

Ben takes owners Jenny and David Collin on a favourite walk near Bridstow Church



Ben takes the lead

Black Labrador Ben assisted by his owners Jenny and David Collin of Ross Ramblers has compiled a booklet of eight dog-friendly walks with no stiles to support the Ross Walkers are Welcome project. Here is one of them

The walk starts by the lovely River Wye and passes the ancient ruined Wilton Castle on its way to the attractive village church in Bridstow. The usual walk is a leisurely 'there and back' of around four miles but it is possible to extend the route to Broome Farm or to shorten it by catching a bus back to Ross. Most of the route follows the Herefordshire Trail, a circular walk of about 154 miles, all within the County of Herefordshire, devised by the Hereford Group of the Ramblers. Copies of the Trail book can be purchased locally in Tourist Information Centres, bookshops or ring 01432 264374.

This is a dog-friendly walk with two easily negotiable stiles and one less-friendly stile, two of which are planned to be replaced with gates during 2010. Always remember the Countryside Code when taking your dog on a walk.

In particular:

🦴 By law, you must control your dog so that it does not disturb or scare farm animals or wildlife.

🦴 As a general rule, keep your dog on a lead if you cannot rely on its obedience and always when in a field containing livestock.

🦴 Everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and how it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly.

One of the paths followed by this walk is a permissive path so please respect the farmer's fields when following the marked route.

1 Leave the Wilton Road car park, cross the road and walk towards the riverbank. At the river turn left and continue downstream along the bank to Wilton Bridge. Climb a short flight of steps and cross the bridge. The six-arched red sandstone bridge ►



Above: Leaving Bridstow Church. Below (top to bottom): Wilton Bridge; Ben; Wilton Castle



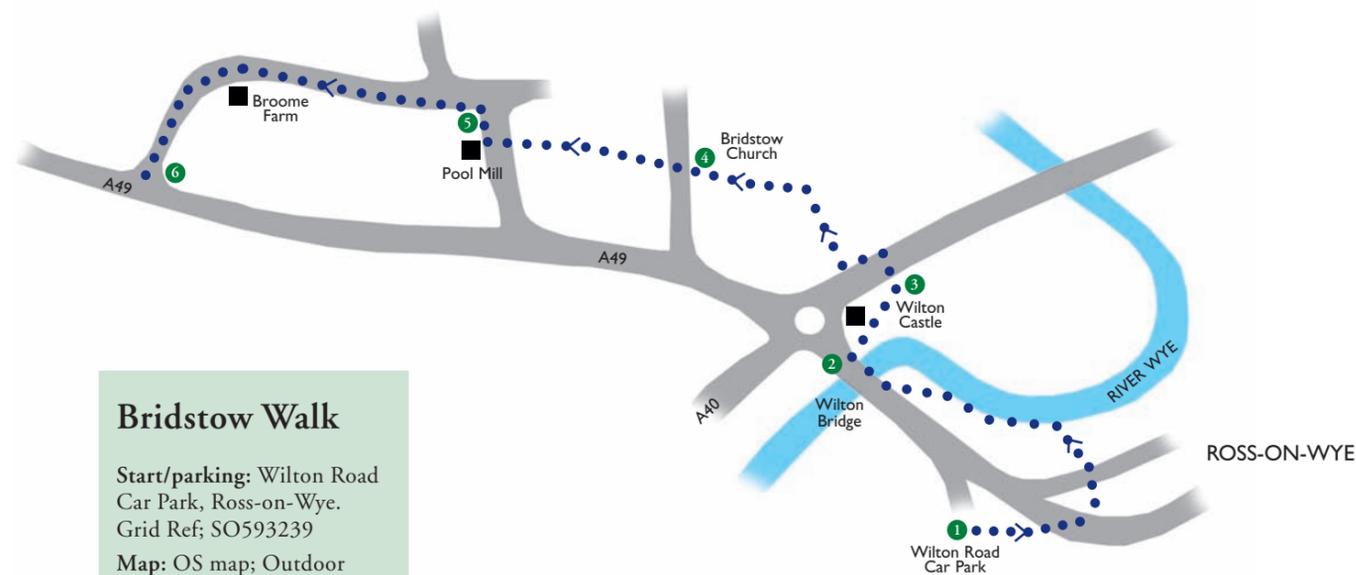
was completed in 1600 and was a toll bridge linking Wilton to Ross-on-Wye. The sun dial was installed in 1712, originally on the opposite side of the bridge. It was moved in 1939 when the bridge was widened and strengthened to cope with increased wartime traffic. Local residents still await its restoration to its pre-war state.

2 Take the public footpath on the right onto the riverbank, keep left and pass through a metal gate and over a footbridge to the right. At the end of the footbridge go through a kissing gate and turn sharp left past the ruined castle walls then left over another footbridge.

Wilton Castle was probably built in the 11th century on a site that commanded views of two roads and the river and was one of many that served to police the Anglo-Welsh border. The castle was set on fire in 1642 during the Civil War, the current owners and English heritage have spent several years in tidying the site and restoring parts of the ruins. It is open to the public on a limited basis during summer months. Leave the castle boundary and follow the permissive footpath to the right. Keep the brook on your right and go through the tunnel under the A40.

3 On exiting the tunnel turn sharp left

up the slope parallel to the road and regain the public footpath at the top. Turn right at the top of the slope and, keeping the fences and hedges on the left go over a stile, through the gate of Greenoak Lodge and onto a farm drive. After 30 yards go over a stile into the field on the left and cross the field to another stile (the less-friendly one). Continue to the far side of the field and enter Bridstow churchyard through a kissing gate. A church has existed on this site since before the arrival of the Normans. The tower dates from the late 14th century and is the only part which is original, the rest of the church having been rebuilt in 1862. The chancel arch,



Bridstow Walk

Start/parking: Wilton Road Car Park, Ross-on-Wye. Grid Ref; SO593239

Map: OS map; Outdoor Leisure 14

Distance: 4-5 miles.
Grade: Leisurely

Nearest town: Ross-on-Wye

Refreshments: Numerous cafes and pubs in Ross. Cream teas at Broome Farm, tel: 01989 567232

Public toilets: In Wye Street adjacent to Bandstand, opposite The Riverside Inn

Public Transport: No.37 bus runs between Ross and Hereford via Pool Mill, No.38 bus runs between Ross and Hereford along the A49

Full details at
www.herefordbus.info or
tel: 01432 260211

Below: Bridstow Church



the east window and two arches built into the north wall of the chancel were recycled from the earlier building.

4 After visiting the church, exit the churchyard, cross the road, pass through two kissing gates and continue along the field edge to Pool Mill. Retracing your steps from here back to Ross makes a walk of around 4 miles. To return to Ross by bus either catch the 37 which stops close to the end of the footpath at Pool Mill or walk back to Bridstow Church turning right on reaching the road and walking up to the A49 past the school and catching the 38.

5 For a longer walk continue along the lane to the right and follow the signs for Broome Farm where delicious cream teas

are available during the summer months. Cider tours and tastings are also available during longer periods of the year. After visiting Broome Farm one can again retrace one's steps to Ross (around five miles in total) or walk further along the lane to the A49 6 and catch the 38 bus service from Peterstow. ■

🦴 This walk is adapted from one of Ben's Favourite Walks contained in the booklet A Guide to Dog-friendly Walks in and around Ross-on-Wye published by the Ross-on-Wye Walkers are Welcome Group and available from the Ross Tourist Information Centre.

FOR MORE WALKS



The Ramblers



The Ramblers is Britain's biggest charity working to promote walking and to improve conditions for all walkers. In Herefordshire there are four local groups, Hereford, Mortimer, Ross-on-Wye and Leaden Vale. Ross Ramblers, and indeed most ramblers' groups, welcome dogs on walks, but you must check with the walk leader first.

For more information contact Tom Fisher, tel: 01886 821544 or email: tomfisher@virgin.net