To visit the Penyard castle location turn right where the track bends sharply to the left and walk to the top of the short but steep hill.

According to Historic England the castle and house were built early C14 and C17 and are Grade II listed buildings. Please do not be tempted to climb over the fence into the private field.



Return down the steep hill and re-join the main footpath. At the junction in the forest tracks, turn right, slightly uphill. Continue to a point where the track bends sharply to the right.

4. Where the forestry track bends right, go left and immediately left before the wooden stile. Now follow the narrow winding path steeply downhill. Don't miss the lone giant redwood tree, standing guard on the path. Where the path levels out go left at the fork and then right at the next fork and climb over a small fallen tree trunk followed by a much larger tree trunk. At the bottom of the hill go left onto the wide forestry track and after about 400m turn right at a clearing onto another forestry track. Follow the forestry track for a mile until you cross a stream (hard to see).

Penyard Park and Penyard Castle

5. Make sure to go straight ahead, ignoring the path going left. At the next T-junction in the paths go right. Keep straight ahead, ignoring the track going steeply up to the left. The view across Coughton Valley now opens up in front. Pass to the right of the steel farm gate and follow the track downhill, passing an old quarry on the left. Keep left at the fork where you see two houses below you to the right. Another path comes up from the right but ignore this and keep straight ahead.
6. The path now traces the lower edge of Penyard woods for $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, passing the sturdy Birches Barn. The views are across the farmlands of Weston to May Hill and the Malvern Hills in the distance. Eventually the path reaches a crossroad where you should turn right, steeply downhill to re-join the track. Turn right to retrace your steps back to the village hall car park.

