



WALKS AROUND WYRE WALK 1

# Dowles Brook Circular Walk

4.5 miles



Start/Finish: Dry Mill Lane Car Park

GR: SO 772762

Length: 4.5 miles

Parking: Dry Mill Lane Car Park. (Free)

Gates & Stiles: None.

Terrain: Flat cycle route, some steep

riverside paths.

This walk guides the visitor through the heart of the Wyre Forest National Nature Reserve. The reserve is one of the largest ancient oak woodlands in England at nearly 550 hectares.



'Grow With Wyre' is a landscape partnership, designed to encourage people to visit, understand and protect the unique landscape of Wyre Forest.

For more information please visit [www.growwithwyre.org](http://www.growwithwyre.org)

Together we have developed nine new walks. Three are fully waymarked, six are available as downloadable maps with route description and three have the added option of an audio guide. For full details on walking opportunities in Worcestershire please visit: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside)

## Dowles Brook Circular Walk

The old railway line, now used for recreational access is all that remains of the once busy Bewdley to Wooferton line. The line closed in 1964 as part of government's attempts to reduce the costs of running British Railways. When you are alongside the brook you may catch sight of a dipper, this type of stream or brook is ideal habitat for this small brown bird with a white front. If you are lucky you may see it flying straight and fast just above the water or sitting on a rock where its constant dipping movement gives the impression of a bird incapable of sitting still. Knowles Mill located near the end of the walk, is one of 6 mills that once operated along the Dowles brook. You are welcome to cross over the bridge and view the mill which is now in the care of the National Trust.



## Dowles Brook Circular Walk

- 1 Start at Dry Mill lane car park. Proceed along the old railway line passing under the bridge, this route is also part of the Sustans cycle route 45. Proceed along the old railway line for about 1000 metres until you come to a gate and another bridge.
- 2 Follow the route 45 signs and proceed beneath the bridge continuing along the old railway line for approximately 500m.
- 3 Keep going straight ahead still on the route of the old railway line for approximately 1 mile.
- 4 At this point you leave the old railway line and take the forest road down to the right following the route 45 and Button Oak sign on the finger post.
- 5 You should now be standing on a substantial wooden bridge with the Dowles Brook flowing beneath you. Keep going for 350m along the forest road with the Dowles Brook down to your right.
- 6 When you reach a clearing with a bench to your right and a large finger post to your left, you need to follow the Dowles Brook sign on the finger post, so take the right path and proceed down through the trees.
- 7 After 30 metres cross back over the Dowles brook via a very substantial timber bridge on concrete pillars, this replaced an earlier bridge destroyed by the floods of 2007. The path now rises up to the right with the brook meandering along down below to your left.
- 8 You should now be standing at a fork in the track, with a path rising steeply up to your right. Take the left hand lower track, you will see a National Nature Reserve sign ahead of you. The path rises steeply up through the wood.
- 9 Cross over the bridge and proceed a short distance up the sunken lane. At the T junction at the end of the lane turn right towards the white building which



is Coopers Mill cottage. Continue past Cooper Mill cottage until you reach a small stone bridge.

- 10 You should now be stood on a small stone bridge over a trickling stream feeding into the Dowles Brook which is immediately down to your right. Follow the path straight ahead with yet another meadow down to your right until you come to Knowles Mill.
- 11 You will find an interpretation panel on the mill side of the brook. You are welcome to cross over the bridge and view the mill now in the care of the National

Trust. Re cross the brook and leave the mill behind you, follow the track through the woods with the brook down to your right. This track winds its way back to the start of the walk passing over the brook and then under what would have been a railway bridge now removed with only the large stone walls still in place. By turning immediately right you will be back at Dry Mill land car park.