

Wellington Heath Christchurch

- Open every day
- SO 712406
- Access should not be a problem
- The Farmer's Arms' in the village and "The Oak" on the Bromyard road at Staplow.
- Events- The usual range of services also prayer meetings on Wednesday mornings at 9.30. Christingle service at Christmas

The church, rebuilt in 1944 in the Victorian gothic style after a disastrous fire, has a warm and welcoming charm.

The cemetery, across the road, has wonderful views to the west and a flower rich wildlife meadow founded by the late Peter Garnett. Snowdrops are followed by primroses, bluebells and wild daffodil. In the summer meadow buttercup, green-winged orchid, and other hay meadow plants put on a show. Mature trees enhance the churchyard for wildlife, particularly birds. Listen for the 'yaffle' call of the green woodpecker and look out for grass snake and slowworm, as well as butterflies such as speckled wood, holly blue and gatekeeper.



Eastnor St John the Baptist

- Open during daylight hours
- SO 732372

The church, built of Old Red Sandstone, has Norman markings on its south doorway. The west tower dates from the 14th century, but the rest of the church was rebuilt in 1852 and has some beautiful Kempe stained glass windows.

The font, possibly dating from Norman times, is in fact a sump, which would have been placed below a font to allow the holy water to drain away.



A Chapel separated from the church by wrought iron gates stands in the churchyard.

A magnificent ancient yew, described by Mee in 1938 as 'a great yew making a bower over an oak lychgate', grows in south-west side of the churchyard.

Berrow St Faith

- The church is locked. Key available from Berrow Vicarage 01684 833230
- SO 794343
- Disabled access
- Refreshments available at The Duke of York in Berrow (1.5mils)

The north wall of the church and its font are both 12th century. A 13th century 'squint' type window can be seen in the north wall. The rest of the church, built of stone and rubble masonry, dates from the 14th and 15th century. A prayer cross stands near the churchyard entrance.

The churchyard, bounded by a stone wall covered with lichens and ferns, contains old yew trees. There are slow worms in the grassland and a barn owl



has been seen hunting over the churchyard.

Near the church north door is a stone telling of a cruel murder in May 1780 at a cottage in Berrow known as Murder House.

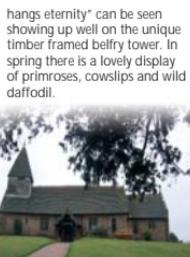
Alfrick St Mary Magdalene

- Open 10am to 4pm
- SO 748529
- Disabled access through the main door of the church
- Events- Patronal festival in July, Harvest supper in October

This little church dates from the 13th century and contains

interesting items such as a Holy water stoup and a carved Jacobean pulpit. A west window shows St Ambrose with his beehive. The bodies of the bees appear on one side of the glass and the bees' wings on the other. The more modern items include the locally worked altar rail kneelers and the Florentine stitch carpet, hand-worked by local needlewomen.

From the churchyard the gilded weathercock and sundial with its motto "On this moment



hangs eternity" can be seen showing up well on the unique timber framed belfry tower. In spring there is a lovely display of primroses, cowslips and wild daffodil.

Coddington All Saints

- Open daylight hours
- SO 718426
- Access by paved pathway avoiding churchyard steps

The churchyard has the original base of a medieval cross. These were used for outdoor services particularly on Psalm Sunday.

Snowdrops are followed by primroses, then summer hay meadow flowers, which grow in the north side of the churchyard.

Listen and look for the many different visiting birds. The list



includes three different species of owl, five species of tit, warblers, finches, thrushes, wagtails and the summer visiting spotted flycatcher. Views to the Black mountains are spectacular.

Hollybush All Saints

- Open during daylight hours
- SO 769367
- Access by wheelchair is possible
- Refreshments available at the Duke of York in Berrow (2mils)

The church, first built as a chapel of ease in 1869, was provided for the Hollybush quarry workers. The building stone is local with Bath stone dressings. Behind the altar is a fine alabaster Reredos and the only stained glass window is apparently by Rogers.

Strorridge St John the Evangelist

- Church is kept locked. Key available from the Vicarage next door
- SO 748486

The church was designed and built in 1856 by Mr. Frederick Preedy, the architect from Worcester. He also designed, and installed the East window. Made with glass of the period the window is a very good example of Preedy's work.

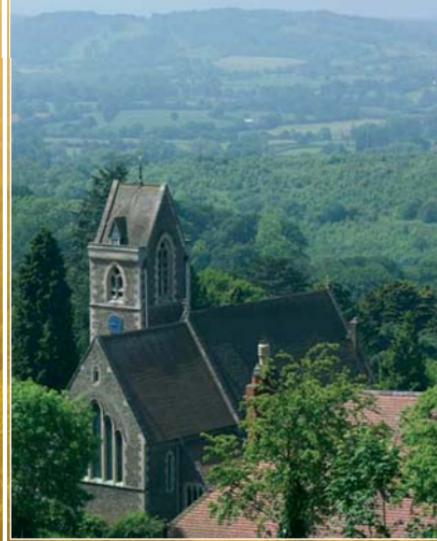
The churchyard is typically Victorian with many fine mature, evergreen trees.



Protecting wildlife
•
Preserving heritage
•
Involving community

malvern hills
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Exploring CHURCHES AND CHURCHYARDS around the MALVERN HILLS Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Wherever you happen to be around the Malvern Hills AONB you are within easy reach of a Parish church and churchyard.



Great Malvern Cemetery

Take time to explore the wealth of interest and enjoy the peace and quiet of these churchyards or 'Living Sanctuaries', as they have become known.

You will find Victorian and medieval church buildings set within churchyards where the abundance of plant and animal life, the carved stonework and the story of people who lived around the Malvern Hills can be discovered.

The gravestones are a record over 300 years or more. The earliest being 17th or 18th century stones of local material and craftsmanship

There may be ancient churchyard crosses, old sundials and lychgates.

Visit in spring and summer to see bulbs and meadow flowers.

Ancient yew trees, possibly the oldest living things in Britain, add to the fascination and atmosphere of these places.

Lichens on the stonework, mosses and delicate ferns, wildflowers and grasses, birds and butterflies all add a mosaic of colour and sound to the churchyard creating the wonderful web of plant and animal life to be enjoyed even on a brief visit.



You can help to protect the peace and tranquility of the AONB by using local buses. The AONB website www.malvernhillssaonb.org.uk has information on public transport services, or contact www.travelinmidlands.co.uk.

Leaflets describing four cycling routes and a variety of local walking routes are available from the Malvern Hills AONB website and local tourist information points.



Little Malvern priory



Window at Alfrick

Please don't forget to leave a donation at the church and sign the visitors' book.



Caring for God's Acre is a small, independent charity which helps communities to care for and interpret churchyards and burial grounds.

www.caringforgodsacre.co.uk

You can become a 'Friend of Caring for God's Acre'

Caring for God's Acre
6 West Street,
Leominster,
Herefordshire,
HR6 8ES

Tel: 01568 611154

e-mail: info@cfga.fsnet.co.uk



Caring for God's Acre is grateful to the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership for support of this leaflet through The Malvern Hills AONB Sustainable Development Fund.

Copies of this leaflet can be downloaded from www.malvernhillssaonb.org.uk (publications).



Lichen on stonework at Suckley



Cradley lychgate



The Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally designated area. Its distinctive character and natural beauty is so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it. There are 40 AONBs in England and Wales, all designated for their high quality landscapes which are recognised as being of equal value to those of our National Parks.

The Malvern Hills AONB encompasses the Malvern Hills and land stretching from the river Teme in the North to the M50 in the South, Ledbury in the west to Malvern in the East.

The Malvern Hills AONB Partnership is a working partnership between people who live in, work in and manage the land, and those charged with conserving and enhancing its landscapes and special features. The main aim of the Partnership is to 'conserve and enhance' the natural beauty of the area.

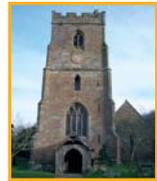
To discover more about the area, visit www.malvernhillssaonb.org.uk

Leigh St Eadburga

- Open 10am to dusk each day.
- SO 784534
- A movable ramp gives access to church via main door.
- Refreshments available at The Fold, Bransford (5 mins drive on A4103)
- Patronal festival service in June

The church at Leigh dates from 12th century, as does the font, which shows Romanesque features.

The rare Romanesque carved relief of Christ, restored in 1972 and now displayed inside



the church, once stood in the niche in the outer north wall. Snowdrops, primroses and wild daffodils flower in spring. This lovely rural churchyard is blessed with an old yew tree and many lichen covered memorials. You will also find the base of a medieval churchyard cross supporting a more recent Victorian cross.

Great Malvern Cemetery

- Open daily
- SO 785462
- Disabled access
- Chapel open by arrangement tel: 01684 566667

The cemetery first opened in 1861 as a result of the Metropolitan Interment Act, which permitted burials in consecrated ground outside churchyards.

The main cemetery chapel is still in use today and has a chapel vestibule and vestry complete with willow-patterned toilet!

The cemetery is famous as being the burial place of Jenny Lind (1820 – 1887), the famous singer known as the Swedish Nightingale.

Areas of grassland are left uncut through the early summer for wild flowers such as cat's ear and vetches. During autumn in the older part of the cemetery you will find colourful grassland fungi such as waxcaps.



Snowdrops, once known as February fairmaids or Candlemas bells are followed in March by primroses. 'Mathon White' hops grow around the churchyard.

Slow worm, the smooth, legless lizard, hunts at dusk or after rainfall and glow worms, the beetles described by the poet Wordsworth as an 'earth-born star', may also emerge.

Little Malvern St Giles

- Open all day
- SO 770403
- Disabled access with a sloping path
- Refreshments available at Malvern Hills Hotel (3/4ml)

Little Malvern Priory was originally a 12th century Benedictine Priory and the churchyard is adjacent to Little Malvern Court. The Court is open mid April to mid July on a Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. Parties should book. Tel: 01684 892988.

The churchyard is perhaps most lovely in spring with its mass of snowdrops quickly followed by celandine, cyclamen, crocus and banks of primroses. If you are patient, you may see the family of nuthatches in the yew tree or hear the mew of buzzards wheeling far above over the Malvern Hills. It is a place of peace.



The present church is built of Cradley stone with Bath stone dressings in the 'Decorated style'. It was erected on the site of the old church, taken down in 1878-9.

Inside there is an original large Tub font, dated about 1150 – 1200 and Kempe stained glass windows – Kempe's wheatsheaf 'signature' appears in the east window over the altar.

Close to the church entrance stands a medieval churchyard cross, circa 14th century, with its square base scarred where arrows were once sharpened for archery practice. Bats roost in the church and forage over the churchyard after dusk.



Colwall St James the Great

- Open approx 7am to 7pm daily
- SO 739424
- Church and churchyard are accessible to wheelchairs
- Annual church events – Colwall festival in July
- Light refreshments and meals available in Colwall village (1.5mils)

This lovely 14th century church built of local red sandstone is set peacefully amongst fields. A flower-bed commemorates the 150th wedding anniversary of Mary Sumner founder of the Mother's Union. Notice also the church doorway supported by colonettes with 'trumpet scallop' tops which dates to late Norman times.

The churchyard, with its medieval churchyard cross, contains flower rich grassland. Snowdrops and primroses are followed by betony, ox-eye daisy, vetches, lady's bedstraw, knapweed and other flowers. A magnificent ancient yew tree and a Worcester black pear also grow here.

Slow worm, grass snake and butterflies of all kinds thrive in the long grassland.



Suckley St John the Baptist

- Opening times – A key is available from Holloway's shop next to the church, usually between 9 am – 5pm
- SO 721516
- Access – Inside the church in the pew on the right hand side of the door is a ramp
- Refreshments available at Holloways Greenhouse café next to the church



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Location of featured churches around the Malvern Hills AONB



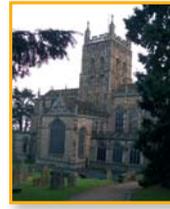
Great Malvern Priory

- Open - 9am-5pm every day
- SO 775458
- Disabled access, well sign-posted

This magnificent building founded in 1085 has a larger display of 15th century stained glass than any church in

England and the East window is the largest in any parish church in the country.

In the churchyard you will see snowdrops in February and a fine collection of mature trees, including old yews and holm oak, Montmorency pine, Lebanon and deodar cedars, Wellingtonia and western red cedars.



Birtsmorton St Thomas of Canterbury with St Peter and St Paul

- The church is kept closed. The key is kept at Berraw Vicarage 01684 833230
- SO 801355
- Access by wheelchair is possible
- Refreshments – 2 pubs. The Farmer's Arms, Birtsmorton (1ml), Duke of York, Berraw (1.5mils)

Situated by Birtsmorton Court, the church here has a Norman font and dates from the 14th, 15th and 19th centuries. Within the church items of interest include the Nanfan family tomb and tapestry dated 1693, a hatchment and a piscina in the south transept uncovered in 1981.

There are fragments of medieval glass in the windows. The churchyard has lichen rich memorials and ferns and mosses on its boundary wall.

West Malvern St James

- Open during daylight hours
- SO 763460
- A movable ramp allows access to the church door. Toilet facilities
- Refreshments available at The Brewer's Arms, close by
- There is a Well Dressing in May, as part of the Malvern Well dressings

St. James's church is a grade II listed Victorian building with beautiful stained glass windows.

This large peaceful churchyard with lovely views is the burial place of Roget who compiled 'Roget's Thesaurus'. The war memorial for West Malvern also stands here.

Visit in late winter to see snowdrops or spring to see primroses. Summer brings hay meadow buttercup and bird's foot trefoil. Listen for the 'yaffle' call of the green woodpecker or see a slowworm in the warmer months.

St. James's is a good place to begin a walk on the Malvern Hills with easy access to the Beacon.



Bromesberrow St Mary

- Open daily
- SO 742336
- Disabled Access
- Refreshments at Bromesberrow Heath Post Office (closed Wed and Sat pm)

The earliest church records of St Mary's date from 1280.

Inside the church the Yate Chapel holds two flags carried

in the Civil war, one is Royalist and the other Parliamentary.



Visit in spring to see the lovely carpet of wild daffodils. A walk can be taken from the church to Chase End Hill.

Castlemorton St Gregory

- Open daily
- SO 795373
- Refreshments available at 2 local public houses
- For walks from here see the Church Discovery Walks leaflets www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk

St Gregory's is a fine, if understated, example of an English country church still serving its community. The



varying architectural styles of the past 900 years blend gracefully to reflect the continuity of the generations that have built and nurtured the church building, which is of Norman origins on an older Saxon site.

Welland St James

- Open most Tuesday's through the year
- Open during summer months but best to check in advance
- SO 796399
- Portable ramp for access inside the church
- Refreshments available from The Pheasant at Welland opposite the church
- Events - Patronal festival in July and Craft Fair late November

There has been a church at Welland since 1300. The present building dates from



1875 and contains a Kempe, stained glass window and war memorials. Visit in February to see the snowdrops and then March for primroses. Welland churchyard also has a fine collection of mature trees.

Little Malvern St Wulstan

- The church is normally closed apart from services but can be opened by prior arrangement for groups. Contact number held by Malvern Tourist office
- SO 771409
- Access - deployable ramp for wheelchairs
- Refreshments can be provided for groups by arrangement
- Events – Open for Elgar Society Weekend (first w/e after late Spring Bank holiday)
- And 2nd Sat in Sept for Historic Churches bike ride

St Wulstan, the patron saint of the church, was the Bishop of Worcester in 1095.

The present church, built in 1862, has coats of arms representing Benedictine houses in England around the inside church walls. The churchyard has a carpet of primroses in spring and provides a splendid view over the Severn plain.

The church is famous as being the burial place of Sir Edward Elgar and his wife and daughter. Dorothy Howell, composer and pianist (1898 - 1982) is also buried here.



Cradley St James the Great

- Open 9am to 6pm Summer, 9am to 4pm Winter
- SO 735471
- Access to the church is level
- Events-Church festival in early June

An unusual 16th century lychgate stands at the entrance to the churchyard where a sundial of tufa stone is sited on



the base of an old churchyard cross.

Ledbury St Michael and All Angels

- Open - Winter 8am to 4pm. Summer 8am to 6pm
- SO 714377
- Provision for disabled access
- Refreshments available in the town of Ledbury
- Events – Civic Service in June, Christmas on 24th Dec. Concerts over the year

The present church dates from the 12th century. Through the years the addition of memorials, carvings, stained glass, tapestry and paintings, has enhanced the beauty and interest of the building.

Behind the altar hangs a painting by a local artist, dated 1824, done as a copy of Leonardo Da Vinci's work, Last Supper.

The Heaton Memorial window, depicting creation, dates from 1991.

The tapestry kneelers in the pews were made by local people.

The churchyard has many interesting lichen covered memorials.



Malvern Wells and Wyche All Saint

- The church is not open except for Sunday services
- SO 772439
- Access – disabled visitors can park by the church door. Ramps available
- Refreshments at The Railway Inn next door
- Events – Harvest Festival. Open church Sunday afternoon serving cream teas

The church, built of Malvern granite, has a foundation stone laid in 1902 by Lettice, Countess Beauchamp on the outside east wall with a statue of St George above.

The reredos, behind the altar, is carved and gilded to a design by the church architect Troyle Griffiths, a friend of Sir Edward Elgar.



There are beautiful views from the churchyard over the Severn valley.

In spring, visit to see the magnificent carpet of snowdrops and crocuses and the ornamental trees including a monkey puzzle.

Bats can be seen in summer foraging after dusk and birds of the woodland edge – blackbirds, thrushes and the tiny goldcrest are common.

The church has a Norman south doorway and a small doorway arch in the south wall consisting of a Saxon font split in half.

Arrow sharpening marks on the south-west church corner show archery practice was once carried out here.

The ancient yew tree to the South East of the church has a substantial hollow trunk. Old yew trees become hollow making them stronger. The second old yew stands to the east of the church.

