



# British Camp CHILDREN'S TRAIL



## About Shire Ditch

It is thought to be as early as bronze age but it was mainly used in 1287 as a boundary between the land of the Red Earl, Gilbert de Clare of Gloucester and Bishop Cantilupe of Herefordshire. The Red Earl was a very powerful man, but also greedy and he started wandering on to the Bishop's land. The Bishop was very unhappy about this and a trial was held at Wynds Point in 1278 and the Bishop won. The Red Earl said that his animals were all moving off his land onto the Bishop's land, so to stop this from happening he created Shire Ditch, it is thought though that he made it going downhill so the Bishop's animals could jump over to his side and couldn't get back. This ditch forms the boundary between Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

**What was Shire Ditch used for?**

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**What is Shire Ditch also know as?**

R d E l's Dyke

Continue down the windy steps.

On this path you will reach a 5 way meeting of paths in a gap, called the Silurian Pass, the different directions are marked on a stone.

## About Silurian

Silurian rocks are a different age to the rest of the rocks of the Malvern Hills. They were laid down under seas, and not made of molten rock (magma). The rocks of the Malvern Hills are hard and ancient (600 million years old) but to the west of the hills, the narrow tree lined ridge, the stone is limestone, these are of Silurian age (400 million years). Where the rocks cut across each other you will see the ground is damp, with rushes and thick, greener grass.

**Name one place that is named on the marker?**

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Follow the path marked on the stone for 'The Giant's' Cave, once you are at the cave, can you find what is marked on the wall?

**What was marked on the wall?**

You could draw it here

## About The Giant's Cave or also know as Clutters Cave

Clutter's Cave is a man made cave formed from dark basalt rock, or pillow lavas, that were created 600 million years ago when a volcano erupted under the sea. Since then it has been dug out to create a possible shelter for shepherds. Do you think a giant could live in here?

There is a folklore story that a giant, upset with seeing his wife with another man threw a large stone at them, unfortunately the stone killed his wife. The large stone can be seen today in the village of Colwall and is known as the Colwall stone.

Now retrace your steps back to the marker stone, follow the broad gravel path along the Eastern side of the Herefordshire Beacon. It is marked as Camp Hotel and Wynds point on the stone.

**How many wooden benches can you count along this path?**

Follow this path, you will be able to see the reservoir to your right as you walk along the path, standing above the reservoir and looking out in front of you can see Bredon hill and beyond that you can see the Cotswolds.

Continue walking on this path, stand in front of the black and white cottage next to the reservoir look to the left of the cottage, you can see the tower of Little Malvern Priory, it was built in the 12th century and this was a site of a monastery from 1171 until 1537.

Continue on this path, back towards the brown gate you came through.



**You're a Malvern Super Sleuth! Well Done**

# We start at the Large Car Park at British Camp...

The Hotel opposite is called the Malvern Hills Hotel, it was an old inn dating back to the 18th Century.

Take the uphill path that goes from the middle of the car park through the trees. Go through the large farm gate.

**What colour is the gate you went through?**

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**What animal might you see on the hills?**

(Look at the warning triangle)

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Keep an eye out for skylarks, buzzards and small heath butterflies, adders, green woodpeckers, harvest mice, meadow pipits and in spring, marsh orchids and heather (that's there all year round).

Why do you think there are benches along this path? Years ago the trees were not so high, so people could sit on the bench and see the view across the Severn Plain.

Continue up through the trees (ignore the path on the right hand side) turn right just past the brown bench and go up the concrete steps heading up towards British Camp—otherwise known as Herefordshire beacon.

**How many steps can you count?**

British Camp is one of the highest peaks of the Malvern Hills. It is 338m high and it is made out of igneous molten rock. The rock was made millions of years ago through cooling magma which is like lava.

Turn left and stay on this path. As you walk along this path look out towards your left.

**What can you see hidden between the trees?**

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(Clue: It holds lots of water for people to drink)

This is a reservoir that is no longer used, it was built in 1892 to store and supply water for Malvern town as it grew during Victorian times. It's full of Malvern spring water.

Continue on this path and you will come to some stone steps. The path winds upwards with more steps in front of you, after the fourth set of steps stop and look around.

Can you see the deep ridges around where you are stood?

What do you think they were used for?

Continue on this path until you come to a clearing.

You are now standing in the middle of what once was the fort.

## About the Iron Age hill fort

You can still see the ramparts (or defensive walls) marked in the earth. The earlier hill fort had two entrances, to the north and south, but when it was enlarged, four gateways were created. One of these faces west, but the other three have the boundary tilted next to the gates so as to ensure the entrances face east which is thought to be the best place for access. During an English Heritage survey they found evidence of lots of hut circles. These huts would probably have been wooden structures with thatched roofs. They did not have chimneys so the smoke from the fires inside the huts would gather in the roof and keep away the insects from the thatch. The lack of chimney also had the benefit of tarring the inside of the thatch and making it more fire resistant. About 29 hut circles were seen within the first hill fort and as many as 118 in the later, larger hill fort. This would suggest it was quite a large settlement. The reason for the huts is not known. It could have been a village settlement occupied for part of the year or all year round or for ceremonies or gatherings. It could have been a place to lay out the dead.

In medieval times, an oval earthwork was built which now circles the top of British camp, this was probably built by the invading Normans between the 11th and 12th century. It could have even been a wooden castle that once stood within this oval. The earth from the building of this was placed on top of the hill giving it today the flat topped shape.

Walk through the centre of the hill fort, stand in the middle and imagine that you are back to 300 BC.

Why do you think the builders of the fort put the fort here?

The builders probably dug the fort and ridges using a tool like a pick axe made from an antler.

Continue on the path. You are now walking down the ramparts from British Camp and along the ridge of the Herefordshire Beacon.

**Look out towards the South you can see a tall**

**T** \_\_\_\_\_ **r.**

This stone pillar is called an obelisk and is a family monument put up by Eastnor Castle's ancestors.

**Look out towards the West you can see lots of**

**F** \_\_\_\_\_ **ms** and **T** \_\_\_\_\_ **es.**

Stay on this path and as you approach the next hill you will see a boundary stone.

**What are the numbers on the stone?**

It was placed here by Malvern Hills Trust on the ridge of Herefordshire Beacon and Millennium Hill (named in year 2000), there is a much older boundary stone just behind this marker.

If you look carefully it is possible to see the flat hut platforms of the Iron Age settlement on the slopes of the hillside.

Continue on the path, you will come to some stone steps. As you come down the steps look to your left and right you will see a big ditch or trench this is called Shire Ditch.

Please turn over...

**Warning: Please be aware of uneven surfaces, some steps and the route going over steep grassy slopes.**