

Route 5 - Coleford Town Centre Loop – Market Square, St. John Street, Boxbush Road, RCO9, RCO10, Scowles Road, RCO11, RCO29, RCO28, Newland Street, Market Square

Approx. Just over 3 miles / time 2-2.5hrs / Hilly, uneven footing, street walk, road walking with no pavements in sections and stiles to cross.

We start this walk at the Town's Clock Tower, a Grade II listed building and the site of the original Chapel of Ease, completed in 1489 and demolished in 1882 as the chapel was too small for the congregation.

As you look at the paving slabs around the Clock Tower you will notice red bricks in the ground that depict the original footprint of the chapel.

The stone from the Chapel was used to build the boys school on Lords Hill.

The Clock tower features a war memorial and down the steps sits a stone trough with an inscription to Queen Victoria's 60 years of reign.



The monthly market by the Clock Tower

As we head up St. John Street, we pass to our left the oldest building in Coleford, circa 17th century The Old White Hart Inn (original part of).

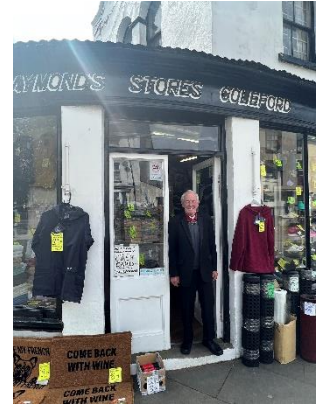
Heading towards the top of St. John Street there is a homage in the paving depicting the old Tram route following its demise in the late 1870s.

The tram line ran from 1812 to link the town with mines throughout the Forest of Dean with the River Wye at Redbrook and Monmouth.



Old Tram Line

As we pass Raymond's store on our left walking up Boxbush Road you will not see any evidence, but the Box Bush Shaft was cited in the car park next to the Carpet store and air vents were situated by the wall.



Mr Raymond himself, the oldest family-owned business in Coleford.

As we continue up the road you will see on your left the old Telephone Exchange building and as we near the top, St John the Evangelist's church, built to accommodate the growing religious population.

Due to a dwindling population the church was closed in 2016 and is to be sold privately. Heading right over the road we pick up the narrow footpath RCO9 which will take us up to Buchanan Park.

Angus Buchanan was born in Coleford in 1894 and was awarded the Military Cross on 7th January 1916, the Victoria Cross on 5th April 1916, being decorated by King George V in Bristol on 8th November 1917.

In honour of his bravery funds were raised and at his bequest a play area was built for the local children and named in his honour.

He is laid to rest in the Cemetery next to the Angus Buchanan Recreational Park which is managed by a trust in his name.

The Cemetery was opened in 1867. As the Chapel of Ease (as it was known then) in Coleford did not have the right to bury its dead and it had to use the cemetery in Newland who could no longer take Coleford's dead.

The track from Coleford to Newland was called the Burial Path.

As we enter the park through the large wrought Iron gates, which were erected by public donations on 6th May 1936 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of their Majesties King George V and Queen Mary, we will see the play area to the left and on the right volunteers of the Angus Buchanan Trust are creating a garden, tirelessly spending many hours here.

As we approach the fields in front of us, we cross through the centre.

During the spring and early summer, the fields are a beautiful wild meadow as

seen on the information board.



On the far side of the field, we turn right on to the track and head past the football field on our left. Heading down the single file footpath we pass Greenacres Campsite to our left.

We cross the stile, which is easy to navigate but does have a steep step down.

There is normally livestock in the field so dogs need to be on a lead.

Keeping to the left we turn left over another stile, the footpath follows around the campsite, still on our left. Heading along the path there is a small step to navigate. The café at the Campsite does a cracking coffee and offers refreshments.



Greenacres Campsite

Continuing around to the right, we pass over another stile and bear left. Carry on walking then bear right and to the end of the track.

Take care when navigating the stile as you are going straight onto a sometimes-busy road.

A good idea to put dogs back on a lead and let children know.

Turn left but cross over to the right so you are facing oncoming traffic.

Continue down the hill for some distance until the grass verge on your left is wide enough to walk on. Safely cross the road.

Continuing down the road bear left at the junction, known as Hodgeway Cross, as the road swings to the right.

Walk along the road until you reach a gate in the stone wall on your right. You will notice a white bungalow down a track to your left. As you stand by the gates you will notice ahead of you several large mounds.



The site of Highmeadow Manor – ruins

This information is compiled by volunteers to the best of their knowledge. If you spot any inaccuracies or work required to a footpath, please do let us know: hello@colefordwelcomeswalkers.co.uk
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These mounds are all that is left of Highmeadow Manor which was built by Benedict Hall in 1670.

The Manor was completely dismantled and mostly recycled in the early 19th Century when the family moved to the ancestral home of Firle Place, Sussex.

It is rumoured that the Iron gates are now housed at Firle Place, the window shutters were installed at the Angel Pub and the stone was used to build Bracelands House.



View from Highmeadow

This is private land so please do not enter the field as per the notice on the gate.

Before you reach Gage Farm and Cowshed Holiday Homes, on your right, take a moment to enjoy the spectacular views toward the Sugar Loaf and Skirrid.

Continuing down the road and on passing the farm there is a footpath to the left, RCO11, through a five-bar gate. (Opposite the entrance to the Campsite).

Just before you reach the gate, there is a hole in the hedge, and if you look close enough you will see the remains of an old well, now full of mud.

Dogs back on leads as sheep are in these fields.

Taking the narrow path across the field and not the track, you will notice the ruins of an old Lime Kiln to your left. It is requested that you do not deviate from the path as the ruins are dangerous and should not be entered or stood upon.

The path joins what was the old Burial Path from Coleford to Newland Church, known as the Forest Cathedral; well worth a visit another time.

You may notice what looks like a shelter for the sheep by the fence on the right but this is another disused well.

This single width track takes us back up towards Angus Buchanan Park, over a stile, whilst passing the old Whitecliff Quarry on your right which is now an off-road centre.

At the top of the track, we turn right and head down the road until it joins the single width track between the two cottages.

As we enter the park through the old wrought iron small gate you will notice the plaque recognising Angus Buchanan.

Heading down the track, footpath RCO29, we are shaded by the beautiful trees which are stunning at all times of the year.

Before you reach the hardcore track, you turn right back towards the fields and head directly across to pick up footpath RCO28. There is no signage indicating the footpath so head for the gap in the hedge.

These fields are popular with the locals and offer fine views of the town and surrounding area.



Coleford Clock Tower

Taking the steep, uneven and narrow path down the side of the hill we meet the old railway line from Newland to Coleford.



If you take a few minutes to continue along this track you can see the original tunnel, now mostly boarded up.

We bear right on reaching the railway line then left following the path as it weaves down to Newland Street. As we weave are way down, we can just about make out the back of Whitecliff furnace which began operating in 1361. You will also notice a cove to your left under what would have been the railway line.



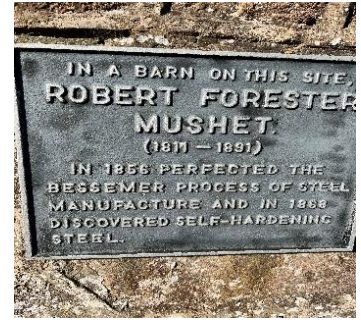
Whitecliff Furnace

On reaching Newland Street, it is worth taking a few minutes to turn right to head down to view the remains of the furnace, now the only remaining remnant of its type in Southern England, it is a Forest of Dean Heritage Site and a Scheduled Monument.

As we head back up Newland Street, we go under the old railway bridge then come back in to the Market square.

If you have time, it is worth heading up Cinders Hill past the Cinema and entrance to the District Council buildings to Forest House on your right, which is the birth place of Robert Mushet, there is a plaque on the entrance to the building (now a private Big House Holiday let).

Continuing up the road and crossing over Hampshire Gardens and then Mushet Place there is a plaque on the wall recognising where a stone barn once stood where the Mushets experimented their theories of steel production.



Memorial Plaque

Heading over the road and back down towards town, at the roundabout turn right and right again diligently making your way across the car park to the GWR Museum.

These buildings are all that remain of the two railway lines that once came into Coleford.

The Museum normally opens on Friday and Saturday (please check first) it is well worth a visit with an enviable collection of memorabilia and, if you are lucky, a train ride round the small track.

The walk has now completed and you will find a selection of eateries in Coleford to try – enjoy!

[Eat Shop Stay - Coleford Welcomes Walkers](http://EatShopStay-ColefordWelcomesWalkers)