

Shropshire Hills Skyline Challenge

Trip style: Challenge walks

Destination: 📍 Shropshire Hills

Trip code: CSCHF-3-

Grades: 1, 4



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Part of our all-new HF Holidays Skyline series, this trip is perfect for those that want to take on an exhilarating weekend walking challenge. With the help of an experienced HF Holidays Leader, you'll hit all the famous highpoints of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape including the Long Mynd, Caer Caradoc, Ragleth, Hope Bowdler Hills and the Lawley. Over the course of two days, we'll cover a total distance of 25.5 miles (41 km) with 4,530 feet (1380 metres) of ascent and be rewarded with spectacular views of the stunning Stretton Skyline. Take on this thrilling walk for incredible scenery, ancient history, and maximum bragging rights.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- The sense of achievement from completing this Skyline challenge
- Exploring the best of the Shropshire Hills
- Discovering the history of the region
- Learning about the unique geology of the area
- Views over the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia, and the iconic Stiperstones Ridge
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 12 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite accommodation in our country house
- Cream tea on arrival day
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walking with experienced HF Holidays Leaders
- All transport to and from walks where necessary

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Check-in at the hotel is available from 16:00. If you are a member you can arrive at the house from 14:00. Enjoy a complimentary cream tea at 16:30 and meet other guests.

Day 2: Long Mynd and Ragleth

Distance: 13 miles (20.5km) Ascent: 2,250 feet (680m) In summary: Leaving the house through Rectory Woods, we'll follow the lower slopes of the Long Mynd, passing through the famous Carding Mill Valley to reach the quiet and hidden 'Batch' valley. The route continues into Jonathan's Hollow, and upwards to the northernmost end of the Long Mynd plateau. Following the ancient Port Way which runs along the heather-clad ridge of Long Mynd, we'll pass an ancient tumulus to reach Pole Bank, the highest point on Long Mynd at 516m. On a clear day Cadair Idris is visible to the west with the jagged quartzite outcrops of the Stiperstones ridge in the foreground. From Pole Cottage, we'll follow grassy paths across Round Hill and Callow Hill watching out for wild ponies grazing the common land, before descending to the pretty village of Little Stretton. After crossing the A49 which runs through the Stretton Valley, the route climbs steeply up Ragleth Hill to follow another stunning ridgeline with 360-degree panoramic views of the surrounding hills and valleys. Our descent takes us through woodlands on the side of Hazler Hill and down through Snatchfield Valley back to Church Stretton. From the town it is a short ascent through Rectory Fields to Longmynd House.

Day 3: Hope Bowdler Hill, Caer Caradoc and The Lawley

Distance: 12.5 miles (20km) Ascent: 2,350 (720m) In summary: After a short coach journey (5 minutes approx.), we'll arrive at the start of the second stage of the Stretton Skyline. We'll ascend past the Gaer Stone and traverse the stunning ridgeline and two cairned summits of Hope Bowdler Hill. A short descent takes us down to the ancient Cwms Lane from which we'll ascend to the iconic Three Fingers Rock on the southern end of Caer Caradoc. Hear about the myths and legends of Caractacus as we follow an ancient route to reach the ramparts of an Iron Age hillfort at the summit of Caer Caradoc and be wowed by 360-degree views. Passing Little Caradoc, we'll descend to the valley floor, contouring the lower slopes of the Lawley. We'll then ascend the final majestic ridge of the Lawley with its summit marked by a pole and a bird, visible for miles around. The path continues along the ridge southwards before dropping down to Comley and the lower slopes of Caer Caradoc before crossing the valley to reach the village of All Stretton. From here we'll wind our way along field paths and quiet roads back to Church Stretton and Longmynd House.

Day 4: Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

Longmynd Hotel

For rural calm in the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, the location of this characterful country house is hard to top. Set in a wooded hillside just a short stroll from the market town of Church Stretton (nicknamed Little Switzerland for its picturesque landscape), you'll be within walking or driving distance of the Stiperstones, Caer Caradoc, Ironbridge Valley of Invention, and the historic towns of Ludlow and Shrewsbury. And then, of course, there's the Long Mynd itself – an area of registered common land that has been cared for by a group of farmers (the self-named commoners) who have grazed sheep and ponies here for generations.

A warm welcome

We want you to feel comfortable from the moment you arrive. You'll find a welcome pack in your room with guest registration forms, menus, order forms for dinners and picnic lunches, the Wi-Fi password, and the front door code. Our houses are locked at night, so we recommend noting the Duty Manager's number on arrival in case of an emergency (or getting locked out).

Evening entertainment

While evening entertainment varies from house to house, HF Holidays Inter-House Quiz night held after dinner on Wednesdays is a weekly staple. Your HF Holidays leader may be around for tips on guided and self-guided walking routes as well as visit-worthy local attractions.

Walks talks

Our HF Holidays walk leaders host guided walking information briefings before dinner on guided walking holiday arrival days. This is followed by a group Walks Talk for information on the following day's guided walks (held before dinner every evening). Self-guided walking guests are, of course, welcome.

The walking day

Prior to setting off on guided walks, your HF Holidays Leader will run you through a short safety briefing. There's also an up-to-date weather forecast on display at the house to ensure you have appropriate clothing and footwear. If you choose to do your own walks or are on a self-guided walking holiday, we ask that you please complete an Independent Walker Card each day. These can be found near the Discovery Point in the house.

Walking safety - SHARED WITH ALL

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests. Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you. If you have a particular health condition or disability please put this on your guest registration form. This information will be confidential to your leaders and the house manager, but leaders do need to take account of any issues when planning walks. Please carry a copy of these trip notes with you, or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

Packing list - UK Guided Walking

The UK has a famously unpredictable climate so it's best to be prepared for weather that's sunny one minute and raining the next. To make it easier, here's a list of items you should consider packing. Essentials Suitable footwear such as waterproof walking boots that provide ankle support and good grip Waterproof and windproof jacket Comfortable clothing (jeans & waterproof capes are not suitable) Mid-layer(s) to keep you warm. Fleeces make a good choice Waterproof overtrousers Gloves and a warm hat Rucksack with waterproof liner Flask for hot drinks Water bottle (at least 1 litre capacity) Sunscreen UV sunglasses For holidays operating October through to the end of March, please also bring the following on your walks: spare warm clothing spare high energy food head torch and spare batteries please note for the October to March season your waterproof jacket needs to offer a high level of waterproofing and wind resistance, and a hood. Look for a waterproof jacket with sealed/taped seams and a minimum HH (hydrostatic head - this is the rating given on waterproof jackets) of 10,000mm+ Recommended Several base layers (long-sleeve or short-sleeve) Cushioned walking socks to avoid blisters First aid kit, including plasters and insect repellent Sit mat Waterproof pouch for valuables Rubbish bag (remember to always leave no trace) Wallet/purse Camera Walking poles
