

# Hike & Paddle Challenge

Try our six-day endurance adventure to experience the south-west section of the Herefordshire Trail on foot and by canoe.

**Total Distance:**

**Hike 45.7 Miles, Paddle 52 Miles**

Up the ante with this exhilarating itinerary: an epic three-day trek followed by a three-day canoe adventure along the River Wye. Take in the wild landscapes of the Wye Valley and Golden Valley, before completing the circuit on the water. Stay in country pubs on the first leg, then camp out by the river on your return. Tough but incredible!

## Hike: Section 1-3

**Day 1 - 16.34mi** Ross-on-Wye\* to Kilpeck

\*Alternatively, start from Hoarwithy for a shorter walk

**Day 2 - 10.28mi** Kilpeck to Ewyas Harold

**Day 3 - 19.08mi** Ewyas Harold to Whitney Bridge

## Paddle: Section 4-6

**Day 4 - 24.5mi** Whitney Bridge to Hereford

**Day 5 - 16mi** Hereford to Hoarwithy

**Day 6 - 11.5mi** Hoarwithy to Ross-on-Wye

## Essential contacts

Get in touch with **Hereford Kayak & Canoe Hire** to arrange canoe hire. Speak to Rural Concierge if you would like the trip organised on your behalf, including places to eat and stay.



1-3

# Hike: Ross to Whitney Bridge

Six Day Hike & Paddle Challenge 45.7 Miles



## Day 1: Ross-on-Wye to Kilpeck,

16.34 miles

The scenic splendour of its setting made **Ross-on-Wye** the 18<sup>th</sup>-century birthplace of British tourism. Seekers of 'the picturesque' flocked to the town to enjoy boat trips. Today, this part of the valley is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The trail keeps company with the river via three historic bridges. **Wilton Bridge**, a six-arch red sandstone beauty and once a strategically important crossing. Upstream, the trail heads over the elegant **Sellack Suspension Bridge** and travels on to **Hoarwithy Toll Bridge**. This riverside village is overlooked by the Italianate **Church of St. Catherine**

The trail then travels through the enchanting **Athelstan's Wood**, and on to the wooded **Mynde Park**, which is graced by a beautiful lake with an island folly. A scenic stretch takes the walker to **Kilpeck**.

*Enjoy dinner and an overnight stay at **The Kilpeck Inn**.*



Sellack Suspension Bridge

## Day 2: Kilpeck to Ewyas Harold,

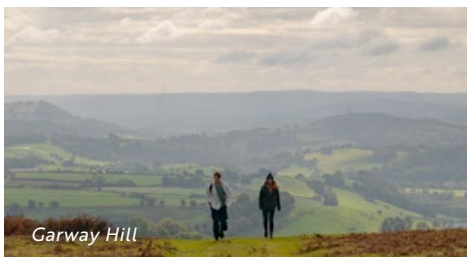
10.28 miles

**St Mary and St David, Kilpeck**, has been described as England's most perfect Norman church. It's the crowning glory of the medieval Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture, famous for its ornate 12<sup>th</sup>-century stone carvings.

There's a long climb to **Garway Hill's** 1204-ft summit, but the panoramic views are a worthwhile reward. Overlooking the Monnow Valley, Garway was an important site for millennia, as proven by the many archaeological finds.

The trail skirts the former **Kentchurch Deer Park** before another long hill climb to Pontrilas. Then, a gentler trek through the beautiful Golden Valley, reaching **Ewyas Harold**. The village boasts two thriving pubs and a popular fish-and-chip shop.

*After dinner, spend the night at the **Temple Bar Inn**.*



Garway Hill

## Day 3: Ewyas Harold to

**Whitney Bridge**, 19.08 miles

The River Dore is our journey's thread through the lush Golden Valley. The pride of which is the serene **Dore Abbey**. The former Cistercian monastery, founded in 1147, became a pilgrimage centre due to its possession of a prized relic of the Holy Cross.

Heading for higher ground, the trail reaches the remote church of **St. Margarets**, with its celebrated carved oak rood screen and superb views to the Black Mountains.

Next, wander through the ancient 100-acre **Chanstone Wood** and then take the easy amble alongside the Dore to **Peterchurch**, where a spring (St. Peter's Well) was once reputed to have healing powers. Next, discover **Snodhill Castle** now a craggy ruin but originally one of the largest Norman castles in Britain.

Climb the steep path to **Arthur's Stone**, a Neolithic Chamber Tomb which predates Stonehenge by a millennium. Later, enjoy magnificent views from wild **Merbach Hill Common** which overlooks the Wye Valley at more than 1,000 ft above sea level. Descend an old drovers' road to reach **Whitney Toll Bridge** - there is no charge for today's foot-sloggers!

*Stay the night at **The Pound B&B**, **Whitney-on-Wye** or glamp/camp at **Whitney Bridge** and take a short walk to the **The Boat Inn** for dinner.*



Dore Abbey



Snodhill Castle



Arthur's Stone



# Paddle: Whitney Bridge to Ross

Six Day Hike & Paddle Challenge 52 Miles



## Day 4: Whitney Bridge to Hereford, 24.5 miles

Hire a canoe with **Hereford Kayak & Canoe** to begin the next leg. You'll launch from **Whitney Bridge** (a private launch point to which the canoe firm has access) and paddle tranquil waters before hitting a series of small rapids. The pretty village of **Bredwardine** lies ahead, then a meander past the red sandstone cliffs of **Brobury Scar**. Look out for **Moccas Court**, a Georgian mansion house.

Navigate the rapids at **Monnington Falls** before cruising alongside the **Weir Garden**. Members of the National Trust can land for a well-earned slice of cake. As you approach the city of **Hereford**, you'll pass a Victorian pumping station, now **The Waterworks Museum**. Pass under Hunderton Bridge before landing on the left at **Hereford Rowing Club**.

Camp overnight at **Hereford Rowing Club**, a short stroll from the **Cathedral**, independent shopping at **Church Street** and the city's foodie delights, including **Ponte Vecchio** and **The Bookshop**.

## Day 5: Hereford to Hoarwithy, 16 miles

The next morning, pass under **The Old Bridge** and soak up views of the rose-tinted **Hereford Cathedral**. Continue to paddle under the elegant **Victoria Suspension Bridge**, surrounded by green playing fields and trees.

Beyond the city lies a sublimely serene section of river, rich in wildlife and with lush landscapes all around. At **Mordiford**, the Wye is joined by the River Lugg, and the village can also claim the oldest bridge in the county. Later you'll paddle under **Holme Lacy Bridge**, those wanting a shorter day can land nearby at **Lucksall Park** campsite.

Towards the end of this section, you'll see the wooded slopes of **Capler Camp**, an Iron Age hillfort, and encounter **Carey Island rapids** which are usually taken on the right. Next, pass between the piers of **Ballingham Bridge**, once a railway viaduct, now a haven for swans. On the right, land on the pebble beach at **Tresseck Campsite** in **Hoarwithy**.

Camp overnight at the tranquil **Tresseck Campsite**, dining at the **New Harp Inn** which sits at the entrance, or walk 30 minutes to the **Cottage of Content** or **The Loughpool**. In high season, the campsite also offers take-away food.



Wye Adventures



## Day 6: Hoarwithy to Ross, 11.5 miles

Beautifully quiet, the next section is abundant in birdlife including geese, ducks, and swans. The sharp-eyed may even be lucky enough to spot the resident kingfishers and otters.

The river passes under **Sellack Bridge** and later **Foy Bridge** - both charming suspension bridges, built to connect parishes and hamlets which were otherwise separated by the Wye.

You will travel on through the remains of **Backney Railway Bridge** which originally carried the Great Western Railway over the River Wye.

Finally, the pastel-painted houses of **Ross-on-Wye** will come into sight, on their sandstone perch. Land on the left hand side, 200 metres downstream from the **Hope & Anchor** pub.

Your canoe hire provider will collect your canoe and gear from this point.

Eat at the **Hope and Anchor** or head up into town for dinner at **No. 3 Restaurant** in town, staying overnight at **The King's Head Hotel**.

