

Take the path with views of Fownhope Church 1



## *In the path of the* MORDIFORD DRAGON

Arthur Lee, chairman of Herefordshire Ramblers fires the imagination for a fairytale walk from Fownhope to Holme Lacey

**T**HIS is a linear walk from Fownhope Court to Holme Lacey and will require public transport either from Hereford or Holme Lacey village hall. Do use the local buses as there is no knowing how our bus services will survive after the possible impending Herefordshire Council budget cuts.

**1** Leave the bus at Court Orchard near Fownhope fire station and turn heading in the direction the bus just arrived from, to cross a small stream by the footbridge. Cross the Hereford road

opposite to go down Ferry Lane as far as the old Forge and Ferry Inn where we turn left. Keeping the field boundary close to your left side until you arrive at a narrow alleyway, turn down this alley, taking great care when you reach the road. There is no pavement as you step into the road. Carefully cross the road and turn left then turn right up the footpath by the village hall and primary school on the right. At the road turn right until you reach a footpath finger post to go right on the pavement between the bungalows, good views of Fownhope church can be seen along here

(photo 1), reaching another road where we turn left then right up an enclosed footpath ahead.

**2** Keep climbing gradually up hill on this enclosed path ignoring paths leading from it, passing close to a derelict cottage well hidden in the wood, until reaching the Wye Valley Walk (WVW) at the top. Turn left onto the WVW and walk towards Mordiford. After 0.4 of a mile we cross the Fownhope to Woolhope road. After crossing a bridge turn right then left through a gate keeping to the ►

## The story of the Mordiford Dragon

One day a little girl called Maud was walking through the woods near Mordiford when she chanced upon a small creature that resembled a shiny cucumber with tiny fluttering wings. Maud played with the creature for a while and had so much fun that she decided to take it home as a pet. Her parents instantly recognised the creature as a dragon and her father threatened to kill it, but gave in when Maud cried and pleaded for its life to be spared. Fearing that he might still attempt to kill her new playmate she took it away to a secret hiding place in the woods and fed it on milk. The little dragon grew very fast and soon milk alone wasn't enough to sustain it, so it began killing the livestock from surrounding farms. At first the dragon ate ducks and geese, but then its appetite turned to sheep, then cows and finally local people. However, it never touched Maud who continued to visit and play with her pet.

The villagers became terrified, but did not know what to do, as none of them were brave enough to approach the dragon, let alone attempt to kill it. Then one day a man with nothing to lose volunteered to tackle the fearsome beast. He was a condemned criminal called Garson who was guaranteed a free pardon if he could put the Mordiford dragon to death. Garson discovered that every day the dragon went down to drink from the banks of the river at the point where the Lugg meets the Wye. He placed a large cider barrel nearby, hid inside and waited for the dragon to appear. When it started to drink Garson shot an arrow through a hole in the barrel, which went straight into the dragon's heart. Although Garson was successful he never received his reward as the dragon incinerated him and the barrel with its dying breath.

4 Look back to see Mordiford Church



On the Wye Valley Way 2



Past the old mill 3

WVW (photo 2) passing several cottages and a farm.

3 On coming to Hope Springs, a very nice barn conversion complex, we turn left on the tarmac road to Bagpipers Tump, going right of the cottages and down to the right into an old orchard still on the WVW, views of Mordiford village and church come into eyesight. Continue down hill and past an old mill in the process of restoration (photo 3), to come onto a road opposite the Moon Inn, which hopefully will be open for a drink and refreshments.

4 Duly refreshed we now go to the rear of the car park, turning left on

a path through the school grounds, emerging on the road opposite Mordiford church gates. Cross into the churchyard and on out through the gates beyond. (A little ahead is the old Mordiford Bridge and turning back gives a good view of the church

## THE WALK

To view a larger version of this map visit [www.herefordshire.greatbritishlife.co.uk](http://www.herefordshire.greatbritishlife.co.uk)

**Public transport:** from Hereford County Bus station to Fownhope Court Orchard. Service numbers 453 and 454 Hereford to Woolhope. Take the number 453 at 9.05am from Hereford County bus station, return from Holme Lacy Wyelands bus stop on number 454 at 2.46pm.

**Operator:** Yeomans Canyon Travel. Details at [www.herefordbus.info](http://www.herefordbus.info) or by telephone during office hours on 01432 260211. No buses on Sunday.

**Drive and public transport:** park at Holme Lacy village hall. Grid Ref. SO 554 356 Take the number 454 service at 10.46am from Holme Lacy Wyelands stop and get off at Fownhope Court Orchard.

**Maps:** Ordnance Survey Explorer 189; Landranger 149

**Distance:** 6.5 miles

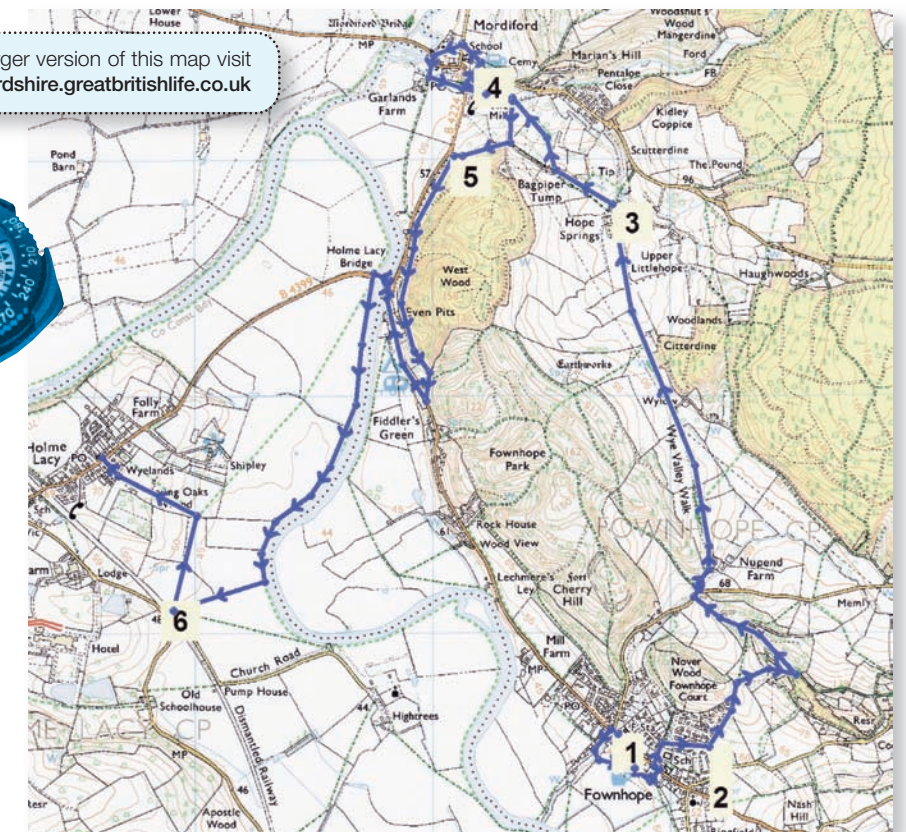
**Grade:** Moderate

**Stiles:** Numerous

**Nearest town:** Hereford

**Refreshments:** Pubs and shops in Fownhope and Moon Inn at Mordiford (01432 873067).

**Public toilets:** None



View from Holme Lacy bridge 5

## The Ramblers

The Ramblers is Britain's biggest charity working to promote walking and improve conditions for all walkers. In Herefordshire there are four groups: Hereford, Mortimer, Ross-on-Wye and Leaddon Vale. **For more information contact Tom Fisher, tel: 01886 821544 or email: [tomfisher@virgin.net](mailto:tomfisher@virgin.net)**



(photo 4) . Cross the road, turn left and then turn right again onto the WVW down the lane and after crossing the Pentaloë stream turn left to come to a road again opposite the Moon Inn. Retrace earlier steps past the old mill to the small footbridge where we turn right uphill towards the opposite left hand corner and pedestrian gate ahead. Turn right onto the lane. Local legend has it that this is Serpents Lane which the Mordiford Dragon used to get to the river.

5 Just before reaching the tarmac road we turn left along a forest track which is followed for ¾ mile when we come to the road again, this being Fiddlers Green. Cross the road and turn

right downhill keeping to the left verge past Lucksall caravan site to reach the Holme Lacy bridge, which turning left we cross (photo 5) and immediately at the bridge end turn left down the steps to reach the river bank. Turn right to follow the river through four meadows to come to a kissing gate and fishermen's hut. On passing through the gate turn right and follow the hedge to another kissing gate onto a lane.

6 Immediately turn right onto a footpath going back on your self and follow the hedge and fence on your right coming to a gate and path through a wood which is followed to a far stile. Cross stile and turn left diagonally uphill to a stile by the

houses into Wyelands. Going ahead along the road bring you to the bus stop on the left and a little further the village hall. ■

**Do not attempt this walk if the River Wye is in spate and across the meadows.**

