

## Ross-on-Wye town and riverside

**Distance and time** Approx 2.8km (including town centre), allow 1–1.5 hours

### **Brief description of the walk and path conditions**

This is a circular walk of approximately 1 ¼ miles (2km) taking in the riverside and town centre with opportunities to make diversions around the streets of this historic market town.

*The entire route is barrier free and uses tarmac paths, except for a 200m section across the riverside park on a grass surface. Walkers wishing to avoid this should start from the swimming pool and shoppers' car park off Kyrle Street, close to Ross Shopmobility, and not from the Sports Ground car park as described below. There is quite a steep section of the walk up Wye Street (approx 150m, with a maximum gradient of 1:10 at its steepest. There are seats half way up the hill on which to rest and enjoy the views.*

*Please note that in wet conditions paths with natural surfaces can become more uneven and difficult to negotiate.*

Whichever way you approach the town, the view of Ross-on-Wye is dominated by the tall, slender spire of St Marys church which is visible for miles around. Built of red sandstone in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the church stands next to the 'Prospect' a pleasant garden with a viewpoint where you can look down on the river Wye curving past the town. The gardens were laid out by John Kyrle, known locally as the Man of Ross a generous benefactor of the town during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Relevant OS Maps**

Explorer OL14 – Wye Valley and Forest of Dean

Outdoor Leisure 162 – Gloucester and the Forest of Dean

### **Start point for the walk and facilities**

Start the walk at the Sports Ground pay and display car park on the south side of Wilton Bridge road B4260. Visitors arriving along the A40 dual carriageway should turn off at the Wilton roundabout (junction with A49 Hereford Road) and cross Wilton Bridge with the car park entrance being 250m on the right.

Visitors wishing to use Ross Shopmobility should also enter the town by this route. They should drive past the sportsground car park up Wilton Road and turn left into the one-way traffic system along Edde Cross Street. Going downhill, then take the second turning on the right into Kyrle Street and find the entrance to the swimming pool complex, shopmobility centre and shoppers car park (pay and display) on the left. Public toilets are situated in the car park, with a separate accessible WC operated by Radar key.

Ross shopmobility is located in a hut opposite the swimming pool. There are 7 mobility scooters, 2 manual and 2 electric wheelchairs available for loan. Users can either pre-book a chair in advance by telephone 01989 763388 or else turn up on spec. Non pre-registered users must complete a registration form, undergo a short training session and complete a basic questionnaire. This procedure may take 20-30 minutes. A Radar key may also be borrowed for persons wishing to use the accessible WC in the nearby public toilet facility.

Walkers starting from the sportsground car park should note the absence of toilets at this location. However, WCs and baby changing facilities are available a short distance into the walk, in Wye Street.

### **Detailed Walk description**

Walk through the sportsground car park noting a useful information shelter with a panel giving a good aerial impression of the town, and follow the sign 'pedestrian underpass to riverside, town centre and toilets'. Pass a skateboard park on the right. There is no drop kerb when leaving the car park to join a level gravel path. Follow the path for 60m to go through the underpass and arrive at the town's riverside park. Head across the grass towards the bandstand, to reach a tarmac

path after 200m. Public toilets are on the right, where the path joins Wye Street. Cross the road using a drop kerb, 10m to the right, in front of the Riverside Inn and Restaurant.

Turn right up Wye Street (the only significant ascent on the walk, 150m long, and approx 1:10 at its steepest) where you shortly reach a small town garden with three seats on the left. A ramped and stepped path leads down from here to Rope Walk, so called because ropes, baskets and boats were made in the building at the bottom of the ramp in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is also a shortcut down to the Hope and Anchor pub which, like the Riverside Inn has a beer garden and picnic tables close to the river. At the top of Wye Street there are three seats located in a paved area in front of the Man of Ross Inn, and a leaping salmon sculpture by Walenty Pytel, erected in 1997. The leaping salmon was also used as the official logo for the long distance Wye Valley Walk which passes through the town. Drop kerbs provide easy access to the Ross TIC on the opposite side of the street.

Walkers wishing to explore the town centre shops and facilities can go along High Street to the market place where twice weekly markets are held under the 16<sup>th</sup> century Market House. There are many independent retailers, antique shops, galleries and eating places here.

Leave the market place by going down Broad Street and take the second turning on the left into Kyrle Street. Half way along, turn right into the swimming pool complex, shopmobility centre and shoppers car park, where there are public toilets, including a separate accessible WC, Radar key operated.

Arriving in the car park turn left onto a tarmac path leading past Ross shopmobility hut where mobility scooters, pushed wheelchairs and electric wheelchairs can be borrowed. Continue along the path to cross a footbridge and turn left to reach Trenchard Street. Turn left and cross the road (drop kerbs) to follow signs pointing to Riverside Walk 50yds, Rowing Club 250yds. Continue along the tarmac driveway to reach the riverside park and bear right along the wide tarmac lane towards Ross Rowing Club. Just outside their entrance gate (no public

access beyond) turn left onto another tarmac path along the riverside. There is a good view of St Marys Church dominating the town from here. Seats are provided at intervals along the path, and another sculpture of swans in flight by Walenty Pytel.

After 300m you arrive at the Hope and Anchor garden. There are two steps on the riverside path here, but these can be avoided by diverting left through the pub car park and then right through the beer garden along a tarmac path. Maybe time for a drink? Follow the path for another 150m where it suddenly turns sharply left. At this point there is an option to continue for an extended walk along the riverside on a grassy path, with 12 seats lining the path at 20m intervals. At the end of this path there are views across the river to Wilton Castle which is privately owned and a third sculpture of mallards set in the parkland.

To return to the sportsground car park, leave the riverside park and either turn right along Wye Street to the car park entrance in Wilton Road, or cross the park through the pedestrian underpass used at the start of the walk.

Walkers who started from the swimming pool and shoppers car park in Kyrle Street can either go left up Wye Street and through the town centre (as described above) or if they want to keep on the level, they should return along the riverside footpath or the Rope Walk back to Trenchard Street.