



Symonds Yat

SUMMARY A circular walk on good surfaces, mainly level along the beautiful Wye Valley at Symonds Yat.

START The ferry across the river at the Saracen's Head pub, Symonds Yat East. There are a number of car parks in Symonds Yat East and they all charge.

WALK INFO

DISTANCE 2¾ MILES

No. OF GATES 0

No. OF STILES 0

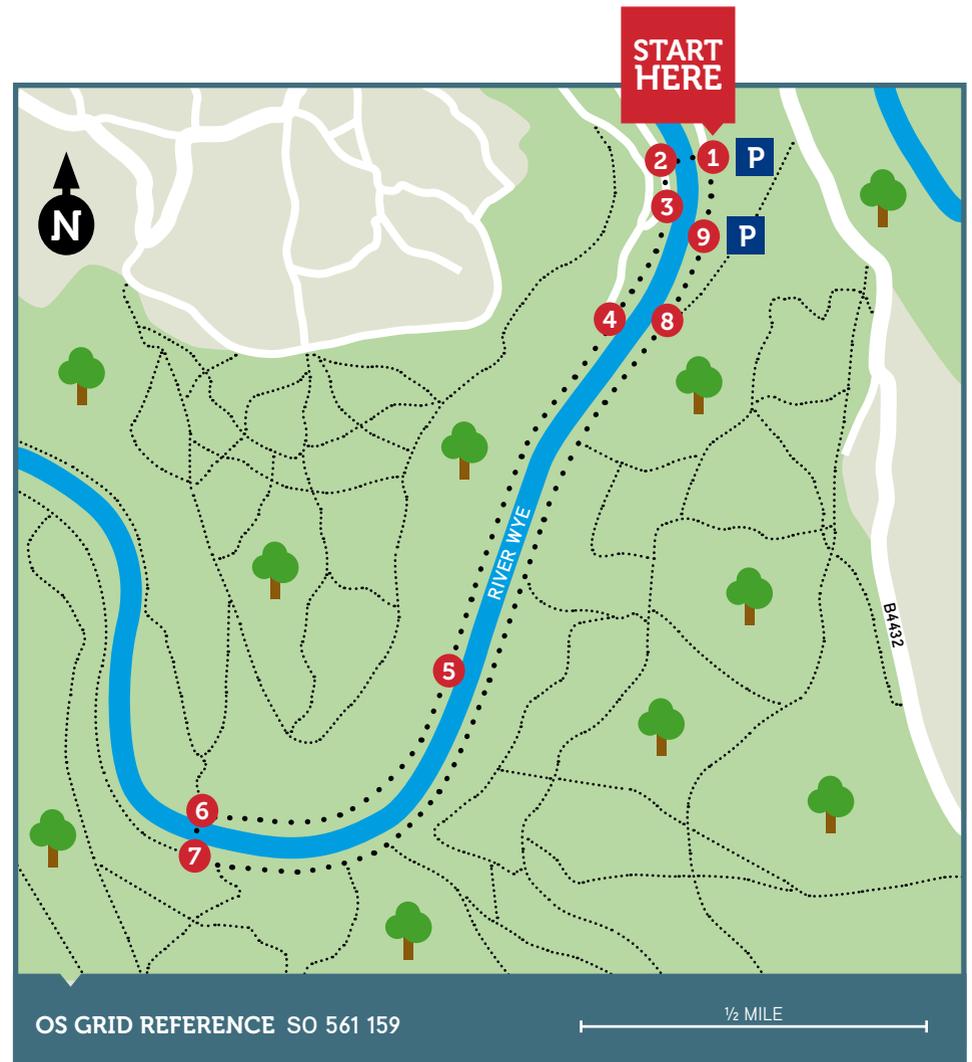
- The River Wye seen from the world famous viewpoint at Symonds Yat Rock forms an almost complete loop. The river here flows 3½ miles yet progresses less than ¼ mile towards the Severn. This walk starts below Symonds Yat Rock in the steep sided, wooded gorge at the pleasant village of Symonds Yat East.

- After parking, make your way to the Saracen's Head Inn [1], the site of an ancient hand pulled ferry across the river. The ferry operates throughout the year unless the river is in flood. If in doubt, phone the pub beforehand, 01600 890 435. The charge for the ferry is £1 or 50p for children. Although this walk can be done in either direction, it is best to go anti-clockwise to ensure the ferry is running.

- After leaving the ferry, climb a few steps onto the road in Symonds Yat West. To get from Symonds Yat East to Symonds Yat West, the only alternative to the ferry is a 4½ mile drive. Turn left [2] and follow the road gently uphill for a short distance and then take the steps, signed on the left [3], down to the riverbank. Throughout this walk the river is kept on your left; the first part is on the bank itself, which can sometimes be muddy, but most of the walk is on hard forest tracks.

- The island and rapids in the river, a favourite spot for canoeists soon comes into view [4]. On the riverbank near the rapids, you will see the ruins of old buildings; these are the remains of New Weir Forge. Although its difficult to imagine today, the Wye Valley was once the scene of 18th century iron industry; the river and fast-flowing steams provided the power for the forges, the iron ore came from the Forest of Dean and the limestone from the steep cliffs prominent along this section of the river.

- After about ½ mile, you will enter the Biblins Youth Campsite [5]. The cliffs here and Lord's Wood above them are the home for over 20 different species of butterflies including the holly blue, gatekeeper and brimstone. At the centre of the campsite is a foot suspension bridge across



the river [6]. Children love this but it is suitable for all, as it has a solid floor and no steps.

- After crossing the bridge [7] turn left and continue to follow the river back to the village, signed to Symonds Yat East, ignoring all tracks going uphill. The route here follows the former Ross and Monmouth Railway and is named the Peregrine Path after the birds of prey that make their home at nearby Coldwell Rocks. Peregrine falcons, the fastest creatures on the planet reaching speeds of up to 200 mph, can be seen from the RSPB viewing point on Yat Rock from April to August whilst they hunt and raise their young.

- You will pass the rapids [8] once more where you may wish to pause to watch any canoeists on the river. A short distance afterwards, you will enter a car park [9] where you should follow roads back to your start point. Before leaving the village, why not enjoy a drink and a bite to eat at the pub or in one of the cafes or hotels.

If you have time to spare, it is also worth considering a river cruise for a different perspective of this lovely spot.