



Above: Unlike Dave, you'll want mudguards here off-season
Below: Stiperstones Nature Reserve
Bottom: Take low gears too!

Weekender

The Shropshire Hills

What better way to see in the autumn than atop a fine vantage point like the Long Mynd?

Dave Barter is your guide



DAVE BARTER

Author and entrepreneur

Dave splits his time between growing a mapping business and attempting to grow beards

The Shropshire Hills resonate with the echoes of an industrial revolution long since past. The area has a deep association with the engineer Thomas Telford, who left his mark in the roads and rail tracks that wind their way around these scenic hills.

The Long Mynd provides a stunning heathland centrepiece and is known to many cyclists via the classic Burway climb. Everyone needs to experience this climb once, followed by the airy views across the plateau that's rightly classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Having ticked off one cycling climb, there's still more action to be had. The Shropshire hills beyond Norbury deliver isolation and interest, and maintain the challenge with plenty of gradients. Thin roads weave their way round a valley system littered with farms, smallholdings, and hamlets. The Knolls gives your climbing legs a second tough test, and then things start to wind down as you traverse gorgeous moorland along the Shropshire Way, before a nice and easy 10 miles home.



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Weekend ride

SAVOURING THE SHROPSHIRE HILLS

•Start/Finish: Wroxeter Roman City, Wroxeter, SY5 6PH •OS grid reference: SJ 565 088 •Maps: OS Landranger 126 •Ride Length: 87.7km [54.5 miles] •Climbing: 1,592 metres [5,225 ft.] •Bike Type: Any bike with nice low gears (and mudguards if wet) •Ride Level: Regular/Experienced •GPX: cyclinguk.org/shropshirehills-gpx

1 Wroxeter
Begin the ride at Wroxeter. You can park at the Roman City museum, which is well worth a visit at the end of your ride. It's a 30-40 minute ride from the train station in Shrewsbury; start on NCN 81, then take NCN 45 south from Upton Magna.

2 Cressage
Beyond Cressage, traffic disappears, the roads narrow, and the climbing starts. Be warned that this area can get mucky after sustained rain. Remember your mudguards if it's been wet.

3 CHURCH STRETTON
Make this your tea stop even though you're less than half way; there are plenty of choices in town. After resting your legs, ride up the Burway, a savage yet scenic climb to the plateau. You could start the route here via the train station but that gives you little warm up!



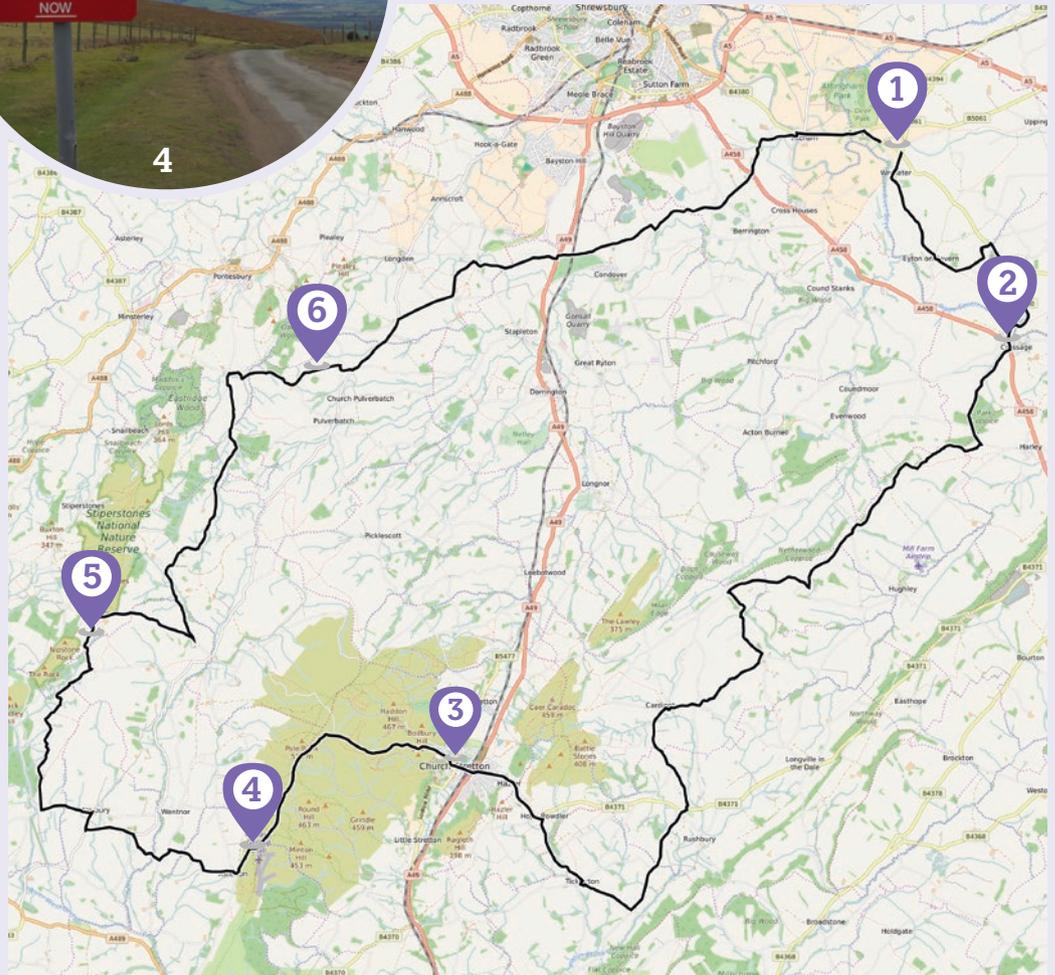
4 ASTERTON BANK
Thank me for not making you ride up this hill! But take care on the way down as the 25% gradient signs are probably understated. Make sure you stop to enjoy the views.



5 THE KNOLLS
Some stiff climbing here but the reward is worth it as you ride up past the Stiperstones Nature Reserve on a glorious view-filled singletrack road. Look out for sheep, which range freely on the plateau and are easily startled by near-silent cyclists.



6 Broom Hill
The last climb of the day; it's all downhill and flat from here. If you are in need of refreshment, there's a pub at Longden Common just over a mile down the road.



Go online

Dave discovered this loop when writing the book *Great British Bike Rides*, which includes a longer version of this route.

greatbritishbikerides.co.uk

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