

Lydart Loop

2 miles, allow 1.5 hours for the views, many stiles—most not dog-friendly OS Explorer Map OL14 Car park at SO492104

A short if quite steep walk up to the historic landscape of Lydart with stunning views along and across the Trothy Valley and an equally steep descent with the view in front changing with every step.

From the church car park (1) at Mitchel Troy, go through the Churchyard past the fourteenth century preaching cross to the medieval lych-gate and cross the road with great care to the lane opposite besides Lamb's Quay. The stone-clad part of the house on the left used to be the blacksmith and the house to the right of Lamb's Quay was the Post Office and shop. This and the two cottages up the lane are a Victorian example of a barn conversion.



Take the right fork behind Lamb's Quay to the top of the lane and go through the pedestrian gate next to the brass plaque in memory of Jim Daghish, a local walker who was the inspiration

for the Mitchel Troy Walks leaflets. At the top of the green lane go through the kissing gate and up the field to the first of five stiles that take you straight up the fields; the last stile (2) has a particularly high step. Turn around from time to time to catch your breath and admire the views!

Continue straight up to the corner of the hedge (3).



Lime plasterwork in the Chapel at Lydart Farm

Turn left through the field gate and then diagonally across the field to another field gate. This is often muddy. At this point, the public footpath (wrongly drawn on the OS map) goes across the field and up a stream to point (6) but, since this is not practical, the landowner has given permission to follow the route shown in red on the map. This permission may be withdrawn at the discretion of the landowner. Before continuing up to the top of the field, go up the slope to the right a short way for a view of an old summerhouse at (4). This is a wooden bungalow, thought to be the last remnant of the temporary homes built above Lydart Bends between World Wars I and II.

Back at point (5), head up the field through the field gate in the fence line. Across the field, there is a



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Historic Lydart At the top of the walk you are in Lydart, which takes its name from the Welsh Llyth Garth or Grey Ridge, reflecting the frost line, below which the settlement spreads out. It is interesting to speculate whether the mounds in the field from points (8) to (9) may be the site of ancient buildings from a much larger settlement than the present Lydart. The settlement would have straddled the main road down from Trellech, the largest town in Wales in medieval times and a thriving industrial hub. This road was one of Ogilvy's Roads, surveyed after the Restoration of Charles II, being on the route from Monmouth to St David's via Trellech and Newport. Towards Trellech, the road ran just below the ridge to Glanau Farm. It then followed the route of the footpath, continuing below Lydart Farm. It can still be seen in the green lane that starts below the old barns at Lydart Farm and ends at the main road just below the first of the Lydart Bends. The remains of the buildings that can be seen in the field are probably of farm cottages of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, built when the Lydart Farm was very rich from the wars with France and the high price of corn.

Lydart Farm is a late fifteenth century Grade 2 listed farmhouse that has grown over the centuries. The history of the farmhouse is closely linked to the old Ogilvy Road. Built sometime between 1485 and 1525, it is thought to have belonged to the Abbey at Tintern, with a recently restored lime rendered chapel upstairs showing signs of continuous ecclesiastical use. Possibly the monks at Tintern wanted a small monastic dwelling to control traffic along the road. Even after the Reformation the house may well have continued in Catholic ownership. One wing of the house, with wooden windows in a cruciform style, has been dated to 1670-90. The front of the house was rebuilt and expanded in 1806 (dated from coins found in the wall), reflecting the riches being earned from farming at that time. The six foot thick cellar walls may date back to the twelfth century. They certainly assisted in the use of the cellar as a cider store and the farmhouse was known to be a cider house in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, providing accommodation on the way along the Ogilvy Road. In the 1860s Monmouth Town Council wished to promote the town to tourists exploring the Wye Valley and this may have been the reason for moving the road in 1861 to a higher level, thus passing above the cider house and making it a less obvious stop. In 1865 the farm passed to the Duke of Beaufort to join with the Troy House estate.

well, possibly in the fenced clump of trees above the farm buildings. Continuing to the top of the field, turn left following the hedge towards the large spreading oak tree (6). Bear right where the route crosses the beginning of the stream by a wall running alongside the road.

Late 15th century
Lydart window



At the wall, turn left, keeping tight to the wall on your right. Go over a stile and continue to the top of the driveway to New House Farm (7). Do not go onto the road but continue across the top of the field above the farm-house. Keep close to the wall on your right up to a pedestrian gate next to a stile, with an eye out for adders basking in this old stone wall and the bee-hives on the left immediately after the gate! After the gate bear slightly right (8) to walk through the next field with the hedge on your left.

Go over the stile (9) to cross the driveway down to Lydart House (10), a nineteenth century mansion house with superb views across the Trothy Valley. This replaced a Georgian mansion, although recent archaeology suggests that there may have been a twelfth century tower house on this site.

Across the drive, go through the small gate by the wall and walk alongside the barns up to the gate into Lydart Farm (11).



Lydart Farm

Turn left by the barn and go through the gate into the orchard. Continue down to the double stile by the holly bush (12) and pause to admire the views of the Sugar Loaf and Black Mountains in the distance. Go on down to the right of two oak trees to a stile on the left of a small copse and down the next field to a stile in the bottom right corner. At this stile, go diagonally, heading just to the left of an old drovers' barn (13), noting the fireplace at each end, and on to the stile in the bottom corner.

Descend this last field continuing to take in the views all round, with Monmouth appearing to the right. Ignore the stile on the right (14) and continue to the bottom of the field where a stile (15) leads on to a narrow footpath beside a garden and down into a green lane that ends at Parc Pentre. Follow the road to the left and then down to the main road by the bus stop and zebra crossing where you can cross back to the church car park.

If you walk with a dog, please be aware that there is livestock in some of the fields and dogs should therefore be on leads and kept strictly under control. Please follow the Country Code:

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

The path in the field between New House Farm and the road are not Public Rights of Way and are walked with the permission of the land-owner. This permission may be withdrawn at any time.

It is strongly recommended that this leaflet is used in conjunction with the Ordnance Survey Map OL14.

Mitchel Troy Church Car Park (at SO492104) can be reached by bus numbers 60 and 83 on the Monmouth to Newport/Abergavenny routes. Contact Traveline Cymru on 0800 474 00 00 for timetable and bus stops.

Mitchel Troy Local Paths Group is not able to guarantee access to any of the Mitchel Troy Walks and is not responsible for their maintenance. For further information, please contact Mitchel Troy Local Paths Group on 01600 715618. Any comments would be very much appreciated.

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Mitchel Troy Walks No 3

LYDART LOOP



Church of St Michael
and All Angels



Church Farm Guesthouse

IEWS FROM AN
HISTORIC LANDSCAPE