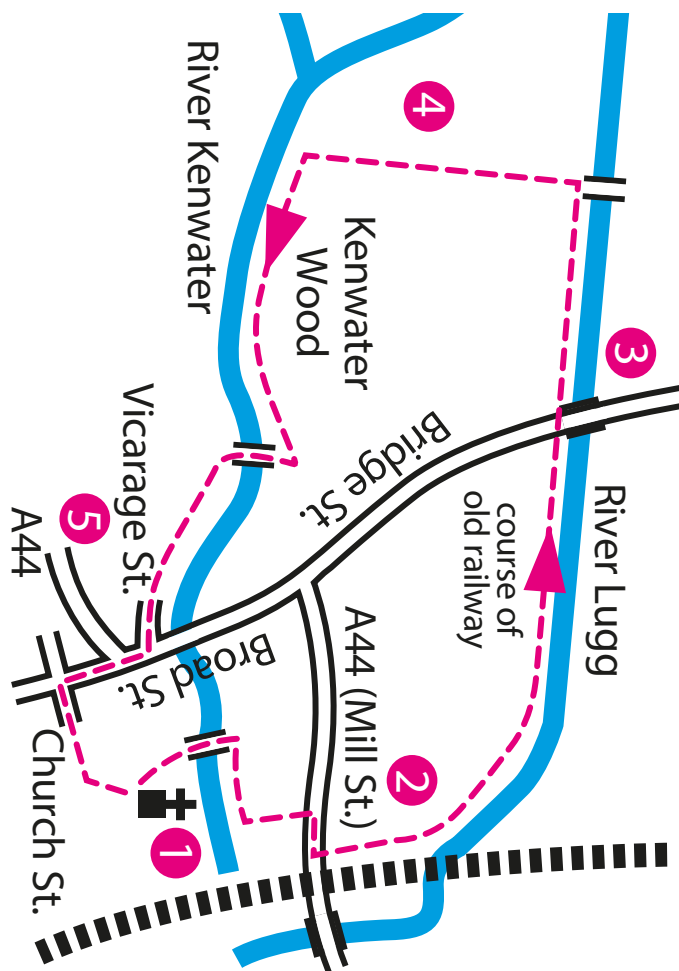


4. Kenwater Wood – approaching river and weir warning sign TL on path through wood, then continue on edge of sports field. TR to cross river at next bridge (Cranes Lane Bridge). Bear left up slope, continue on riverside path.

5. Vicarage Street – continue to end of road and, with great care, cross Broad Street. TR up Broad Street and TL along Church Street to return to the Priory.



Please remember the Countryside code

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants & animals
- Take litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people at all times



2

Family Walks around Leominster

Old Railway and Kenwater Wood



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2 miles, flat, no hills, no stiles,
mixed path surfaces.
Start at the Priory Church,
at the end of Church Street.
OS map explorer 202.





Though the trains are long gone, part of the former track bed on the northern edge of Leominster is now a popular riverside footpath. For more than 100 years from 1857, steam engines chugged along the single track **Leominster to Kington Railway**. The old line, which had what we would now value as useful rail links to Hay-on-Wye and Brecon and also New Radnor (there were hopes for a mid-Wales route on to Aberystwyth), closed to passengers in 1955 and to freight in 1964. In its heyday it was busy with wagons of stone, timber, cattle and sheep. The hounds of a local hunt were also occasional passengers!

This short walk roves between the town's two channels of the River Lugg and includes a lovely belt of woodland. Beginning at the **Priory Church**, pause to view a frequently-overlooked gem in the stonework below the tower - the beautifully carved capitals on the columns at the little-used Great West Door. The 12c sandstone images - lions, birds of prey, serpents, foliage, ears of corn and reapers at work - are among the earliest works of the celebrated *Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture*. Together, the carvings form a historic masterpiece that has survived the weather of centuries and the attention of the puritans.

Over the elegant iron footbridge marked 'Worcester Foundry 1844', the route crosses the **River Kenwater**, one of the Lugg channels. **The Poplands**, Mill Street, the distinctive timber-framed jettied house, once the Old Harp Inn, dates from the 16c. This part of the town was long known as *Popelands* and is thought to have been the location of a Catholic burial ground. In 1736 protestors pulled down *The Popelands Turnpike* at Mill Street, one of six tollgates on Leominster roads, despite two men having been hanged for a similar offence at Ledbury.

The River Lugg 'Cut' or relief channel was created beside the route of the former **Leominster-Kington Railway** in the 1960s to counter flooding. (An earlier course of the Lugg ran through the town by another route and flowed along the south side of Mill Street).

By what is now **New Lugg Bridge**, trains once crossed North Road over a level crossing managed by a keeper who lived in a cottage by the gates. Today at this spot **Summergalls Farm**, approached along the former line, has an attractive railway-style name sign and a feature plinth of 'milk churns' awaiting collection by the 'track'. Near the farm, the footpath heads through **Kenwater Wood** which thrives, in part, on former rubbish tip land and is a haven for many species of birds.

Prior to landfill the old course of the River Kenwater ran through the site. You will walk beside its modern course a little further south. Leominster's watercourses have been much altered. At **Vicarage Street** the Pinsley Brook once flowed along the south-west (the right) side of the street. Cottages near the brook were reached over small bridges. At **Brook Hall**, a former church at the end of the street, full-immersion baptisms took place in the Pinsley in the 19th century.

1. Priory Church – with the tower to your right go down steps in corner of churchyard, (to avoid steps go out of main gate and turn right) continue down 'No Through Road' and cross footbridge over River Kenwater. TR and follow riverside path to Mill Street.

2. Mill Street (opp 'The Poplands') – TR briefly and, with care, cross road. Just past end house take footpath and follow it to River Lugg 'Cut' (relief channel), TL along riverbank on course of former Leominster to Kington Railway.

3. North Road, New Lugg Bridge – cross road with care and continue ahead by river as far as Summergalls farm entrance. Opposite bridge TL down slope, use stile or gate and follow path.

