

The best way to see the Shropshire Hills is by bike! Follow quiet country lanes from the Secret Hills Centre and in five minutes you are in the heart of the Shropshire Countryside. Discover for yourself superb views, hidden valleys, ancient castles, quiet woods and sleepy villages.

1 The Acton Scott Activator – 16 MILES, allow 2½ HOURS. Some hills but not too many.

2 The Church Stretton Saddle Shiner – 24 MILES, allow at least 4 HOURS. Hilly but easily achievable in an afternoon.

3 The Long Mynd Motivator – not for the faint of heart – 30 MILES. Some very steep climbing and a steep descent off the Long Mynd to Asterton.

REFRESHMENTS



Church Stretton and Craven Arms have plenty of facilities for refreshments, whilst Acton Scott Historic Working Farm has a wonderful tea-room in the Old Schoolhouse serving afternoon teas & light lunches.

WHERE TO START

All three cycle routes start from the Secret Hills Centre in Craven Arms. The town is on the main line railway service connecting to Shrewsbury and Ludlow (see *Travel Information*).

Use the map and the numbered route descriptions to help you find your way. Stop occasionally to read the text in yellow boxes as it describes the special features of the Secret Hills.

Right, are you ready to go? Then read on...

START Your experience starts at the Secret Hills

1 Centre, turn right out of the car park and take the second left along Newton Street to the Corvedale Road.

Turn right cycling out of Craven Arms on the B4368. Cross the River Onny and take the first left to the village of Halford.

2 After 300 metres take the first right signposted for Lower Dinchope & Westhope. (Next to Halford Farm).

3 This narrow lane takes you uphill to 'Ireland Cottage', with good views of the Onny Valley.

4 Downhill, and then up a short steep hill to Lower Dinchope. Note the memorial by the wall of the long low house. Turn left, signposted to Westhope. The hill on your right is Callow Hill. Look for the tower known as Flounders Folly on the crest.

Flounders Folly – Probably built by Benjamin Flounders, a local ship & landowner, in 1838.

5 Fairly level cycling. Stop here and admire the view of Wenlock Edge on your left.

Wenlock Edge – A wooded, limestone escarpment that runs unbroken for 14 miles between here and the Severn Gorge. The Edge is rich in flora & fauna.

6 Carry straight on with a gentle downhill roll into Hope Dale.

7 At Westhope (next to the college), turn left, signposted for Middlehope & Ticklerton.

Westhope College – Traditional Victorian gardens now run under organic principles. Open mid April to mid September, Mon to Wed 9am to 4.30pm.

8 Cycle past Middle Westhope Farm and keep left at the next junction signposted for Ticklerton. Up a short steep hill to Wolverton Wood. Down a steep hill through the woods and straight on into Ape Dale towards Ticklerton.


9 Cycle through the hamlet of Harton (Harton Farm has some outstanding black and white decorative woodwork).

10 Level cycling with wonderful views of the hills around Church Stretton (Ragleth & Caer Caradoc). At Ticklerton, keep left signposted for Acton Scott (Farm Museum).

Caer Caradoc – A spectacular Iron Age hill fort dominating Ape Dale & Church Stretton. Reputedly the site of Caractacus' last stand against the Romans.

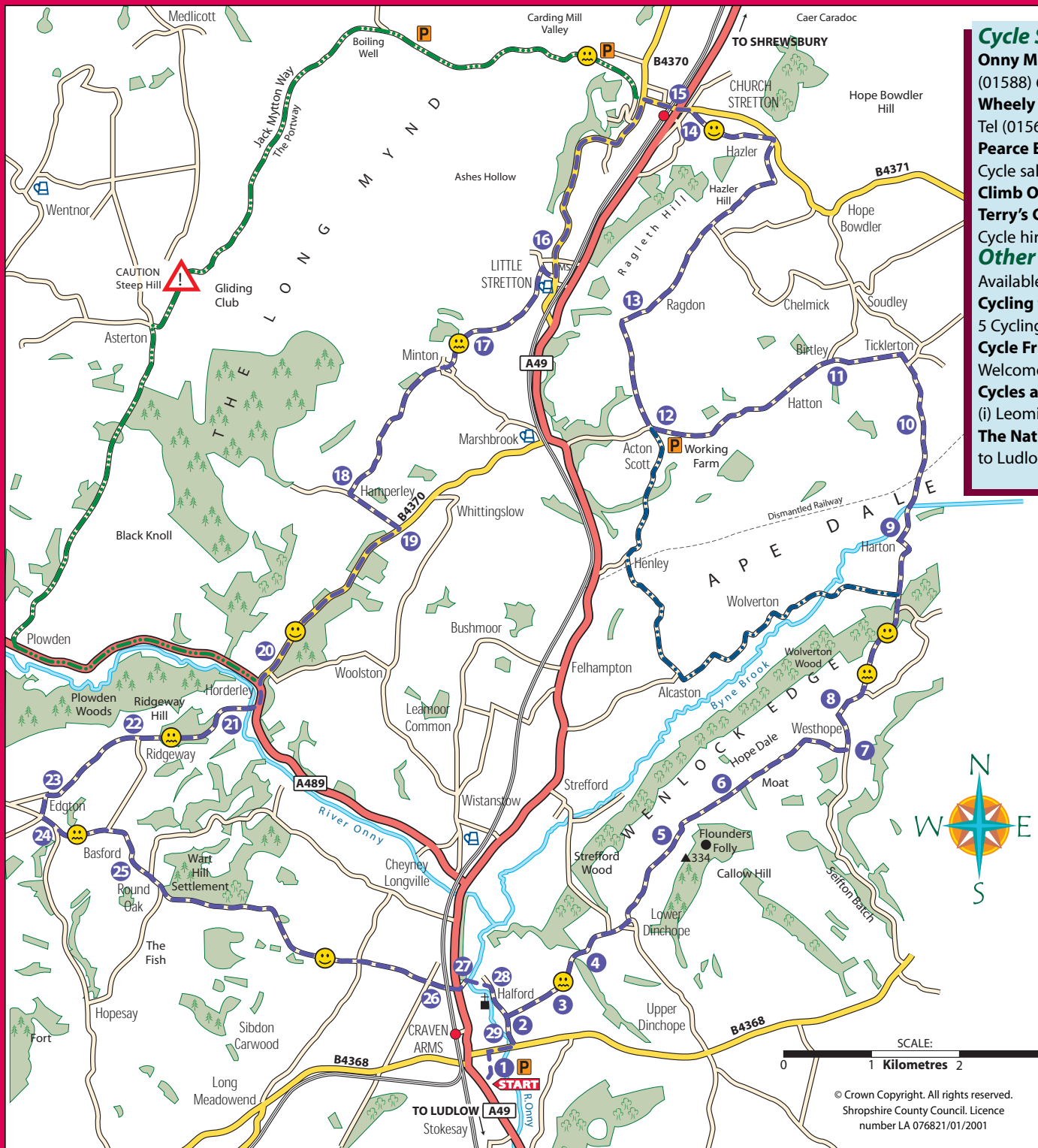
11 Cycle on past the hamlets of Birtley and Hatton until you arrive at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm entrance.

Acton Scott Historic Working Farm –

 A farm run as a living museum of agricultural life at the turn of the century. Open Easter to October. Tues – Sun 10am – 5pm.

Acton Scott Activator Route 1 – returning to Craven Arms

Total – 16 miles (26 km). Continue on to the crossroads at Acton Scott and turn left signposted for Henley. Cycle past Acton Scott Hall and church, at the bottom of the hill fork left across the old railway line to Henley. Continue through open



Cycle Shops & Cycle Hire

Onny Mountain Bike Hire, Flowers Coffee Shop, Market Street, Craven Arms (01588) 672710

Whely Wonderful Cycling, Petchfield Farm, Elton, Ludlow. Tel (01568) 770755. Cycle Hire Centre & Cycling Holidays.

Pearce Engineering, Fishmore Road, Ludlow. Tel (01584) 876016. Cycle sales, repairs & hire.

Climb On Bikes, 22 Bull Ring, Ludlow. Tel (01584) 872173. Cycle sales & repairs.

Terry's Cycles, 6 Castle Hill, All Stretton. Tel (01694) 723302 / 724334. Cycle hire & repairs.

Other Publications

Available from Tourist Information Centres

Cycling for Pleasure in the Marches:

5 Cycling maps of Shropshire & Herefordshire.

Cycle Friendly Accommodation guide

Welcome cyclists with a safe storage area for cycles.

Cycles and Spires: Easy cycle routes to historic churches

(i) Leominster, (ii) Tenbury Wells, (iii) Clebury Mortimer.

The National Byway: Midlands, covering Shropshire from Whitchurch to Ludlow.

- Route 1
- Route 2
- Route 3
- Steep Climb
- Whizz Down Hill
- Main Road
- Secondary Road
- Other road
- Railway
- Woodland
- Hill Summit (*ht* in metres)
- Pubs

The Secret Hills Cycle Rides have been funded by



CYCLING WITH CARE

- Watch out for other vehicles especially tractors
- Always wear a helmet
- Ride in single file
- Follow the Highway Code and take care at road junctions

Further Information

SECRET HILLS, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Ludlow Road, Craven Arms SY7 9RS.

Tel: (01588) 676040.

Discover the wonders of the Shropshire Hills from the splendour of the scenery to the complexity of their history and heritage.

Tourist Information Centres in the area

LUDLOW – Castle Street, Ludlow SY8 1AS Open all year, accommodation booking service. Tel: (01584) 875053

SHREWSBURY – The Music Hall, The Square, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LH open all year, accommodation booking service. Tel: (01743) 350761 E-mail: tic@shrewsburytourism.co.uk

CHURCH STRETTON – The Library, Church Street, Church Stretton (Closes in winter). Tel: (01694) 723133

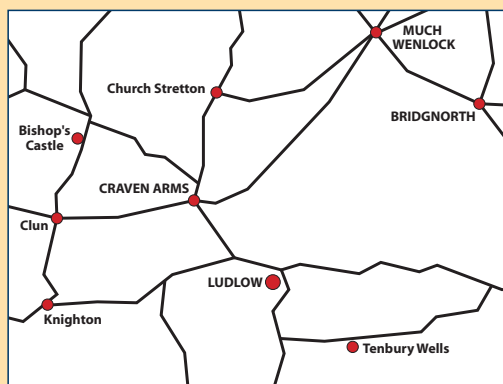
KNIGHTON – Offa's Dyke Heritage Centre, West Street, Knighton. Tel: (01547) 528753

BISHOP'S CASTLE – 29 High Street, Bishop's Castle Tel: (01588) 638467

Travel Information

Mainline Railway stations are at Shrewsbury, Church Stretton, Craven Arms and Ludlow. Trains carry 2 bikes per train (Reservations are essential). For information on all bus, coach and train services in the Shropshire area call:

0870 608 2608



The Ordnance Survey map covering this area is:
Landranger 137 – Ludlow, Wenlock Edge and Surrounding Area

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commonland (Henley Common) to Alcaston. Keep left signposted for Wolverton. Straight on past Wolverton Manor Farm, uphill and turn right to rejoin the main cycle route at Wolverton Woods. Return to the start via Westhope.

- 12** For Route 2 and 3 continue on to the crossroads at Acton Scott. Turn right signposted for Ragdon, easy uphill cycling to the foot of Ragleth Hill.
- 13** Carry on past Ragdon to Hazler and cycle down a short steep hill to the main road (B4371). Immediately turn left along Hazler Road (residential road on the outskirts of Church Stretton).
- 14** A lovely long whizz downhill to rejoin the main road again at the valley bottom. Turn left at the main road and straight on at the traffic lights for Church Stretton town centre.

Church Stretton



Known as 'Little Switzerland' this spa town was a popular Victorian holiday resort. Now equally popular with walkers as it provides easy access to the Long Mynd and Stretton Hills. Cardingmill Valley (at the base of the Long Mynd) is a famous beauty spot with car park & National Trust tea room.

Long Mynd Motivator Route 3– including a very steep descent off the Long Mynd

Total 30 miles (48 km). At the crossroads in the town centre go straight on to follow the Burway Road up a very steep hill to the top of the Long Mynd. Bear left and cycle along The Portway past the entrance of the Gliding Club. Continue down the very steep hill to Asterton and turn left. Continue on for 2½ miles to

Plowden. At the main road turn left to rejoin the main cycle route at Horderley (Go to point 21).

The Long Mynd – England's most southerly grouse moor now managed by the National Trust. Dramatic views across the Shropshire Plain to the north and Wales to the west.

- 15** For Route 2 turn left at the crossroads in Church Stretton town centre to follow the B4370 to Little Stretton.
- 16** At Little Stretton cycle past The Ragleth Arms and turn right just before the village shop and The Green Dragon pub. This tiny lane follows a small stream through the back of the village, turn first left towards Minton (not signed).


Little Stretton

A quiet village with lots of historic buildings. The church is not only half timbered... but also has a thatched roof.

- 17** Go up a short but very steep hill to the hamlet of Minton (a small cluster of houses grouped around a village green, is a rare example of a Saxon village layout). Go straight on signposted to Hamperley, and then turn right at the T junction (next to Minton Long Barn).
- 18** At Hamperley (Hamperley Farm & campsite) turn left signposted Horderley.
- 19** After half a mile turn right at the T junction with the main road (B4370) towards Horderley (not signed).
- 20** Downhill to the River Onny and the junction with the A489. Turn left on the main road signposted for Craven Arms.

21 After 100m turn right over the River Onny signposted for Edgton. (Look out for Dippers in the River below the bridge). Just next to the bridge is the old railway station. The line used to lead to Bishop's Castle and operated from 1865 to 1935.

22 Up a long hill out of the Onny valley and down a short way to Edgton.

Edgton –  A lovely hill top village. Pottery in the Old Schoolhouse (next to the church), open daily 10-5pm. The village well ('Stock Well') is decorated with a willow arch and 'dressed' every year. On the edge of the village is an old milestone, left over from the days when this narrow road would have been an important link between Bishop's Castle and Craven Arms.

23 Go straight on through the village and fork left at the Manor House. Continue past the 'Stock Well' (decorated with the willow arch) and turn left at the crossroads signposted for Craven Arms.

24 Cycle past Edgton Village Hall and milestone, then down to Basford. Up a very steep hill. At the summit (approx. 300m) you can virtually see your complete cycle route.

25 Downhill to Round Oak and straight on signposted to Craven Arms. One last climb to Wart Hill and then downhill all the way to Craven Arms.

Wart Hill – site of an Iron Age Hillfort. At 324m the fort has excellent views of the surrounding hills and is the focal point of 'The Wart Hill Wander', a Secret Hills Walk.

26 Go over the level crossing to the T junction with the A49 (**Take care**). Go straight across down a small track (next to stone water trough) leading to a footbridge across the River Onny.

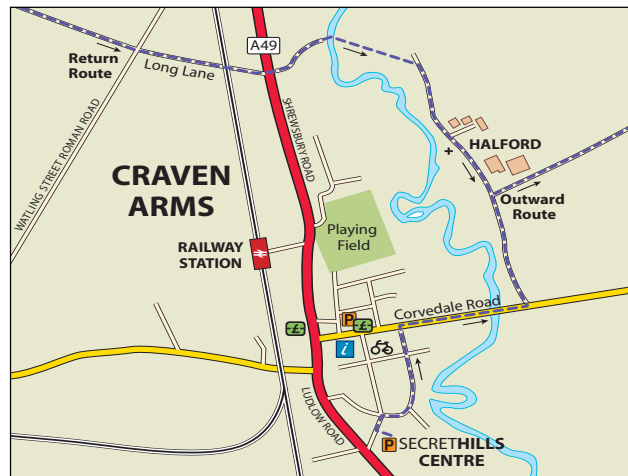
27 Cross the footbridge and go through the 'kissing gate'. Follow the path through the field to another 'kissing gate'.

28 Turn right on the stone track to Halford. Cycle past the church and up to the T junction with the main road (B4368).



















29 Turn right on the main road for Craven Arms and the end of the cycle route.

Well done, we hope you enjoyed this cycle route. Look out for the other Secret Hills Cycle Rides leaflet to Clun, available from the Secret Hills Centre.

CRAVEN ARMS TOWN MAP and symbols used in the text



----- Cycle route in/out of town

	Café		Pub/Inn		Restaurant
	Toilet		Tourist Information		Shops
	Post Office		Bank/Cash Point		Museum
	Crafts/Pottery		Gardens		Monument
	Picnic Area		Rail Station		Car Park
	Petrol		Accommodation		Cycle Hire

SECRET HILLS
Cycle Rides
Three routes through the Shropshire Hills



**Craven Arms to Acton Scott,
Church Stretton & Long Mynd**