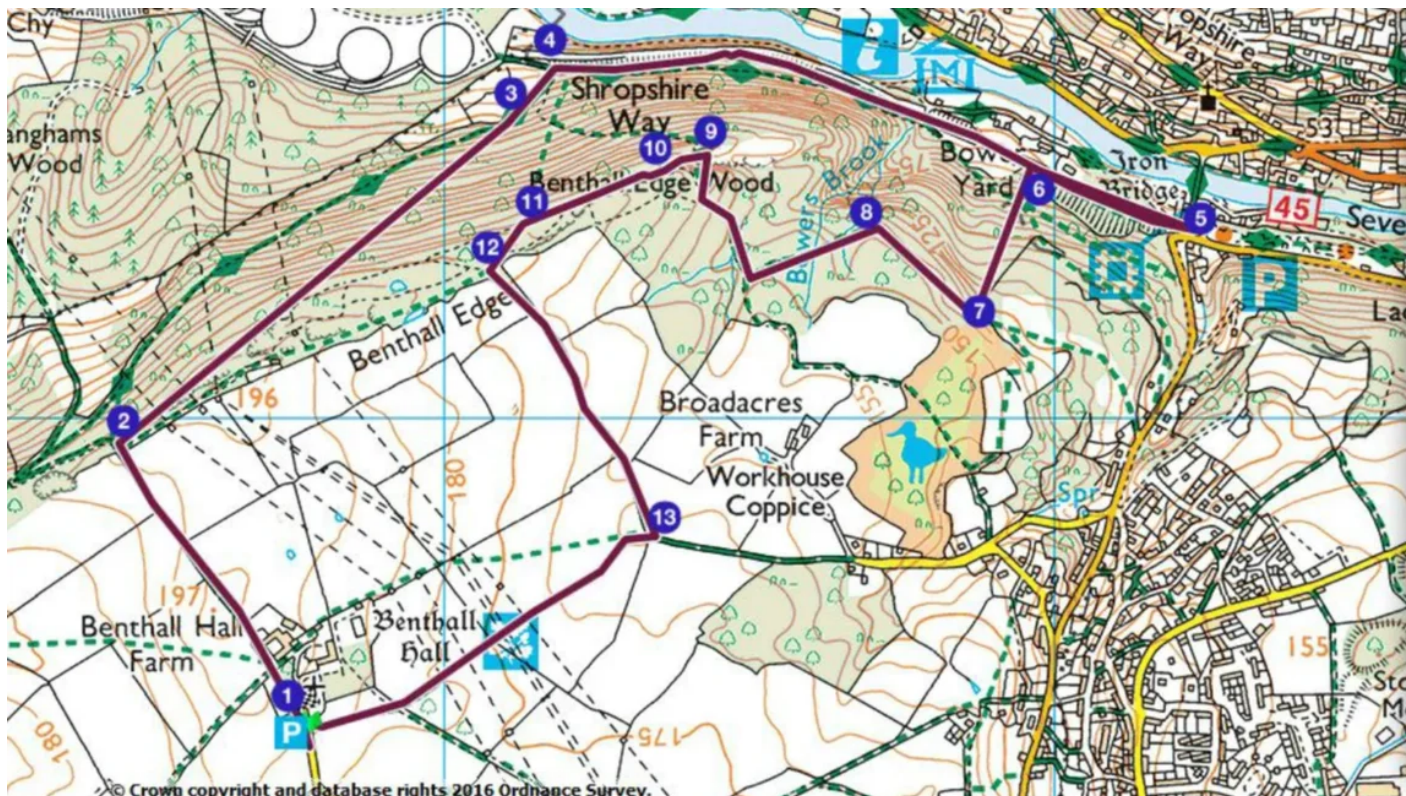


SHROPSHIRE & STAFFORDSHIRE

Benthall Hall Ironbridge walk

This walk might be strenuous but it takes in lovely views of Benthall Hall as well as the world-famous town of Ironbridge. Make a day of it. Start in the morning from the car park at Benthall, walk down to Ironbridge for lunch and wander around this fantastic World Heritage Site, before returning to Benthall in the afternoon.



Information

Address: Benthall Hall car park, Broseley, Shropshire TF12 5RX.

OS map: Landranger 127, Explorer 242

Activity: Walking

Moderate

Dog friendly

Full trail: Miles: 3.4 (km: 5.44)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 3 hours

Terrain

This can be muddy in wet weather and winter months, so sensible walking footwear is advised. This route includes stiles, lots of steps and some steep climbs. This route crosses the parkland in front of Benthall Hall, at certain times of year there are cattle in this field.

Total steps: 13

Start point: Benthall Hall car park

1. Leave the car park, turn left and then take the left-hand path at the fork. Follow this path straight down to the woodland edge. Where the track forks to the right, continue straight ahead through the metal gate. For this part of the walk you are following purple waymark arrows.
2. Continuing to follow the purple waymark arrows. After around 164yd (150m) the path forks. Take the left-hand fork and follow the Shropshire Way signs, stop following the purple arrows, and head downhill for 1093yd. Look out for rare bird's-nest orchids about halfway down.
3. When you reach a junction with some other paths turn left.
4. At the bottom go through a kissing gate and turn right. You are now following the old railway track. Follow this path until you reach the Iron Bridge. At this point you can go off and explore Ironbridge, returning back to this point to start the return leg of the journey back to Benthall Hall. The return described below is fairly strenuous. If you'd prefer a more gentle return, simply go back the way you came.
5. Retrace your steps back onto the former Severn Valley Railway track and, after about 273yd (250m) along this path, take the path to the left through a squeeze stile, following the fingerpost to Broseley.
6. This is the start of a steep climb out of Ironbridge Gorge up a series of wooden steps. Keep heading up the steps and at the next junction after 76yd (70m), still signposted to Broseley, continue climbing for a further 219yd (200m) or so.
7. Turn right as you reach the top of the climb, following the red Severn Gorge Countryside Trust (SGCT) route arrows (they are mounted on the steps at this point).
8. Follow a pleasant gravel footpath and boardwalk meandering through the woods for around 547yd (500m), before branching right at the end of the boardwalk. The

fingerpost here points to Patton's Rock Quarry View. Cross the Bower Brook, following it for a short distance before bearing left up a steep incline, at the top of which is another fingerpost to Patton's Rock Quarry View, still on the SGCT Red Route.

9. After 50m or so you reach the viewpoint and can take a well-earned rest here on the bench provided, as your climbing is complete. Enjoy views over the limestone grassland in the old quarry bed (which supports a variety of wild orchids) to Ironbridge.
10. At this point you leave the SGCT Red Route, which heads down a tortuous set of steps back into the gorge. Follow the fingerpost at the viewpoint that points to Benthall Hall, which takes you along the top of Benthall Edge. 'After negotiating a steep dip, ignore the path to the left and continue along the edge for another few metres until you reach a fork in the path with another fingerpost. Look out for bird's-nest orchids again on this section of the route.
11. Take the left fork, signed Spout Lane. Follow the path for 219yd (200m) or so, until you reach another fingerpost at a timber gate and stile leading to a path to the left. At this point you start following the purple waymark arrows again. You may enjoy looking for some of the many fossils on this section of the route in the stones that have fallen from the old quarry face.
12. Take the path over the stile to your left, signposted to Spout Lane. (Don't follow the sign to Benthall Hall as this joins back onto the route down to Ironbridge.) Pass through a spur to the woodland and out onto a farm track into open arable land.
13. After around 547yd (500m) the track (a public bridleway) turns left. Turn right at this point through a wooden bridleway gate and follow the path gently uphill through the fields for about 765yd (700m) to the Hall.

End point: Benthall Hall car park
