



Hills & Dales Hike

There are wonderful views across the Shropshire Hills on this energetic hike up Halford Hill through Lower Dinchope and up to the marvellous Flounder's Folly.

 6½ miles/10km

 3-4 hours

 7 stiles*

 Pasture with cows and sheep – dogs must be on leads for some sections, woodland, several fields with crops, muddy and rough in places, several steep climbs and about 1½ miles of walking on quiet lanes.

*The route directions were correct when printed (2017), however there may be minor changes over time for example stiles are increasingly being replaced by kissing gates to make routes easier. **OS Explorer Map 217**

If you encounter any significant problems with the route please report them at the Discovery Centre and we will inform Shropshire Council who can liaise with the landowner.

Start behind the Discovery Centre

1 From the Centre take the main path towards the meadows and turn left before the Community Garden to take the path to a gate and into the hamlet of Newton. Keep ahead and then fork right along the lane to reach the white metal bridge over the River Onny.



Some of the houses in Newton are over 400 years old and have timber frames. The Onny is one of the major rivers of the Shropshire Hills. Its source is almost on the Welsh border and it is a popular river for trout and salmon fishing.

- 2** Cross the river. Head straight across the field, close by the electricity posts, to reach a metal kissing gate in the opposite hedge. Please keep your dog on a lead and keep away from any livestock in the field.
- 3** Go through the gate and follow the path that runs along the field edge ahead, before bearing left at the bottom to bring you out to the Corvedale Road. Take care crossing the road as traffic can be travelling fast.

Various crops are grown in local fields including barley, which is one of the earliest crops grown in this area from around 10,000 years ago. Wheat and oats were introduced to Britain in the Bronze Age. Potatoes were only introduced from the Americas in the late 16th century. Interestingly rapeseed – the yellow flowered brassica widely grown in the area – was introduced earlier than potatoes. It is now mainly used for animal feed, vegetable oil and bio diesel.

- 4** Go through the kissing gate in the hedge opposite. Follow the field edge as you climb the slope to reach another gate in the field corner.
- 5** Climb up the hill straight across the field to another gate. Through this, go straight ahead up the hill and into Halford Wood.

The view of Craven Arms behind you with its grid pattern reveals its origins in the 19th century – much later than Newton and Whettleton which are Anglo-Saxon in origin. The view behind you includes the ridge of Stoke Wood and Sallow Coppice, plus to the right, above the industrial estate, the small summit of Wart Hill.



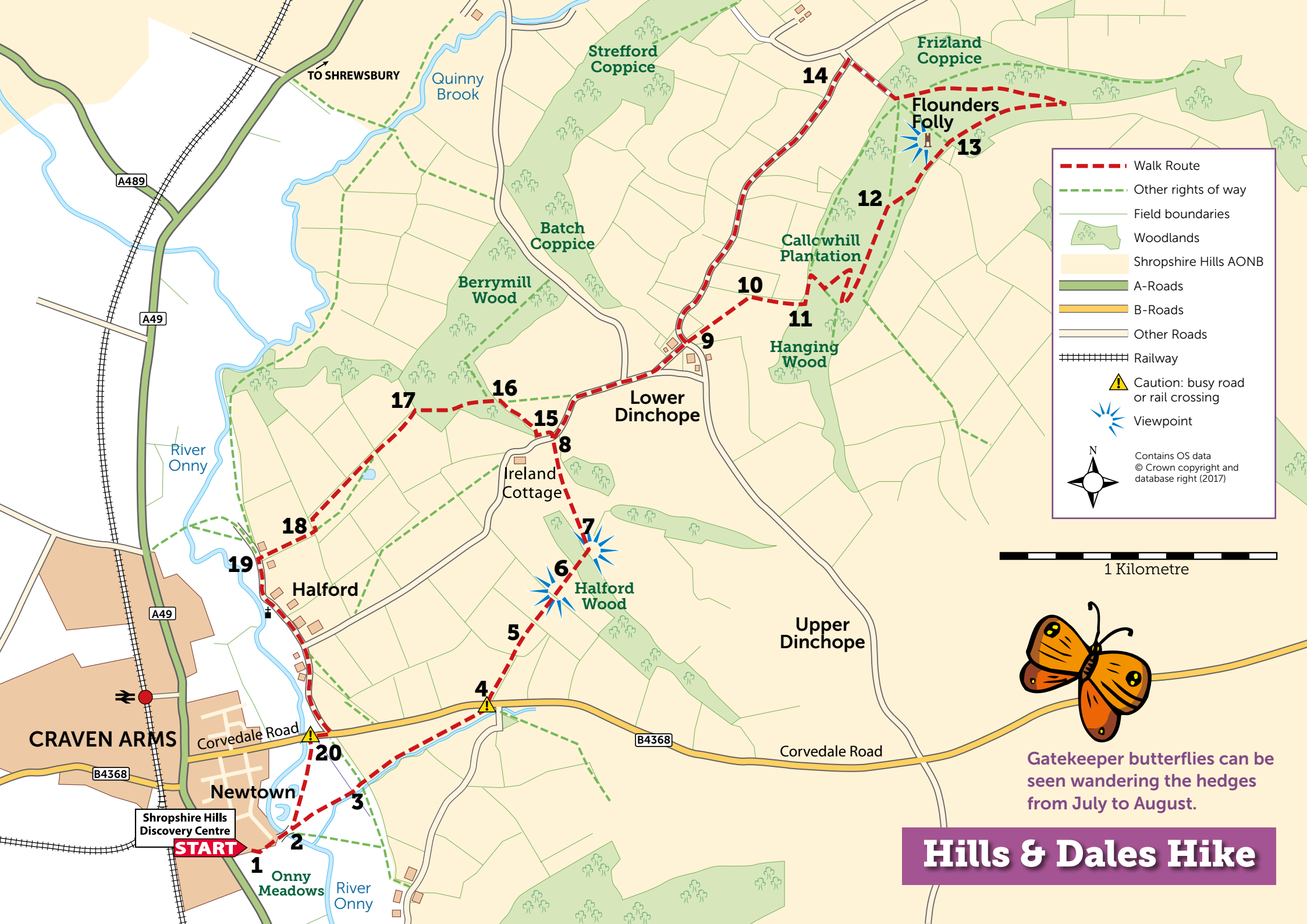
- 6** Climb up the steep bank under the trees bearing right to reach the top of the hill.

Most people stop here to admire the view. Looking right you should be able to see Brown Cleve and Titterstone Cleve Hills, across Corvedale. Brown Cleve is (just) the highest point in Shropshire. The Stretton Hills and the Long Mynd are in the other direction to the north east, beyond the limestone ridge of Wenlock Edge – the wooded escarpment which runs from here to Ironbridge.

- 7** Turn left along the hill top and then veer right and down the hillside to the lane at the bottom of the field where there is a stile by the gate in the corner. A view of Flounder's Folly emerges above the woods on your right. Cross the stile and turn right onto a lane.

This is where you can take the SHORT CUT to return to the Discovery Centre – jump to point 15.

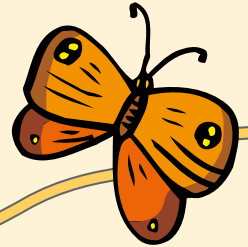
- 8** Follow the lane downhill, ignoring the first left turn. Take the next left fork to climb up to Lower Dinchope.



- Walk Route
- Other rights of way
- Field boundaries
- Woodlands
- Shropshire Hills AONB
- A-Roads
- B-Roads
- Other Roads
- Railway
- Caution: busy road or rail crossing
- Viewpoint

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1 Kilometre



Gatekeeper butterflies can be
 seen wandering the hedges
 from July to August.

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**Shropshire Hills
Discovery Centre**

START

TO SHREWSBURY

Craven Arms

Newtown

Halford

Lower Dinchope

Upper Dinchope

Ireland Cottage

Flounders Folly

Callowhill Plantation

Strefford Coppice

Frizland Coppice

Batch Coppice

Berrymill Wood

Hanging Wood

Halford Wood

River Onny

Quinny Brook

Onny Meadows

A489

A49

A49

B4368

B4368



Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, the home of Grow Cook Learn

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Grow Cook Learn is a registered charity, connecting people to the food, history and landscape of the Shropshire Hills AONB, providing opportunities to local people and visitors to learn and discover.

Visit the Centre for the Shropshire Hills exhibition and film, our cafe which serves delicious home cooked meals and for walks through 30 acres of riverside meadows.

There are regular bus and train services to Craven Arms.

The Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is recognised as one of Britain's finest landscapes. It's one of 46 AONBs in the UK.

Walks produced with support from:



CRAVEN ARMS
Community Food
Initiative

As you enter Lower Dinchope pause to read the memorial on your left against the wall of the low brick building, which commemorates a famous pony.

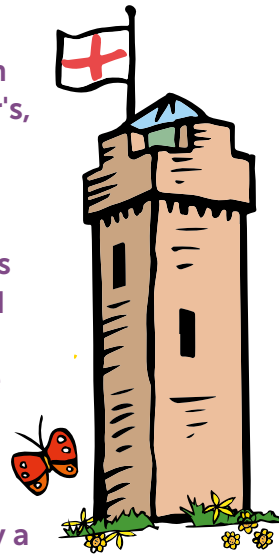
- 9** Head right at the T junction to the stile ahead beside the field gate. Cross this stile and go through the field gate beyond. Follow the left hand field edge to the corner, then continue on across the field heading slightly right towards the junction of the hedge ahead and the remnants of an old hedgerow.
- 10** When you reach the hedge turn right and climb up the hill to a kissing gate in the top corner of the field.
- 11** Turn left and follow the path for a short distance, then look for a waymark by a sharp right hand turn uphill. Climb up the track following waymarks. Turn left, continue ahead and then the path zig zags up to the top left hand corner, into thicker woodland.
- 12** The path continues into the trees climbing gently and then more steeply. Watch for the point when the path starts going downhill and look for a flight of wooden steps off to the right soon afterwards. Climb these



steep steps and turn right at the top before a final climb to turn left along the top of the wood. You will see Flounder's Folly ahead of you and wonderful views all around. Continue on to the tower.

On a clear day the view from the path leading to the Folly is superb, looking north west across Wenlock Edge towards the southern end of the Long Mynd. To reach this point you have climbed steadily over 210 metres (630 feet).

Flounder's Folly was built in 1838 by Benjamin Flounder's, a wealthy ship and land owner from Yorkshire. At the time local people said he used the tower to see his ships docking in Bristol and Liverpool! In more recent years it was owned by Julie Christie, the actor best known for her part in the epic film *Doctor Zhivago*. The tower is now owned by a trust which restored the building. It is open to the public several times a year.



(www.floundersfolly.org.uk)

- 13** Pass the tower and follow the grassy track beyond, gently downhill. This takes a sharp left hand turn and descends the hill, eventually reaching the road at the bottom, past a metal barrier.
- 14** Turn left and follow the lane for about a mile back to Lower Dinchope again. Go right and down the hill, retracing your steps to point 8 above Ireland Cottage.

From here you can either go back along the route you came out on over Halford Hill or continue through points 15–20.

15 Go through the gate on the right and skirt round to follow the left hand field edge round the top of Berrymill Wood. After a while you reach a stile on the left leading into the wood. Note the view back to Flounder's Folly.

16 Cross the stile and descend through the wood where there are swathes of wild garlic in spring. Keep to the faint path downhill to reach a gate at the bottom of the wood.

17 Through the gate in the field follow the right hand hedgerow to a stile into a field with a pool on the left. Follow the right hand hedgerow over the hill, to eventually follow a track curling left to a stile in the hedge ahead on the right.

18 Cross the double stile and follow the left hand hedgerow to Halford Lodge. Head right at the fence to find a stile, left, onto a path that leads between the lodge and the old school house to the road, where there is a final stile.

You've arrived in the small village of Halford. On the left is the old school and on the right the school master's house. This road was once the main coach road to Bishop's Castle and Shrewsbury. Imagine coaches and horses clattering up the lane to cross the Onny and reach the New Inn, now known as Newington.

19 Go left and follow the lane through the village past the church (worth a look) to reach the Corvedale Road. Turn right.

20 At the bridge cross the road and go left through the gate. Follow the river back to the white bridge and then back through Newton to the Discovery Centre – where well deserved refreshments await!



The hedgehog is named because the way it forages, making pig like grunting noises, for insects, worms, snails and small creatures through hedges and other undergrowth.

Guidelines for walkers

- Wear suitable clothes and footwear for the walk, paying attention to the local weather forecast.
- Take water and refreshments with you suitable for the length of the walk.
- Most of the Discovery Walks have muddy patches for much of the year and stout shoes or walking boots are recommended.
- Please keep dogs under close control, taking particular care when crossing fields with livestock.
- Keep to the waymarked paths and leave gates as you find them.
- Take your litter home. Respect the wildlife, plants and trees and do not light fires.

SHROPSHIRE HILLS DISCOVERY WALKS

6½
miles

Hills & Dales Hike

