

Further information

www.churchstretton.co.uk

Tourist information

CHURCH STRETTON: At library in Church Street. **01694 723133**
Craven Arms: Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre. **01588 676010**
BISHOP'S CASTLE: At Old Time in the High Street. **01588 638467**
SHREWSBURY: Rowley's House. **01743 281200**
LUDLOW: Castle Street. **01584 875053**

Travel information

www.travelshropshire.co.uk
Nearest mainline stations: Church Stretton & Craven Arms
For Rail Travel call **08457 48 49 50** www.nationalrail.co.uk
For Bus Travel call **0870 608 2 608**
Shropshire Hills Shuttles: **01588 673888**
www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk

Ordnance Survey maps

Explorer 217 The Long Mynd & Wenlock Edge
Landranger 137 Ludlow & Church Stretton

Cycling contacts

Plush Hill Cycles, cycle hire, repairs and sales, 8 The Square, Church Stretton. **01694 720133**
Terry's Cycles, cycle hire, tandem & repairs, 6 Castle Hill, All Stretton. **01694 723302**
Shropshire Hills Mountain Bikes and Outdoor Pursuit Centre (& Blazing Bikes), cycle hire, sales, camping and training, Marshbrook. **01694 781515**
Central Garage, electric bike hire, Crossways, Church Stretton. **01694 723939**

Discover Shropshire by bike

It's great to get out and about on a bike in Shropshire. Discover hundreds of miles of National Cycle Network routes along quiet lanes, explore traffic-free trails along old railways and waterways, follow the cycle rides from historic towns and get muddy on mountain bike tracks in woods and forests.

Other publications

www.travelshropshire.co.uk
Shropshire County Council 01743 253008

With thanks to John Wardale and Phil Harris who devised the original routes & the Church Stretton Area Tourism Group whose local knowledge and experience has proved invaluable in the production of this leaflet.

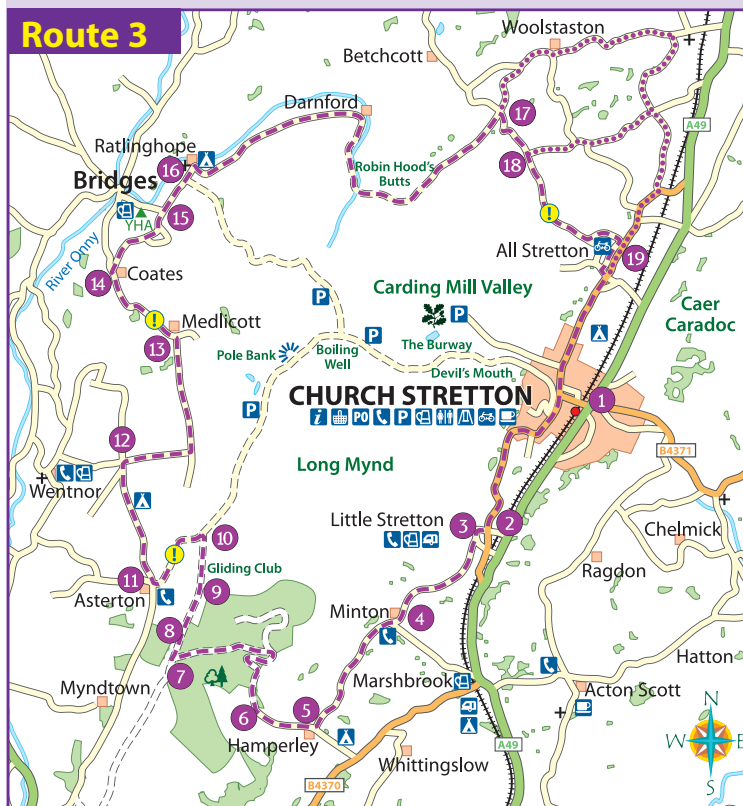
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Edition #6 Feb. 2012

Part funded by the Department for Transport

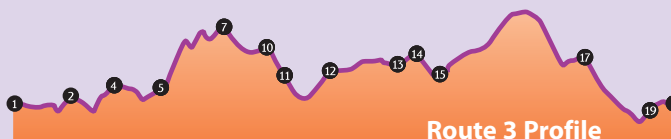
Route 3



Route 3: Long Mynd loop

Total distance: 20 miles (32 Km) Total climbing: 715 metres

- 1 Start at the railway station car park, turn left onto the road. Then turn left at a crossroads opposite the HSBC bank, onto the B4370 to Little Stretton.
- 2 Turn right immediately after the Ragleth Inn at an unsigned minor junction opposite Elm Lane.
- 3 Follow the road round to the left, past a small black & white cottage on the right. Shortly afterwards turn right at an unsigned junction adjacent to stone farm buildings and begin the climb to Minton.
- 4 Entering Minton carry straight on to the junction at the end of the green where you go straight on signposted Hamperley. Shortly afterwards turn right at an unsigned T-junction with a red phone box on your left.
- 5 At the crossroads opposite Hamperley Farm turn right signposted Church Moor – don't worry that it is signed as a 'No Through Road'.
- 6 A three-way fork in the road. Carry straight on, along a stone track with a wooden bridgeway fingerpost (the left fork is a grass track signposted as a Public Right of Way. The right fork is tarmac leading



to a nearby house). A little further on go through a wooden gate and shortly afterwards a galvanised gate with a wooden pedestrian gate to its side. Keep climbing on the best quality stone track, ignoring tracks that split away going down or level.

The Long Mynd (from the Welsh 'mynydd' or bare mountain) is a huge whale-backed plateau of ancient grits and shales, owned and protected by the National Trust. Some ten miles long, rising to 1700 feet above sea level, and covering almost six thousand acres, it provides some jaw-dropping panoramas.

- 7 You reach the top and the main track that you have been using now bends sharply off to the left and starts to drop. Don't continue to follow it now but instead take the more minor track off to the right which is unsigned. Note there is also a track leading straight on at this point.
- 8 Go straight on through the steel gates onto the gliding club landing area. When through the gates look left and right for gliders landing before crossing. Follow the blue marker arrows set in the grass track.
- 9 You reach a crossroads of tracks with a large wooden fingerpost that directs you either along the Portway or the Starboardway. You can follow either as they both come out at the same point on the public road behind the gliding club building. It is best to follow the Starboardway if gliders are taking off as this interferes less with the glider launches.

The Portway is an ancient track that runs along the entire length of the 10 mile crest of the Long Mynd. Riding along the track, you are following in the footsteps of Neolithic traders, while in the Middle Ages it was a King's Highway. Towards its southern end the track passes a large flat and grassy area occupied by the Midland Gliding Club. From here scores of gliders swoop and soar in Welsh/Shropshire thermals while just beyond one can glimpse far below the patchwork of little fields on the western foot of the Mynd.

- 10 Exiting through the gliding club gates, turn left at the unsigned junction with the public road. Soon the road begins to drop steeply. **Take Care.** Inexperienced cyclists may want to dismount.
- 11 Crossing the cattle grid turn right at the T-junction, then carry straight on signposted Medlicott.

Asterton The road from the Gliding Club to Asterton is considered by many to be the most dramatic and picturesque in Shropshire. The Crown Inn at Wentnor offers a welcome stop. Deep ditches help drain the wet lands around Proly Moor.

- 12 At the cross roads turn right signed Medlicott. Then after a 1 mile climb follow the road sharply round to the left, again signposted Medlicott.
- 13 Follow the road as it bends to the left, and then back to the right, passing a building made of a mixture of stone and brick on the left. Shortly afterwards ignore the concrete track off to the left marked Lowerhouse Farm, carry straight on through the closed gate and the road drops steeply. **Take Care** as the road is muddy. Go through another gate and then up a very steep climb for a short distance. The road is a little rutted. **Take Care.**
- 14 Arrive in a farm yard with a white road sign (titled Coates). Bear left signposted Bridges. Leaving the farm yard, go through a gate

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which has a cattle grid to its right, then immediately turn right onto an unsigned road which has grass tufts in its centre, soon after pass a fairly new wooden barn on the right.

- 15 Go straight on signed Ratlinghope Church.
 - 16 Ignore the tarmac road off to the right signed Belmore, carry straight on signposted Darnford. Shortly afterwards enter Ratlinghope with St Margaret's Church on your left. The road then begins its climb for a few miles up the Long Mynd with wonderful views.
- Ratlinghope** Pronounced 'Ratchup' by the locals, this is a scattered village in a lovely wooded valley. All the nearby hills contain prehistoric remains.
- 17 After a steep drop down arrive at a crossroads, turn right signed All Stretton. (If you want to extend your ride carry straight on signed Woolstaston and follow the additional dotted purple routes marked on the map).
 - 18 At a junction after a cattle grid carry straight on signed All Stretton. (If you want to extend your ride turn left signed Lower Wood and follow the additional dotted purple routes marked on the map). Then pass Jinlye Guesthouse on the right and the road drops steeply for a mile, **Take Care**.
 - 19 At the unsigned T-junction, turn right onto the B4370 and follow back to Church Stretton.

Route 4: Church Stretton Challenge

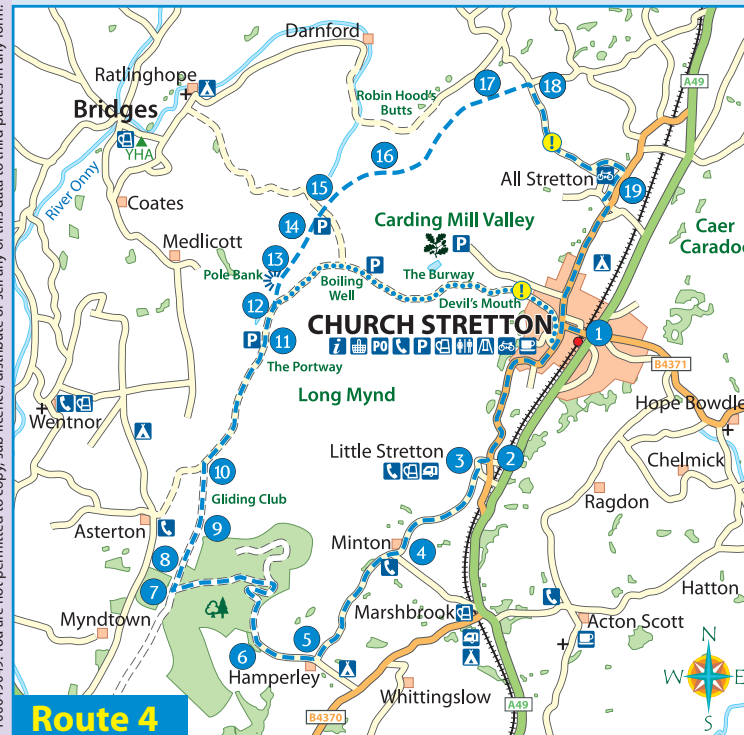
Total distance: 15 miles (24 Km) or 13 miles (21 Km) taking shortcut. Total climbing: 545 metres.

- 1 Follow instructions 1 to 9 of **Route 3** Long Mynd Loop
- 10 Exiting through the gliding club gates, turn right at the unsigned junction with the public road. Stay on the tarmac road ignoring a muddy track off to the right signed Minton and another signed Little Stretton.
- 11 Ignore a track off to the left leading into a small unsigned car park.
- 12 Just after a wooden hut on your left, ignore a grass track off to the left along the fence line signed as a footpath to Medicott. Then a few hundred metres on turn left onto a 1 metre wide sandy coloured track. There is no sign on the tarmac road, but just as you turn off onto the track there is a wooden marker post with a Ride UK disc and a yellow Jack Mytton Way disc. (Note: Stay on the tarmac road for a short cut along The Burway back to Church Stretton).

Devil's Mouth At certain times of the year mists from Townbrook Hollow swirl past the rock devil's mouth, giving an impression of it breathing out smoke from its 'mouth'.

Boiling Well is so named because, after heavy rains, the underground spring feeding the well causes bubbles to rise to the surface of this spring pool.

- 13 Arrive at a trig-point and a steel display map of area.



- 14 Go straight on, signed a Ride UK route, at this stone track crossroads. Soon after the track becomes better quality, blue gravel, and a little wider.
- 15 Carry straight on signposted Carding Mill, crossing the tarmac road. Then the track becomes poorer quality, fairly muddy. Shortly afterwards the track widens, carry straight on following Ride UK arrows.
- 16 Turn right, signed Carding Mill Valley, at a fork in the track marked by a wooden marker post (Note: The left fork is signed Duckley Nap). A few metres on ignore an unsigned track off to the right to Carding Mill Valley, carry straight on along what is now a wide grass track.

Robin Hood's Butts is said to have earned its name from the mass of boulders nearby that afforded good concealment for hidden 'highwaymen' waiting for unsuspecting victims on the Portway.

- 17 Pass a house on your left and the track becomes blue gravel leading down to the main road.
- 18 Turn right at the tarmac road signed All Stretton. Then pass Jinlye Guesthouse on the right and the road drops steeply for a mile, **Take Care**.
- 19 At the unsigned T-junction, turn right onto the B4370 and follow back to Church Stretton.



FREE

Church Stretton Cycle Rides



Four cycle routes through the Shropshire Hills following quiet lanes and bridleways
From 12 – 22 miles (20 – 35km)
www.churchstretton.co.uk

The best way to explore the Shropshire Hills is by bike!

About the cycle rides

Explore the dramatic landscape of the Church Stretton Hills on these 4 graded cycle routes, **Route 1** being the easiest.

Route 1 To The Edge takes in beautiful countryside and visits well known attractions such as Acton Scott Working Farm and the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre.

Route 2 Roman Road Ride visits picturesque villages and passes attractions like Acton Burnell Castle plus it gives you the chance to ride the Roman road from Acton Burnell to All Stretton.

Route 3 Long Mynd Loop, a ride with a few testing climbs and steep descents, rewarding you with fabulous views and the opportunity to watch gliders at close hand. The traffic-free section through the Forestry Commission land is on a well made stone track, suitable for most bicycles.

Route 4 Church Stretton Challenge a challenging off-road mountain bike ride along the top of the Long Mynd.

WHERE TO START

All four routes start from Church Stretton's railway station. There is some car and cycle parking at the station but for ample car parking try the Easthope Road car park. (see town centre map, right).

CYCLING CODE CYCLE WITH CARE!

- Always follow the Highway Code
- Be considerate to other users, and give way to pedestrians and horse riders
- Take particular care at junctions, when cycling downhill and on loose surfaces
- Ride in single file on narrow or busy roads
- Consider wearing a helmet and high visibility clothing

i Visitor Information Centre
 P Car Park
 Pub/Inn
 + Church
 Café

PO Post Office
 Shop
Public Toilets
Picnic Area
Play Area

Telephone
Caravan/Camping site
Railway Station
Cycle Shop

National Trust
Forestry Commission
Viewpoint
YHA Youth Hostel

Unfenced Road
Take Care on busy road junctions and on steep hills

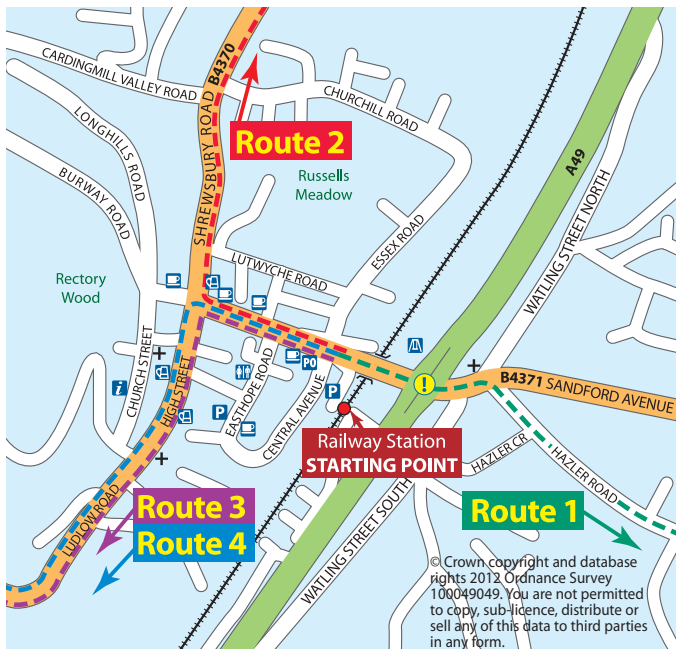
Church Stretton

The Three Strettons – All Stretton, Church Stretton and Little Stretton – form a north to south line down the lovely Stretton rift valley. **Church Stretton** is a small, bustling market and tourist town, given its charter by King John in 1214. It is the only town in the **Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** and nestles among some of the most dramatic and spectacular hills in Britain, being sheltered from the west by the **Long Mynd** and by the hills of **Caer Caradoc**, **Helmeth**, **Hazler** and **Ragleth** in the east.

The Visitor Information Centre, in Church Street, is open six days a week, and has maps and a wide range of useful tourist leaflets. The Strettons know a good deal about hospitality, being the holidaying heart of the Shropshire Hills.

Once advertised as ‘Little Switzerland’ and the ‘Highlands of England’, Church Stretton is ideal for lovers of outdoor pursuits, giving direct access to a wide variety of superb countryside, serviced by an excellent footpath system. It provides a loop on the Heritage Byways mountain bike circuit, while the Shropshire Way, the Jack Mytton Way and countless local routes offer unlimited possibilities for walkers and cyclists.

Gabled and half-timbered 19th century specialist shops offer visitors traditional and friendly service, while regular weekly markets are held in the Square. There are delightful tea-rooms, delicatessens, pubs and restaurants offering delicious local food and health-giving local water. This stunning little town is well worth a visit, as is their website www.churchstretton.co.uk

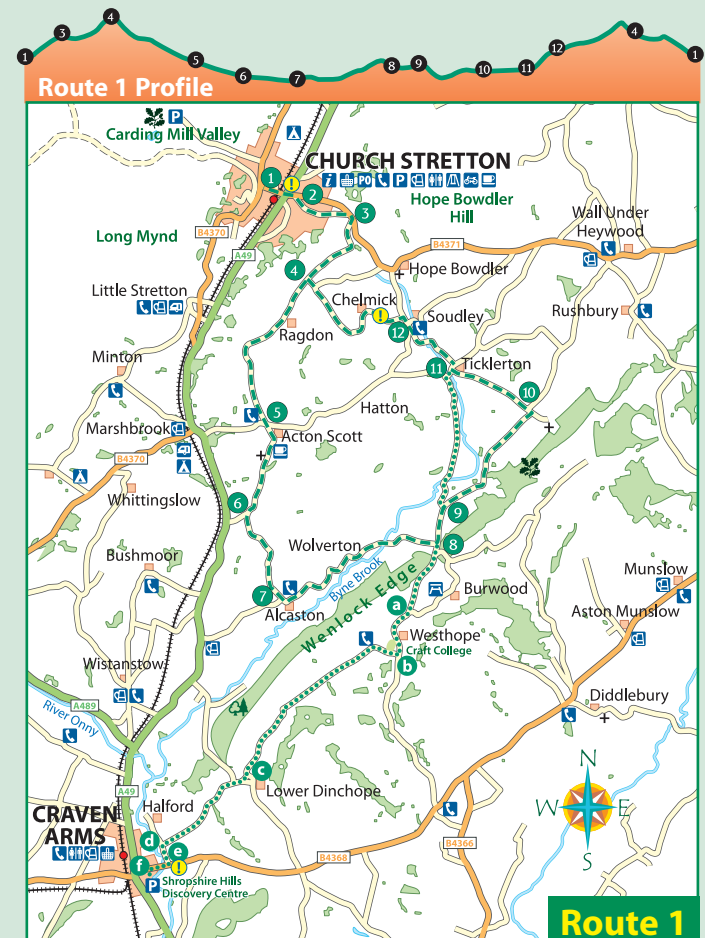


Route 1: To The Edge

Total distance: 14 miles or 22 Km or 13 miles (21 Km) taking shortcut. Total climbing: 335 metres

Also possible is a spur to Craven Arms adding 5 miles (8km) each way OR you could do a linear route from Church Stretton to Craven Arms and return by train, total distance 12 miles (20 km).

- Starting at the railway station car park turn right onto the road towards the A49.
- At the A49 go straight across at the traffic lights, taking care. Less experienced cyclists can dismount and use the pedestrian crossings. Once across, take the 2nd right into Hazler Road and start to climb.
- Skirt round to the right and back on yourself up an immediate steep climb. The junction is unsigned.
- At this junction, next to Ragdon Cottage, go straight on signed Ragdon.
- At the cross-roads go straight over signed Henley. The road is then a little rutted & steep, **Take Care**.



The Historic Working Farm Museum at Acton Scott

contains rare animal breeds and visitors can actively participate in the farming activities of a bygone age.

- 6 Turn left at a forked junction with a post box, signed Henley & Alcaston (Don't go straight on signed Craven Arms this goes via the A49). Immediately after, you go over a stone bridge.
- 7 At this junction on a bend, go straight on signed Wolverton. There is a large farm complex on both sides of the road at this junction.
- 8 At this T-junction turn left signed to Eaton. But if you want to go down the spur to Craven Arms then turn right signed Westhope.

Spur to Craven Arms

- a Ignore a road off to the left and back on yourself and carry on straight, which is unsigned, but straight ahead there is a sign welcoming you to Westhope.
- b Turn right at this junction signed to Dinchope. Westhope Craft College is on this junction. Gardens open to the public 9am to 4pm, £1 admission.

Westhope Craft College lies in Hope Dale and is a handsome gabled house. The College has built a good reputation for imaginative arts and crafts workshops and courses.

- c Take right hand turn signed Halford
- d At T-Junction turn left signed to Craven Arms (right is signed Halford).
- e At T-Junction turn right (**Take Care**) onto B-road signed to Craven Arms
- f Turn left down Newton Street to get to the Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre

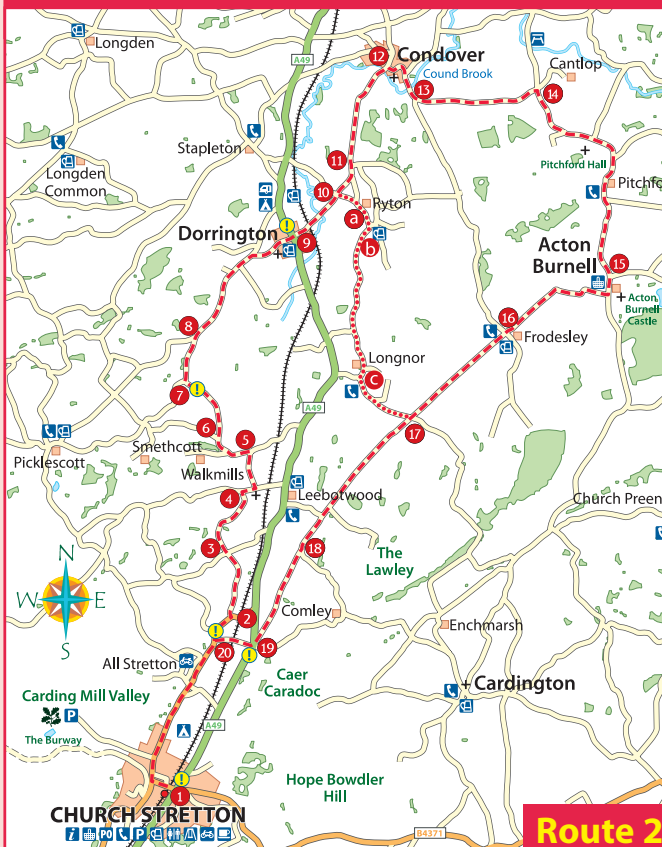
- 9 Turn right on the bend, signed to Eaton. (OR you can take a short cut by following the road round to the left and then about a mile on, turn right signed to Much Wenlock).
- 10 Turn left at this unsigned T-junction. As you turn left you pass under an old railway bridge which no longer has a deck. Immediately after the old bridge, ignore the road off to the right signed Wall and carry straight on signed Ticklerton.

Ticklerton Hall is an impressive 17th century house with two large and impressive dovescotes.

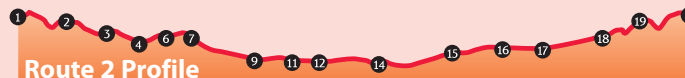
- 11 At this T-junction the sign is opposite but off to the right and set into the hedge, so obscured slightly. Turn right signed Much Wenlock. Very shortly afterwards turn left for Soudley at a memorial for the 1st & 2nd World Wars.
- 12 Carry straight on, at minor crossroads next to Soudley Cottage, signed Hope Bowdler. Shortly afterwards turn left signed Chelmick, go up a fairly steep climb to Steepside Cottage. The road then drops down again (**Take Care**, the road is rutted) before climbing again to great views off to the left. Carry on until you arrive at the T-junction which you passed earlier. Turn right signed Church Stretton and retrace your route from earlier.

Route 2: Roman Road Ride

Total distance: 22 miles (35 Km) or 16 miles (26Km) taking short cut. Total climbing: 340 metres



- 1 Start at the railway station car park, turn left onto the road. Then turn right at a crossroads opposite the HSBC bank, onto the B4370 to All Stretton.
- 2 Immediately before a bridge over the railway, turn left at an unsigned road junction.
- 3 At the crossroads go straight on signed Woolstaston. Soon after pass Hodghurst Farm on your left.
- 4 At this unsigned T-junction turn right and then turn left, opposite St. Mary's Church, signed Smethcott.
- 5 Turn left at the T-junction signed Smethcott, then soon after in Walkmills ignore the left fork signed RS Beaver Ltd, carry straight on.
- 6 Turn right at this unsigned junction (although there is a sign to Smethcott straight on). Soon after you pass Walkmills Farm on your left.
- 7 Pass through 2 gates which are usually open. At the second gate fork right. (Between the gates the road is rutted and muddy - **Take Care**).
- 8 At this unsigned T-junction turn right and a mile or so on you pass a road off to Netley Hall on your right.



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- 9 Arrive at a dog-legged junction with the A49. Advisable to dismount, use the pavement to the left and cross straight over on foot into Station Road. **Take Care**.
- 10 Here you can turn right signed Ryton to follow the short-cut. Otherwise carry straight on signed Industrial Estate. (Note: the road to the left is signed RSPCA).

Shortcut

- a At this unsigned T-junction, next to Rose Cottage, turn right.
- b Pass the Fox Inn on your right and ignore first an unsigned road off to your right and then another to your left on a bend.
- c Turn left at this T-junction signed to Frodesley. (Note: Don't turn right here signed Church Stretton - this takes you via the A49).
- 11 Ignore one road off to the right signed Ryton and another signed Wheathall. Shortly after you pass Gonsall Quarry on your left.
- 12 After crossing a river bridge, turn right at the junction signed to Frodesley, Pitchford & Acton Burnell. Pass Priory Condover Hall on the right, ignore left signed Berrington and carry straight on signed Frodesley.

Condover lies in well-wooded countryside and boasts Condover Hall, the finest Elizabethan house in Shropshire. There are also half a dozen old timber-framed cruck houses covered with brick 'skins'.

- 13 Turn left signed Cantlop, Pitchford & Acton Burnell.
- 14 At the cross roads turn right signed Acton Burnell. Pass JR Davies Garage on your right, pass a right signed Pitchford Church and then pass a left signed Crosshouses. Carry straight on until you enter Acton Burnell.

Pitchford Church retains good Norman details, while the adjacent half-timbered Hall (not open) is a perfect example of a 16th century building.

- 15 As you enter Acton Burnell carry straight on signed Frodesley. Then follow the road as it bends sharply right signed Frodesley, past the Post Office & Village Store on your right.

Acton Burnell 'Castle' was built from red sandstone in the 13th century. Its roofless ruins now stand alongside a tall cedar, surrounded by manicured lawns in the grounds of Concord College. It was a fortified manor house and is now in the care of English Heritage.

- 16 Entering Frodesley ignore roads off to left and right and carry straight on, signed Church Stretton, passing The Swan Pub on your left.
- 17 Carry straight on, signed Church Stretton, along the Roman Road, passing through two shallow fords.
- 18 Fork right signed Church Stretton next to a house and, usually present, a trailer with free range eggs for sale.
- 19 Arrive at a dog-legged junction with the A49. Advisable to dismount, use the grass verge to the left and cross straight over on foot to the minor unsigned road opposite. **Take Care**.
- 20 After a hump-backed bridge over the railway turn left at the T-junction. Use the mirror opposite as visibility to the right is poor. **Take Care**. Retrace your route back to Church Stretton along the B-road.