

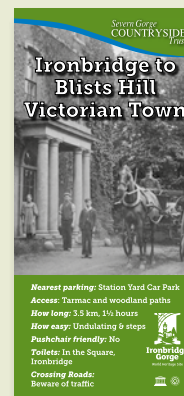
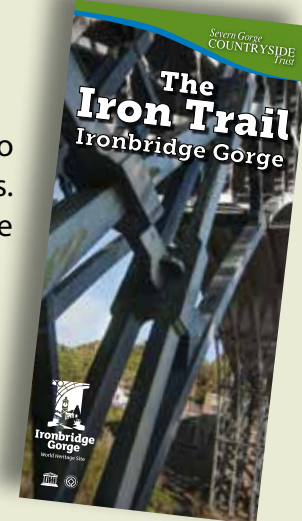


# Exploring Ironbridge Gorge



## Exploring the Ironbridge Gorge

**Severn Gorge Countryside Trust** welcomes you to explore the network of waymarked paths and trails. You can use this leaflet together with the Ordnance Survey Explorer 242 map.



We have a continuous programme of upgrading the paths and if you encounter any difficulties while walking on our land, then please let us know by phoning the office on 01952 433 880. A number of routes are fully described in a series of high-quality books and leaflets available from the Visitor Information Centre, Museums or the Trust Office, at a small cost, or free to download from these websites [www.severngorge.org.uk](http://www.severngorge.org.uk) [www.discovertelford.co.uk](http://www.discovertelford.co.uk)

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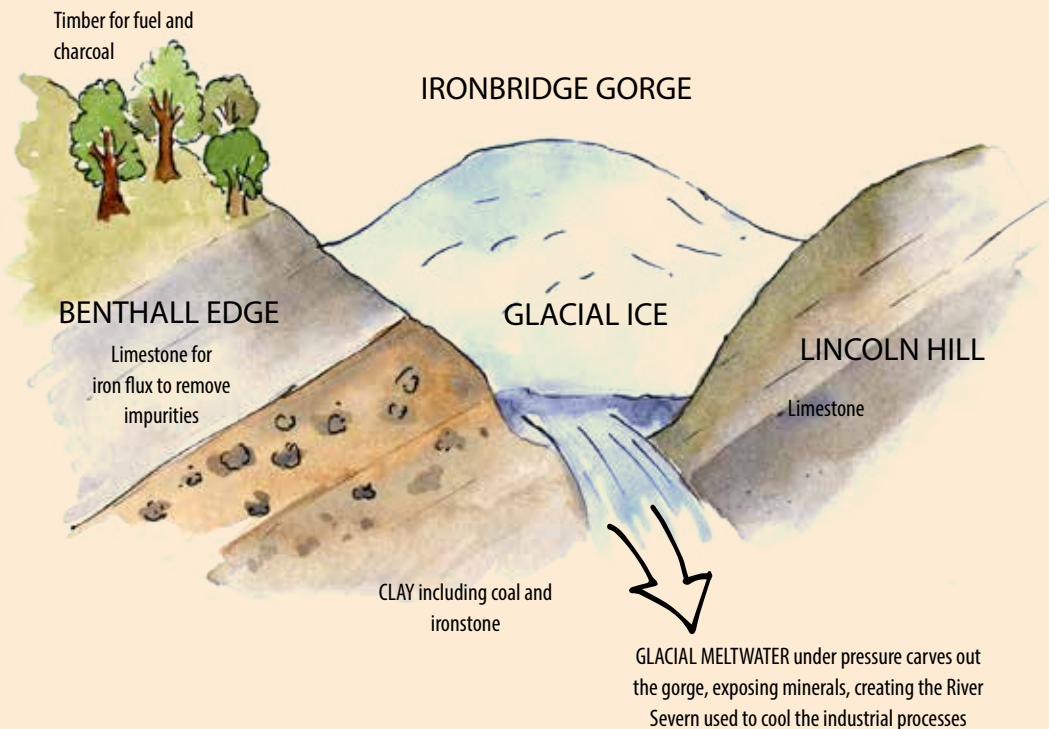


## Geology and landscape

Shropshire has perhaps the richest geology of any county in Britain, and the Ironbridge Gorge is no exception. While it is better known as the 'Birthplace of Industry', this would not have happened without a quirk of nature that exposed all of the necessary rocks and minerals in one, accessible place.



At the end of the last Ice Age, weaknesses in the limestone provided an escape route for water trapped beneath an ice sheet. Under very high pressure, the water carved out the steep-sided gorge we see today, and in the process, exposed limestone, ironstone, sandstone, coal and clay. This process changed the course of the River Sever forever; previously, it had flowed north, now it flows south to Bristol and is the longest river in the UK.



## Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

The Trust manages most of the historic landscape within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site including 52 sites, 60 historic structures, 230 hectares of woodland, 25 hectares of wild flower meadow, 26 kms of paths, 8 kms of bridleways, 260 hectares (700 acres) in all on a 999 year lease. The landholding includes a number of important sites for national nature conservation and internationally important species of wildlife. The Trust has a small team of professional staff who work with around 20 self-employed contractors carrying out a range of tasks from engineering to tree surgery, footpath maintenance and hay making. We also employ specialist ecological consultants. The Trust is guided by a Board of 12 Trustees.

## Want to get involved?

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust volunteering project involves local people who help the Trust by carrying out a wide variety of countryside work from hedgelaying to boardwalk building under the guidance of Trust staff. Contact us for a programme or download it from our website: [www.severngorge.org.uk](http://www.severngorge.org.uk)





## Exploring Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site



**Severn Gorge Countryside Trust** (SGCT) aims to promote, protect, and conserve the living landscape of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

If you want to get some fresh air, see amazing views, get fit or stay fit then much of the land in the Gorge is on steep slopes but well served by steps, with boardwalks and tracks on the flatter tops of the valleys. All of our landholdings are open to the public to freely explore and enjoy, and a network of waymarked paths and trails have been established through the woods and meadows of Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Jackfield, Coalport, Madeley, Barrow Parish and Broseley.

You are welcome to explore the historic landscape of the Severn Gorge along the network of paths and trails that thread their way through the Trust's landholdings. While many of these follow public footpaths and bridleways, many are new paths that have been established and waymarked by SGCT.



## World Heritage Site

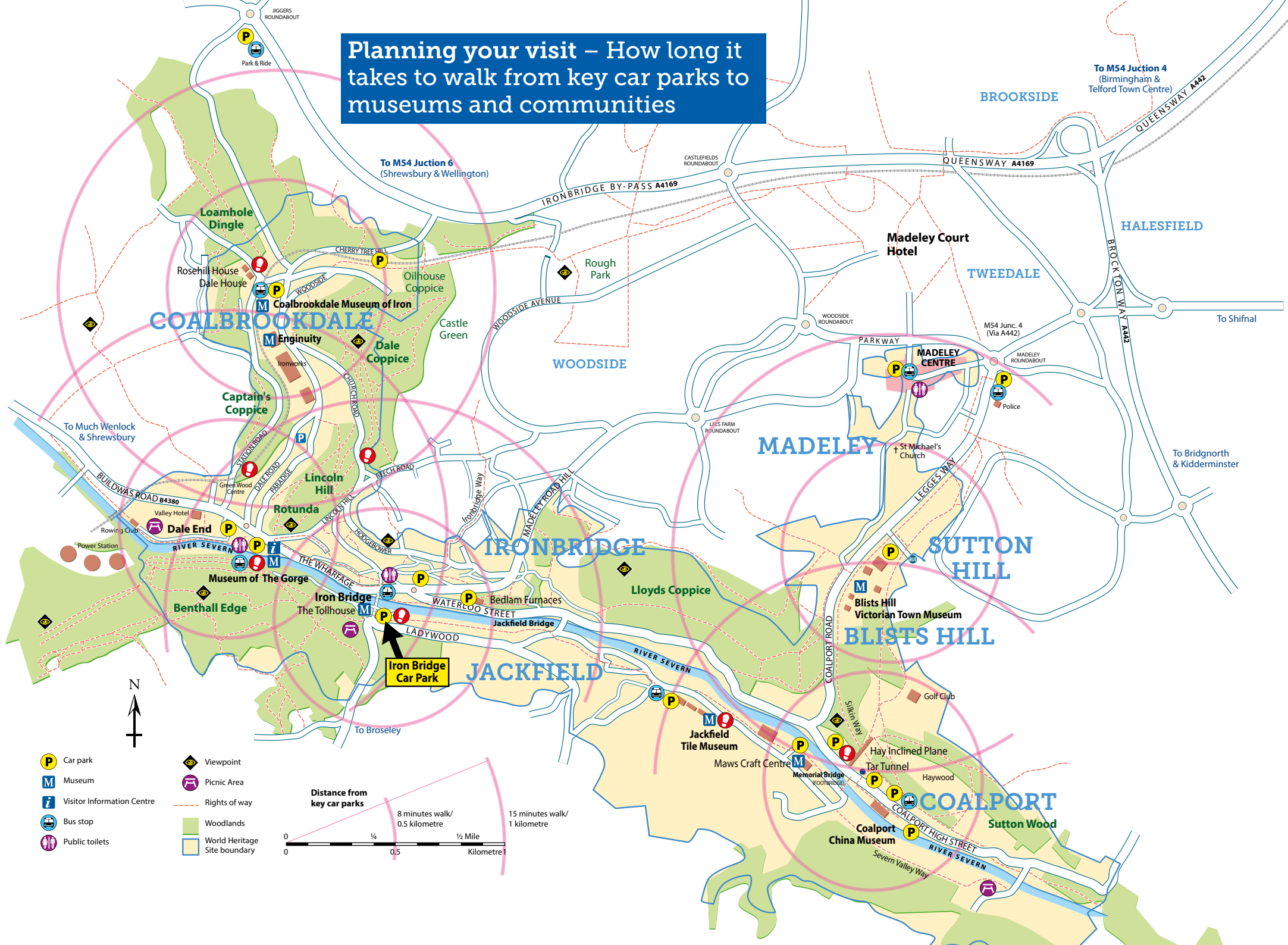
The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site was one of the first UK sites inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage list in 1986. The site covers 550 hectares of beautiful countryside following the River Severn, the UK's longest river, and most of the landscape is managed by Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, an independent Charity established in 1991. There are also ten wonderful Museums to visit managed by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, who also manage many historic structures and other smaller sites. Telford & Wrekin Council manages much of the rest of the land. SGCT sits on the World Heritage Site Steering Group which manages the processes of the World Heritage Site as a partnership of key organisations.



Why not try the Iron Trail, Lime Trail, Sabbath Walks Trail, or walk to Blists Hill Victorian Town on a safe route through beautiful woodland. Or walk from the Upper Furnace Pool by the Museum of Iron on Darby Road following the Lydebrook stream up through Loamhole Dingle and back via the historic Ropewalk and wildflower meadow. All of the Trails are shown on this map and individual free leaflets are available from the main Iron Bridge Station Yard Car Park, the Tourist Information Centre or online via our website.



# Planning your visit – How long it takes to walk from key car parks to museums and communities





# Exploring Ironbridge Gorge

## location of walking trails, landscape features, museums and settlements

This is a landscape rich in wildlife and history, being one of the key seats of the industrial revolution. It is now a beautiful valley of woodlands and wildflower meadows either side of the River Severn, the UK's longest river, which flows from the Welsh hills to Bristol.

All of the land shown on the maps managed by Severn Gorge Countryside Trust is open access, free to walk where you like on a series of trails, rights of way and permissive paths. There is also a network of bridleways for horse-riding or cycling. You can use the Trails to learn more about why the landscape was key to the iron and ceramics production due to its wealth of ironstone, lime, coal, clay and timber or just relax and enjoy the birdsong.

You can use the paths to visit the ten wonderful museums (managed by a separate charity Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust) on foot as an alternative to the car. Also use the paths to explore the 4 communities of Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Coalport and Jackfield for their shops, cafes and local architecture.



## JACKFIELD

JACKFIELD is a fascinating area made up of a series of very ancient neighbourhoods with wonderful names like The Tuckies, Salthouses and The Werps, reflecting its long working past from fishing, pottery, iron making and clay industries of brick, roof tiling and decorative tiles.

## COALBROOKDALE

COALBROOKDALE which lies in a beautiful wooded valley is where Abraham Darby I revolutionised the smelting of iron using coke from coal in 1709, which means the area can claim to being one key seat of the industrial revolution which changed the world.

## COALPORT

COALPORT was very much the inspiration of the ironmaster William Reynolds. The key to its success, as the seat of the china industry, lay in the canal/river interchange which he instigated in the late 18C. In 1792 an astonishing engineering construction was developed called the Hay Incline Plane, still considered one of Britain's foremost industrial monuments.

## IRONBRIDGE

IRONBRIDGE alongside the River Severn lies at the heart of the World Heritage Site which is the Ironbridge Gorge, where the famous bridge was constructed in 1779 by Abraham Darby III. It enjoys a range of facilities including shops, pubs and cafes.





## View looking east Jackfield and Coalport







## View looking east

Coalport and Sutton Wood







## View looking north Coalbrookdale and Jiggers Bank

