



TRAVELLING BY CAR

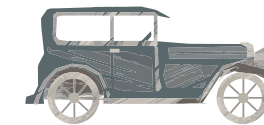
BLACK & WHITE

VILLAGES TRAIL



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Delightful driving, quintessentially English villages

TOTAL DISTANCE - 37 MILES

North-west Herefordshire is home to a cluster of picture-perfect Black & White Villages. Their history is far from monochrome, however, and among the pretty timber-framed houses you'll discover reminders of Norman conquerors, including fine stone churches and the remains of castles built to defend from Welsh incursions.

MAGICAL MINI ROADTRIP

Designed to take 1 or 2 days, this driving route makes a magical mini roadtrip. Stay at B&Bs and pubs en route (see page 5) or base yourself in one of the villages. Visit in spring to see the cider orchards blossoming pink and in autumn for the harvest of apples and perry pears.

Along the way, there's plenty of opportunities to enjoy local food, drink and heritage. Take a picnic and go for a paddle on the pebble beaches at Pembridge and Eardisland. Or stay a while longer and get to know this picture-perfect landscape on foot with our circular walking routes.

SHORT ON TIME?

The stars of the show are Weobley, Pembridge and Eardisland.

ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING

In Leominster's Broad Street (HR6 8DD) and Etnam Street (HR6 8AE) car parks or Kington's Mill Street car park (HR5 3DP).

1	Leominster	5	Kinnersley	9	Pembridge
2	Dilwyn	6	Eardisley	10	Eardisland
3	Weobley	7	Kington	11	Kingsland
4	Sarnesfield	8	Lyonshall		

CLICK TO DOWNLOAD THE FULL ROUTE

osmaps.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/route/11375763/Black-and-white-House-Trail-Drive



Black & White Villages Trail

Driving Route

1 - Leominster

Start the trail in the market town of Leominster, a beautiful Black & White town with a treasure trove of antique shops. It boasts the finest example of the area's typical timber-framed buildings, most of them constructed between the 15th and 17th century: Grange Court. The ornately carved work of 'King's Carpenter' John Abel is the former market hall, built in 1633; later re-erected here and used as a family home. It's now a community hub housing a gallery and a welcoming café with tempting cakes, hot meals and a lovely little garden. From here, stroll to the magnificent Priory Church, admiring its imposing Norman West Door (look for the beasts carved in the corners, including a quirky Green Man inside) and the last ducking stool used in England in 1809. Then spot the various Tudor, Stuart and Georgian-era buildings along Church Street, Broad Street and Drapers Lane.



2 - Dilwyn

Leave Leominster on the A44, signed Rhayder, turning left (still A44) at Barons Cross, about a mile from the town centre. After a mile you will reach Monkland where you can make a short detour to Monkland Cheese Dairy with its cafe and farm shop, open Monday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm. Otherwise, remain on the A44 and turn left to Dilwyn after around 3 miles.

Dilwyn, meaning 'shady or secret place,' is a tiny settlement in a wooded hollow. Here, the friendly 17th-century Crown Inn faces a triangular green lined with Black & White cottages, converted from a tithe barn which was built over 300 years ago to house the tithes (taxes in kind) that every landholder had to pay the Lord of the Manor and Church Rector. Enter the 12th-century sandstone church of St Mary's via its imposing porch to admire the effigy tomb of an unnamed medieval knight. The village's original 17th-century forge is now a tea room with a delightful garden.

3 - Weobley

Leave Dilwyn with the green on your left, rejoining the main road (A4112 signed Brecon). After about 2 miles, turn left for Weobley on the B4230, taking a subsequent left and then right turn.

As you enter one of the largest, most attractive and best-provisioned of the Black & White Villages, keep an eye out for the much-loved black and pink house. In the village, hop between interpretation boards to follow the Heritage Trail for morsels of historical insight, including how to identify different timber-framed buildings, including cruck cottages and Wealden houses. Look out for the Throne, an impressive early 15th-century house named as a nod to its most famous guest, King Charles I, who overnighted here during the Civil War, and admire the Old Grammar School, a lovely double-gabled early 17th-century building on Hereford Road.

Duck into the russet-stone church, with its tall, slender spire, and explore the remains of the 13th-century ring-and-bailey fortifications, perhaps taking Visit Herefordshire's recommended 5.5 mile circular walk to Burton Hill. Younger visitors will appreciate the excellent skatepark. For lunch-on-the go, try The Green Bean Café for excellent coffee, toasties and cream teas. Ye Olde Salutation Inn is an ideal base for a night or longer, offering hearty, locally sourced food. Across the road, Jules Café-Bar Restaurant serves more sophisticated mod-Brit cuisine plus lighter lunches and beers from the on-site Weobley Brewery Co.



4 - Sarnesfield

Return to the A4112 and turn left (signed Brecon).

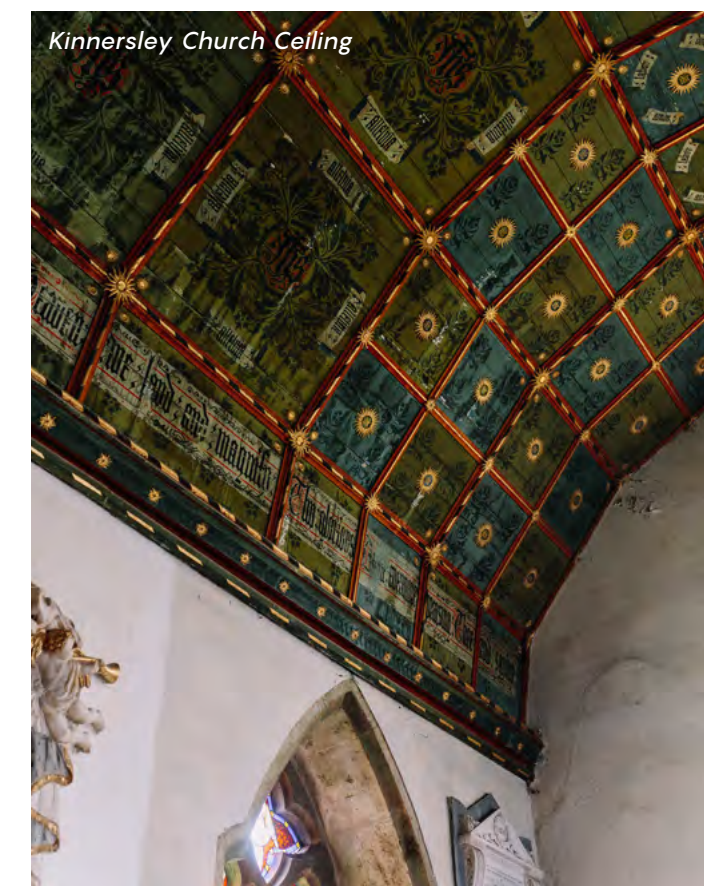
You'll soon pass through the village in which John Abel was born and is buried. Aside from Grange Court, his craftsmanship graces much of the county, including the Golden Valley's magnificent Dore Abbey.

5 - Kinnersley

Continue on the A4112 for two miles to reach Kinnersley.

The impressive Kinnersley Castle (open around 30 days a year, check website for details) stands on the left as you enter the village, with Kinnersley Church alongside. It's an absolute gem with its striking 'saddleback' tower, which brings to mind Dutch architecture, and its prettily painted nave.

Follow up with an orchard walk and cider tasting at the Orgasmic Cider Company (booking required).



Black & White Villages Trail

Driving Route

6 – Eardisley

Continue on for two miles, taking a right turn at the T-junction for the A4111 towards Rhayader.

The Church is also the draw in Eardisley – St Mary Magdalene’s elaborately carved 12th century font features a great lion and two battling warriors and is the work of the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture. Meander around the elaborate memorials ornamented with lengthy odes to the dead. Spot the gravestone of Thomas Bev... (eroded), blacksmith exclaiming that: “My Sledge and Hammer lie declin’d / My Bellows have quite lost their Wind / My Fire’s extinct my forge decay’d / My Vices in the Dust all lay’d”. Amongst the Black & White houses is Tram Square, named after the early 19th century horse-drawn tramway which brought in Welsh coal. Continue past the Tram Inn (now closed) towards Woods Eaves, turning right by a chapel, to admire the 900-year-old, gnarled Eardisley Oak at Hurstway Common. Back in the village, pause at the New Strand, a combination café-bookshop-post office-pub with a large garden.



7 – Kington

Return to Tram Square and turn left on the A4111 towards Kington. At the roundabout with the A44, turn left for the town centre.

Kington’s tiny constellation of shops and galleries is also home to a smattering of the county’s traditional timber-framed houses. Border Bean and La Gala are lovely lunch options or go back in time with a pint at Ye Olde Tavern. Lying on the border with Wales, this is real walking country. Stretch your legs on Hergest Ridge where you may meet the wild ponies or take an equally spectacular stroll at Hergest Croft Gardens. See the effigies in St Mary’s Church of Black Vaughan and Ellen the Terrible, two local legends.

8 – Lyonshall

Return to the roundabout and follow the A44 Leominster signs. You’ll pass the fine 14th century pile, Penrhos Court, with its excellent restaurant The Cattleshed. Lyonshall is a mile further on.

The lovely hillside church is on the left, next to the ruins of the moated castle. Somewhat stranded, it looks down on the main village half a mile away. The Black Death is to blame. After it hit in 1348/50, survivors decided to rebuild a good distance away from the original site.

Today the village retains a cluster of Black & White houses and all around there are rolling fields, some of which grow blackcurrants for the locally-made liqueur British Cassis (tours available).

9 – Pembridge

Continue on the A44 to Pembridge, with the option to turn into the exuberant Westonbury Mill Water Gardens with follies and cafe.

Another star of the show, Pembridge once enjoyed the patronage of the powerful Mortimer family and the prosperity that went along with it. Quintessentially English, picture-perfect timber-framed buildings line the main street, with the house names giving away the buildings’ original uses. At the 16th century Market Hall you can see the notches on the pillars where merchants wedged in planks to display their wares. Follow the steps to St Mary’s Church to see its extraordinary detached wooden belltower, reminiscent of a pagoda. Nearby, The New Inn is anything but new. Dating back 700 years to when the farmer’s wife brewed ale to sell to the merchants, it still serves up character, local ales and pub food.

Nearby, The Old Chapel Gallery is packed with high-quality works by British (many local) artists and craftspeople and the Ye Olde Steppes Village Shop is the place for provisions. Take a walk over the bridge to find the pebble beach, the perfect place for a paddle and picnic. Call in at The Pembridge Café for fresh-baked goodies, sandwiches, cakes and – on weekend evenings – hand-stretched pizzas. A short drive away, the Cider Barn Restaurant offers delicious dining in an idyllic orchard. Further along, spy Luntley Dovecote, dating to 1673 – even Herefordshire’s feathered friends enjoy the timber-framed treatment!



10 – Eardisland

In Pembridge, turn right onto the A44. After 2 miles, turn left at the junction signed Eardisland, then right into the village.

Heard of saving the best for last? Arguably the most sublime of the settlements, Eardisland has a gaggle of photogenic cottages straddling the River Arrow and millrace. Stand on the bridge to see the Old School House (complete with Whipping Post!) and the Manor House opposite. A short distance on the left, along the Leominster Road, see the fine 14th-century Yeoman’s hall known as Staick House. Cross the bridge, guarded by a red-brick Georgian dovecote – now a community shop – to find atmospheric eating options: Rita’s Tearooms with a pleasant garden and an abundance of home-cooked hot and cold meals, and The Cross Inn, a homely pub with exposed beams, B&B rooms and locally sourced food. Alongside the pub, beyond reputedly the oldest AA box in the country, follow the path past the tree-tufted, moated castle mound to the Church of St Mary the Virgin, with its medieval timber roof and a nave which is at least eight centuries old. A short walk along the river reveals the perfect place for stone-skimming and paddling.

Black & White Villages Trail

Driving Route

11 - Kingsland

Head back onto the A4110, heading north east for Kingsland.

The Black & White beauty of Kingsland often flies under the radar but it's definitely worth a peek. Its wide green is studded with handy benches and on one side looms the Church of St Michael's and All Saints, its high barrel-vaulted chancel roof ornately decorated. Along the sprawling main street you'll also find two enticing pubs - The Corners Inn and The Angel, with low beams, tempting food, an open fire and a beer garden - as well as Kingsland Stores and Tea Rooms serving toasties and cakes.

Return to Leominster to complete the circuit.



BLACK & WHITE CIRCULAR WALKS

Make the most of your trip with two scenic circular walks

Weobley to Burton Hill - 5.5 mile circular walk

Start in the beautiful village of Weobley with its wealth of black and white architecture.

Traverse peaceful fields and catch a glimpse of the glorious Elizabethan multi-gabled manor known as The Ley.

Ascend to the mesmerising forest of Burton Hill, listening out for woodpeckers and peeking through the trees for skittish families of roe deer.

Continue on to Weobley Church and the evocative remains of the village's 13th-century ring-and-bailey fortification, before toasting your return with a well-earned pint or tea and cake

Eardisland to Shobdon Arches - 7.6 mile circular walk

Eardisland is arguably Herefordshire's prettiest village, with timber-framed houses, a moated castle mound and an impressive medieval church.

This walk winds through cider orchards and meadows to reach Shobdon Arches. Now a spectacular hilltop folly, the arches were removed from the nearby 12th-century church when it was revamped in unusual rococo style six centuries later.

Take a little time to enjoy the light and airy church before walking along a fine avenue of trees to reach the ancient arches. They are an incredible monument to the work of the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture featuring winged monsters, Celtic abstract patterns, military figures and Anglo-Saxon animals. Return to Eardisland for refreshments.

Black & White Villages Trail – An Extra Day of Discovery

Driving Route

Take a longer break in north-west Herefordshire.

Extend your roadtrip with this additional loop which takes in two National Trust properties and an award-winning gastropub.

1 – National Trust Berrington Hall

From Leominster, head north for four miles on the A49 to Berrington Hall.

Capability Brown's final visionary landscape commands panoramic views across Herefordshire and Wales. Explore the Georgian mansion's surprisingly intimate and elegant family rooms, before wandering around the walled garden and strolling to the lake, home to the 'Heron Island' colony. Take a light bite in the Old Servants' Hall.



2 – National Trust Croft Castle

Cross country via Eye Lane, arriving at a T-junction in Luston, turn right onto the B4361, before heading left on the B4362 to reach Croft Castle in Yarpole.

The Crofts lived here at Croft Castle for many centuries and the castle retains that warm, family atmosphere. Beyond the walled garden, stretch miles of way-marked routes. In spring, see bluebells and hear the cuckoo on the gentle 1.5 mile ancient tree walk or the longer 3 mile circuit to Croft Ambrey, an Iron Age hillfort.

3 – The Riverside Aymestry

Return to the B4362, heading right towards Mortimer's Cross – the site of the famous battle – and then north on the A4110 to Aymestry.

Sat on the banks of the River Lugg, The Riverside is an award-winning restaurant which specialises in seasonal, sustainable food, much of it grown locally and in their own kitchen garden. The 16th-century Black & White building is beautifully atmospheric and has rooms if you fancy stopping the night.



4 – Leominster

Head back to Leominster on the A4110, turning left onto the B4360.

Alternatively drive on to Newton Court Cider to pay a visit to their tasting room and shop.



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PLACES TO STAY

Rest your head in country pubs and friendly B&Bs, full details available at

visitherefordshire.co.uk/black-white

There are numerous self-catering cottages in the area, many of which are Black & White, see visitherefordshire.co.uk/stay to find your favourite.

AROUND LEOMINSTER

- 1 - Grove Farm (Kimbolton), 01568 613425
- 2 - Wall End Farm B&B (Monkland), 07824 638333
- 3 - The Riverside (Aymestrey), 01568 708 440
Electric car charging for guests.
- 4 - Winsley Park Farm B&B (Hope under Dinmore), 07794419659

WEOBLEY

- 5 - Ye Olde Salutation Inn, 01544 318 443
- 6 - Mellington House B&B, 01544 318 537
- 7 - The Gables Guest House, 01544 318228

EARDISLEY

- 8 - Arboyne House B&B, 01544 327 058

KINGTON & AROUND

- 9 - Burton Hotel, 01544 230323
- 10 - The Swan Hotel, 01544 239433
- 11 - The Royal Oak, 01544 231864
- 12 - The Stag at Titley, (Titley), 01544 230221

PEMBRIDGE

- 13 - Old Forge B&B
- 14 - Yew Tree Cottage B&B, 01544 388398

EARDISLAND

- 15 - The Cross Inn, 01544 329300

KINGSLAND

- 16 - The Corners Inn, 01568 708385



