



Benthall Edge and the power station from Jackfield Bridge



Route 13 Much Wenlock to Benthall Edge

Discover Shropshire

The hidden tunnels and tiles of Benthall Hall

Worthy of a detour, this fine Elizabethan country house is managed by the National Trust. The house is said to have secret tunnels under its lawns. Beneath its wooden floors hide beautiful tiles, laid by the Jackfield tile masters, George and Arthur Maws. Brother George is also thought to have planted the crocuses that light up the gardens in spring.

Ironbridge Power Station

It is ironic that the clay-red cooling towers of this landmark, so obvious from many of Shropshire's hills, are thought to be well hidden. This monster chews its way through 1.2 million tonnes of coal and 20,000 tonnes of oil a year to power our kettles. It was shortlisted for a conservation award, because it was designed to blend into the valley!

Ironbridge

If you visited Benthall Hall you may have already stumbled across the work of Thomas Farnolls Pritchard. This respected interior designer designed its fossil-rich marble fireplaces. However, he is more famous for the work that stands proudly at the end of this walk. Pritchard's designs were cast at Coalbrookdale, stretching the skill of iron master Abraham Darby II. Such is the innovation contained in this work, it's said that it could not be built today.

...and railways?

You started along the line of William Penny Brookes' railway. Not content with re-birthing the Olympic movement, he also brought steam to Much Wenlock. You finish along a different line. Once, the mighty engines of Severn Valley Railway powered through here to Shrewsbury.

Walking the Shropshire Way from Much Wenlock to Ironbridge you'll meander the magical woodlands of Benthall Edge to skirt invisible cooling towers and finish at Pritchard's Iron Bridge.

Benthall Edge

These days Benthall Edge is so crammed with wildlife you can hear the trees creak in protest. At any moment the wood's stitches threaten to burst, spilling out all over the landscape. The careful fields hem them in but nothing can stop the birdcalls and insect noises from leaking out.

There are many criss-crossing paths. Most are traces of the wood's once industrial harness. Limestone, coal and clay were blasted, hewn, scooped and dragged from here to feed the ravenous beast of industry birthed in the Gorge.

Benthall Edge is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, one of the few places anywhere to boast Wild Service and Large-leafed Lime trees.



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



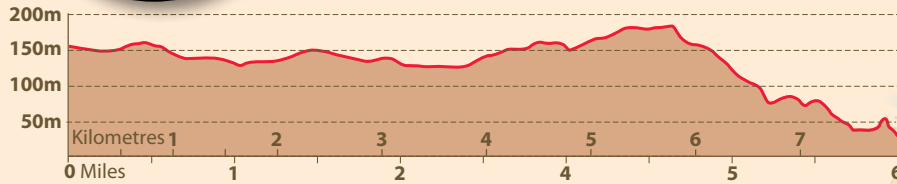
Along the wooded slopes of Benthall Edge





Discover Shropshire

Route 13



Shropshire Way	Footpaths	Bridleways
Visitor Information Centre	Place of Worship	Museum
Café	Caravan/Camping Site	Car Parking
Public House	English Heritage	National Trust
Toilets	Forestry Commission	Youth Hostel
Building of Historical Interest	Castle	
Gardens	Walking routes	

Scale bar: 0 to 2 Kilometres / 0 to 1 Miles. Compass rose showing North (N), South (S), East (E), and West (W).

For a more detailed map directions and information visit:
www.shropshirewalking.co.uk

DIFFICULTY: often uneven and undulating woodland paths and stony tracks

★★★★☆
 8 kilometre section

