

Welcome to Wellington and The Wrekin Forest

This map and guide is designed to help you find your way around the town, giving an idea of some of the town's historic features and modern facilities. The walk routes lead you onto The Wrekin, part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Getting to Wellington is simple, it is just north of the M54 motorway, accessed from junctions 6 and 7. Also from the A5 which joins M54 east and west. From the north take A442 from Hodnet or A518 from Stafford. There are also frequent bus and train services.

In mediaeval times Wellington was known as 'Wellington Under The Wrekin'. Today it is a traditional market town which has a population of over 20,000, centred on Market Square, with many specialist shops and a variety of places of worship. The Town has a range of cafes, restaurants, pubs, hotels, banks, estate agents, accountants and other professional services. It is well off for schools too, including three primaries, three comprehensives, a sixth form college, a college of arts and technology and private primary and secondary schools. Local Government provided facilities include a swimming pool and leisure centre and a library with a local studies section. Shopping in Wellington Market is great fun as well as a money saver. The traders are friendly, generous, cooperative and independent. The market is owned by a private company that has taken over several other town markets. The range of goods offered is huge.

To anyone interested in geography, geology, biology, ecology, archaeology, wild life or just walking and enjoying the scenery, Wellington and The Wrekin Forest are ideal. Most of The Wrekin Forest is located in the Borough of Telford and Wrekin although the western end is in Shropshire.

Historic Information



1 Wellington Railway Station

Wellington Railway Station was a junction operated jointly by LMS and GWR; the Goods Yard was to the west. Trains went to Crewe, Stafford and South Wales via Much Wenlock as well as to Shrewsbury and Birmingham/London. The station cutting destroyed part of the burial ground; bodies were removed and buildings have crosses in recognition of this. The north side had a turntable, engine sheds, coal store and water tower. South east is the bay once used by 'slip coaches' without engines and local 'dodger' trains. Horse drawn charabancs once took parties to The Wrekin from the Station Hotel. A new bus station with public toilets has been developed. Station Road was the site of the Talbot Hotel, one of the sites where the Town Improvement Commissioners met.



2 All Saints Church

An earlier church damaged in the Civil War was replaced with the present one, designed by George Steuart in 1790, with cast iron pillars hidden behind plaster. Northwards, past gates given by John Crump Bowring, a generous fish merchant and the site of the town lock-up, is The Green. An alley called Ten Tree Croft leads to an area where processed cloth was hung on tenterhooks. The Lych Gate commemorates the dead of both World Wars. South of All Saints is the cast iron memorial recording the Corbet family who made agricultural implements. Dr. William Withering, an 18th Century medical and scientific pioneer famous for formally introducing digitalis as a treatment for heart disease, was baptised at All Saints.



3 Market Square

Market Square was set out in Mediaeval times, then including Crown, Bell and Duke Streets between which market stalls have become permanent buildings. The Square had a building called Market House with a meeting place above until the lord of the manor sold it in around 1805. In the former Houlston's/Hobson's shop are tiles indicating their trade as printers/publishers. Number One, the half timbered building, has two eccentric gables. Here followers of Sir Oswald Mosley tried to convert Wellington to fascism in 1939 but started a riot. The Market is entered via Market Approach (formerly known as the Shambles). Wellington's Town Clock celebrated the millennium.



4 Wellington Market

Granted its first Charter in 1244, Wellington Market is a fully heated indoor market hall, housing over 120 shopping units. There is also an outdoor market area. Some of the finest food outlets around can be found in the market, with everything from bakers to butchers, fish to fruit

Nearby are Ironbridge, the Roman city of Viroconium (Wroxeter) and the new town of Telford. Half hidden away are many more interesting places well worth exploring, especially on the Weald Moors, including a Bronze Age lake village (Wall), the world's first cast iron aqueduct and several high-tech factories. The two best visits, however, are Wellington Market and The Wrekin.

Park and Walk Information

After parking in one of Wellington's free car parks (most are free), you will have the advantage of a whole town waiting for your return. Wellington's car parks are well signed on the inner ring road. The distance from Wellington town centre to the foot of The Wrekin is only 1.7 miles, most of which will be on woodland paths. See the routes shown on the reverse side of this guide.

Bus Information

The Wellington bus station is conveniently located next to the train station, town centre and walk routes shown on this map.

For information about the bus station, stops, shelters and timetables for services in Wellington and the surrounding areas, please contact the Telford Bus Station on 01952 200005 or visit www.telford.gov.uk.

Train Information

Wellington is currently served by two trains an hour between Birmingham New Street and Shrewsbury, one operated by London Midland and the other by Arriva Trains Wales. The latter trains continue alternately to Aberystwyth and Holyhead via Chester.

For train times and station information call National Rail on 08457 484950 or visit www.nationalrail.co.uk.

and veg. The market cafes are popular places to stop off and our delicatessens are great to visit, providing hams, cheeses and goodies from near and far.



5 New Street

New Street was set out in burgess plots, probably by Giles of Erdington around 1244. As usual the upper storeys are more historically interesting but several shop fronts have recently been improved. Several buildings retain timber framed walls hidden by fashionable brick in the 18th Century.

A plaque to Hesba Stretton (Sarah Smith), best selling Victorian novelist and friend of Charles Dickens, marks her birth place. Her book 'Jessica's First Prayer' sold 1,500,000 copies in many languages. She helped found the London Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, one of the fore runners of the NSPCC and campaigned on many social issues including the plight of poor children.



6 Walker Street

Walker Street was named for the fullers, nicknamed 'walkers' because they stamped cloth in tubs of water and fuller's earth. The Halifax (once Walter Davies, ironmonger) has ornamental brickwork above. The Market entrance is framed by an old Fire Station, later Urban District Council offices. Two Post Offices, the latest built in the 1980s, were closed and moved into the Market. On Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays the extensive and fascinating market is open, including a large Victorian hall and part covered outdoor stalls. The Library was presented to the town in 1902 and extends into the former Union Workhouse that became Union Brewery. The modern extension was opened by the poet Philip Larkin, a former librarian.



7 Tan Bank

Tan Bank was the site of a Mediaeval tannery. It was once called Water Lane where a town pump was situated. The YMCA building on the corner (now Williams and Lamb) was once home to World Billiards. At the Northern End was Swine Market, near which Espleys later had a slaughterhouse and pork pie factory. South east is a night club on the site of a roller skating rink, later Grand Theatre, where a 3D film system was invented. The Rechabite Hall was built by a teetotal friendly society but later became a snooker hall with a bar. Nearby was the Excelsior Carriage Works, which changed production to motor cars; these were wider and caused the invention of the now universal 'up-and-over' garage door. The Primitive Methodist Chapel is now a Mosque and their Sunday School a Pentecostal Church.

Acknowledgements:

- George Evans, Allan Frost and the Wellington History Group.
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Historic Viewpoints

Use the numbered historic viewpoints to help you find your way around the town. The corresponding historical references will give an idea of some of the town's history, features and modern facilities.

The blue walk route will lead you towards The Wrekin, part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Various routes around and up The Wrekin can be found on the reverse of this leaflet.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Wellington Railway Station | 6 Walker Street |
| 2 All Saints Church | 7 Tan Bank |
| 3 Market Square | |
| 4 Wellington Market | |
| 5 New Street | |

Map Key

- | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|---|
| | Train Station | | Public Toilets |
| | Bus Station | | Public Telephones |
| | Car Parks | | Roads and Streets |
| | Cycle Parks | | Suggested walk route from the Train Station to around The Wrekin and Forest |
| | Rail Route | | |

Maps of Wellington Historic Town & The Wrekin Forest Walks

Wellington Gateway to Shropshire

This map and guide is designed to help you find your way around the town and towards various walking routes around and up The Wrekin.

About Wellington

Eating - There are a variety of eating establishments, Cantonese, Chinese, Indian, Italian, hotel and pub grub - prices to suit every pocket.

Where to stay - Wellington has five highly rated hotels, and several guest houses. It provides a good base for visiting the many interesting attractions in the surrounding area.

Sporting Facilities - Wellington boasts excellent sporting facilities including AFC Telford United, Wrekin Golf Club and Wellington Cricket Club with bowls in the local Bowling Park and Civic Centre health suite and swimming pool.

Literary Festival - This takes place each year in October and is sponsored by the Town Council. It is a well respected event with many eminent writers having participated in recent years such as Kate Adie, Carol Ann Duffy and Germaine Greer amongst others.

The Wrekin - Our most known local attraction, part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and within walking distance of the town centre.

Useful Resource Websites

- www.wellingtonunderthewrekin.co.uk
- www.wellingtonla21.org.uk
- www.wellingtonhistorygroup.wordpress.com

Contact Us

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Wellington is a "Walkers are Welcome" Town
www.wellingtonwalkersarewelcome.org.uk

Walk Key

- A** To the Top of The Wrekin
- B** Around The Wrekin
- B** Alternative route
- C** Erccall Wood Nature Reserve
- C** Alternative Route
- D** Limekiln Wood
- D** Alternative route

Ordnance Survey® Explorer Map 242, Telford, Ironbridge & The Wrekin
The walk routes featured on this map have been overlaid on the Ordnance Survey (OS) Explorer Map 242, scale 1:25,000. Further key information can be found by purchasing this OS Map or visiting www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown Copyright 2011. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100050156.

Suggested Walks from Wellington Railway Station

A To the Top of The Wrekin

From the station ticket office take the road up towards W.H.Smith. Turn left and go through Market Square, keeping to the left of the black and white building. Go along Crown Street. Carry straight on up Tan Bank. Cross Victoria Road and continue through the pedestrian access into the next section of Tan Bank. After about 30 metres take the brick footpath on the right. Cross the next road (Roseway) and take the footpath immediately opposite. Carry on past the allotments on your right and Sunnycroft (maintained by the National Trust) on the left. Cross Holyhead Road by the pelican crossing going ahead into Golf Links Lane. Continue until just before the bridge under the motorway.

Take the signed public footpath to the right. Continue until you reach the next bridge over the motorway. Cross over the M54 to where Erccall Wood begins. There is a small car park on the left. Take the path on the left of the road. This takes you along the edge of The Erccall Wood Nature Reserve. The path joins Erccall Lane by the Buckatree Hall Hotel. Walk carefully along the road until the next road junction. This area at the foot of The Wrekin is called the Forest Glen. Cross the road and go through a large gate into the wood. Take the track which leads gently up.

Follow the main track as it bends right to the Halfway House. At busy times light refreshments are on sale here.

Go through another gate and continue on the path up the hill, which turns to rise steeply up the ridge. At Hell Gate you enter the hill fort. The track climbs to Heaven Gate, from where it is almost level to the top. Here you'll find a trig point and a toposcope. In good weather the views are magnificent. Return the same way or take any of the other routes on the map.

The total length of this walk, in one direction is approximately 3.5 miles (5.5 km). The walk climbs 1,000 feet (300 metres).

B Around The Wrekin

Follow the first two paragraphs of the description of Walk A. At the sharp bend where the main track turns right up the hill, leave the main track and go straight on. After about a mile, take the right fork onto the signed permissive path (do not take the descending left fork). Cross the path that goes very steeply up to the summit. (Alternatively, turn right here to ascend to the summit and then follow the main route down to the Forest Glen.) Go straight ahead, on the gently descending permissive path. At the next junction turn right, by the permissive path signpost, onto the public footpath. Where the path forks, take the left fork. Continue straight on, crossing the stile through the old rifle range, eventually joining the road. Turn right onto the road, continue to the T junction, cross the road, climb the stile and go through the kissing gate. Continue on the path on the left of the reservoir. Turn right onto a wide track and reach the road. Turn left to the Buckatree Hall Hotel, then retrace your steps to Wellington.

The total length of this walk is approximately 7.5 miles (12 km).

C Erccall Wood Nature Reserve

Follow the first paragraph of Walk A to the motorway bridge.

Continue under the bridge. Immediately turn right to follow the signposted footpath. Go over the footbridge. Bear left into the wood and fork left again where there is an Erccall Woods Walk green waymark on a tree. Keep to the wider main path which rises slowly along the side of the hill. Near the top there is a path which descends steeply from the right. (Alternative shorter walk avoiding the very steep section: turn right here, continue uphill to the ridge and turn right. Continue following the instructions from C1 below.) Bear left here onto the descending path, following another green waymark. Continue between a slab wall on the right and a large concrete drainpipe on the left. Follow the path around the bend and take the left fork to descend into the quarries, still following the green waymarks. Continue on the path through the quarries. About 25 metres before the gate onto the road, there is a path on the right which leads down steps to a footbridge. Take this path, cross the footbridge and go up the other side. (To the left a path leads to the Buckatree Hall Hotel.) Turn right to continue the walk. After a short distance bear left up the hill. Where the path levels turn right and follow the very steep path uphill to the summit. Follow the green waymarks, bearing left at the top and (C1) continue straight on down the ridge. Keep following the green waymarks, bearing right to descend to the footbridge. Re-cross the footbridge and retrace your steps to Wellington.

The total length of this walk is approximately 4 miles (6.5 km).

D Limekiln Wood

Follow the first paragraph of Walk A to the motorway bridge.

Continue under the bridge. Climb up to and over the stile into the signed path on the left. Take the first right turn, just past the edge of the golf course. Stay on the path, keeping the boundary on your left. Do not go onto the open part of the golf course. Still keeping to the boundary, bear left to enter Limekiln Wood through a kissing gate. Keep on the main track until a major path comes in from the right at a post. (The alternative shorter walk below leaves here.) The main walk is waymarked with red arrows until the golf club house is reached. Continue straight on along the path until you reach the houses at Steeraway. Go onto the main track, turn right over the stile and follow the path up, keeping straight on up the hill, ignoring any side paths. At the top there is a kissing gate on the left. Do not go through this but keep to the path straight ahead. At the T-junction, take the farm track to the right down the hill. Towards the bottom of the hill, turn right between two rocks (this is also the Hutchison Way). After about a mile, follow the path bearing left over the golf course, bear right onto a bridleway and follow the hedge dropping down to pass the golf club house on the left. By the golf club house, instead of following the Limekiln Wood Walk and the Hutchison Way to the right, follow the blue waymark straight on to join the road from the club house further down, which goes back down to Golf Links Lane. Retrace your steps to Wellington.

The total length of this walk is approximately 5 miles (8 km).

Shorter Alternative: At the post mentioned above, turn to the right. Following the waymarks (Hutchison Way), at the first post fork left and at the second post fork right.

Turn to the right when a more definite path comes in from the left. This path will come to the approach road to the golf club, just below a wall. Turn right down the road until the motorway bridge is reached, then retrace your steps to Wellington.

The total length of this alternative walk is approximately 3 miles (5 km).

Long Distance Walks

Shropshire Way

Shropshire Way is a 139 mile (224 km) route through Shropshire. It is waymarked using a white buzzard symbol on a black background. The local section comes through Allscott and Aston and ascends the west side of The Wrekin. It joins the summit path near the Halfway House. It then crosses the summit, continues over Little Hill and descends to a minor road which it follows to Little Wenlock.

Hope House Way

Hope House Way is a 335 mile (539 km) long-distance walk through mid Wales and the Marches. It is a circular route, with its official start and finish by the Community Clock in the Market Square in Wellington. The route was created by the Rotary Club of The Wrekin in order to raise funds for the Hope House Children's Hospices. The start of the route ascends The Wrekin, as in route A. It continues down the ridge on the Shropshire Way route. It follows the Shropshire Way towards Little Wenlock. The end of the route also passes over The Wrekin.

Points of interest

The Wrekin Hillfort

Like most Shropshire hills, The Wrekin has its fort, begun in the Bronze Age around 3500 years ago, rebuilt by Celts about 500 BC. It is believed to have been the 'capital' of the tribe the Romans called Cornovii, who lived in Shropshire and Cheshire, where a body was found in a marsh some years ago. Although the hillfort has not been used for 2,000 years it is still visible. It is a Scheduled Monument and the home of our ancestors, so please treat it well. See 'Archaeology of the Welsh Marches' by Stan Stanford and 'The Wrekin Hill' by Allan Frost.

The Wrekin Hills - Geology

Some of The Wrekin's rocks are very ancient and were formed when there was only microscopic life on Earth. They began thousands of miles south of the Equator and drifted here over hundreds of millions of years. The truth is even more fantastic than The Wrekin Giant story, which most locals can tell in one version or another. The older rocks are igneous, raised up by gigantic faults, moving over the Earth's surface propelled by plate tectonics. Our Wrekin is millions of years older than the Himalayas, Alps or Andes and may once have been higher. Rocks include Gneiss, Granophyre, Camptonite, Dolerite, Schist, Rhyolite, Tuff, Quartzite, Sandstone, Shale, Basalt, Limestone, Coal Measures, Conglomerate, Keele Beds, Gravel, Sand, Clay and Scree. That's a huge variety. See 'Geology in Shropshire' by Peter Toghil.

The Woodlands - Ownership

The Wrekin and Little Hill, Gibbons Coppice, Wenlock's Wood, Hazel Hurst, Maddocks Hill, Black Hayes and Short Wood are all privately owned. The Borough Council owns the north sides of The Erccall and Limekiln Wood, both of which are nature reserves. The south side of The Erccall and Lawrence Hill belong to Shropshire Wildlife Trust; naturally that's a nature reserve too. All the paths marked are either public or permissive; if you don't stray you're quite legal but remember that owners, farmers, foresters and golfers have rights as well as we do.



The Wrekin Hillfort image supplied by the Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

Other Routes

There are many other routes from Wellington, particularly in the area depicted on the map. For example, a route going over the summit of The Erccall, around the base of The Wrekin to the ridge path, back over The Wrekin and then possibly over The Erccall again is to be recommended. There are other approaches to The Wrekin, via Limekiln Lane or via Cluddley. It is feasible to walk in a day from Wellington to Ironbridge and back via The Erccall and The Wrekin, possibly returning on the Ironbridge Way via Leegomery.

Hutchison Way

Hutchison Way is a 19 mile (30 km) route from Wellington to Newport. It is named in memory of late former Chief Executive of (the then) Wrekin Council, David Hutchison. It is waymarked using named maroon arrows on a white disc. The route starts outside Wellington Town Civic and Leisure Centre. It goes to the foot of The Wrekin, as in Route A, skirts the base of The Erccall and continues via the Golf course to Steeraway Farm. It then heads off in the direction of Telford Town Centre.

Silkin Way

Silkin Way is a 14 mile (22 km) walking and cycling route, partly on the line of old railway tracks, running across Telford from north to south. It starts at Bratton, just north of Wellington and goes through Dotherill, passing just behind the Princess Royal Hospital on its way to Leegomery. It eventually arrives via Telford Town Centre, at Coalport in the Ironbridge Gorge.

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