

## Hope Mansell Walk from Bailey Lane End

**For our neighbours in Hope Mansell and for Weston's walkers who can now travel outside their parish this is a lovely 4 mile circular walk with great views and interesting features**

Parking: Bailey Lane End, at the forestry entrance on the road between Ryeford (on the A40 Ross/Gloucester road) and Drybrook. When parking, do not obstruct access to the woodland. Grid Ref SO 643195. Maps Outdoor Leisure OL 14.

Length 4 miles. Grade Moderate. Some steep sections. Stiles 4. Can be muddy in the forest.

1. Pass the forestry barrier and walk into the wood for about 50 m to where six tracks meet. Take the second track on the left which is the only one that goes downhill. At the foot of the slope the track bears right and runs parallel to the small Bailey Brook on your left. Ignore a smaller track heading left down to the brook. Pass two cottages on your left, the second one called Oak Tree. Go left at the T-junction just after Oak Tree. After about 300 m you come to another T-junction. Take a left turn, downhill past Lilly Cottage (a white cottage on the right). Head downhill and pass through the gap to the right of Bailey Brook Cottage. Continue to descend the path to a stile and a small bridge over the stream.
2. After crossing the bridge go straight ahead, with the stream to your right, for about 50 yards and cross another small stream. Climb the short but steep hill in front of you to pass through a footpath gate. After the gate look to the right for a lovely view towards Weston under Penyard and beyond. Follow the path straight ahead through the field to another stile in the hedge. Cross the stile and descend the steps onto a lane with the Hope Mansell's Old School House and a small village hall on the left. Continue down the lane to a junction with a tarmacked lane.
3. At the junction is a prominent display cabinet containing information about the walks in and around Hope Mansell. Turn left and walk up the lane for about 150 m to St Michael's Church. Continue up the lane for about 400 m to where a finger post points to the right up a short lane where two five-bar metal gates can be seen. Enter the lane and go through the gate to the right. Emerge from the sunken lane into a field, with good views over Hope Mansell to your right.
4. Follow the hedge on your left as it curves left up the field, through a footpath gate and continue up the field, keeping close to the fence and the woodland on your right. Towards the top of the slope, turn right through another footpath gate. Keep right across a small field and pass through another footpath gate into a field. Continue ahead, towards a 4-bar gate where a stile will be found leading onto a lane at a T junction next to a cottage called High Stones. From here you can see the Malverns behind you and the Black Mountains in front of you.



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5. Turn left down the lane, past the cottage. The lane goes down quite steeply. Walk for about 200 m down the hill until you reach a bench seat on the left, from where you can see virtually the whole of the route. Continue downhill and along the lane for about 700 m, past the entrance to Horn Hill Farm and the junction with the lane to Hope Mansell. Just after the road junction the lane goes slightly uphill. Pass Twizling Farm on your left and then, after 30 m, turn left onto a byway marked by a wooden finger post.



6. Walk along the byway with fields and nice views on the left and the pleasant Harechurch Wood to the right. As you emerge from the woodland you arrive onto an open lane at Hom Grove Farm. On the right, a wonderful spring gushes from the bank. As you enter the woods keep on the main track to the right. Just before reaching the road, pause to admire the road bridge over one of the many disused railway lines in the Forest of Dean. Where the track meets the road, turn left, and walk with care back to the start, as the traffic here travels very quickly.

