

## Barbury Castle and the Ridgeway



WILTSHIRE TOURISM

A delightful downland walk for a clear day. Part of the route is along the Ridgeway, said to be Europe's oldest road. The Iron Age hillfort of Barbury Castle is believed to be the site at which Cynric defeated the Britons in 556AD.

### The walk

**1 Start**  
Leave the car park using the way that you entered. At the road turn to the R and pass Upper Herdswick Farm on your L.

**2 0.3km/ ¼ mile**  
After the farm, take the first gate on your L which is sign-posted the Ridgeway Long Distance Footpath. Follow the obvious track along an undulating ridge (Smeathe's Ridge) with fine views to the east and south of Liddington Castle, Aldbourne Chase, Savernake Forest, and the northern edge of Salisbury Plain. After a gate and a seat, the path forks to the L. You

will pass a covered reservoir, enclosed by a fence. The path then drops fairly steeply to a stile and gate. At this point you will join a track-way with a hedge on either side that comes in behind you from the L.

**3 3.8km/ 2½ miles**  
Turn L, and follow this track. When you join a concrete track bear L and follow round to the R. Go straight ahead keeping a line of trees on your L.

**4 6.4km/ 4 miles**  
At a gate you join a track at a T-junction. Turn L and start to

climb Burderop Down. The track skirts to the L of a burial mound. On the northern slopes of Burderop Down there are the remaining ridges of an old field system. Follow the track over Burderop Down to join the road.

**5 8km/ 5 miles**  
Turn L to find the car park.



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### POINTS OF INTEREST AND LOCAL INFORMATION

- Barbury Castle, near Marlborough, was built by the Celts in the sixth century. Constructed in a double-earth bank design, the outer bank was reinforced with huge Sarsen Stones that can still be seen today. Barbury castle offers great views north of the Marlborough Downs towards Swindon and can be a good spot to watch the sunrise as the mist clears
- The Science Museum, at Wroughton Airfield, stores and conserves large objects from the National Collections including air transport, land transport, agricultural machinery and firefighting. Limited opening hours - for details, tel 01793 814466
- Marlborough is an ideal base for riding, rambling and cycling. It has attracted visitors since the days of the stagecoach and has excellent accommodation, restaurants and shopping. The town has one of the widest high streets in England, with many Georgian

buildings and architectural styles that span 300 years

- A mile from Marlborough is the magnificent 4,500 acre Savernake Forest, with its long Grand Avenue flanked by a cathedral-like arcade of beech trees. Henry VIII hunted deer here and married Jane Seymour, whose family lived nearby
- Between Barbury Castle and Marlborough you can access the Marlborough and Chiseldon Railway Path, a level path which was a disused railway line
- Lydiard Park and House is a beautifully restored, elegant Georgian Country House in 260 acres of 18th century parkland. There are many paths and trails through the woods and by the lake, and in early spring the woodlands are carpeted with snowdrops. The park is ideal for picnics and has a woodland adventure playground for children. Parking and entry to the grounds are free. From the M4 take exit 16 and follow the brown signs to Lydiard Park



### IS THIS WALK FOR YOU?

**Terrain** Downland  
**Stiles** 2  
**Suitable for** Average walkers

### PLANNING

**Start/parking** SU156761, car park at Barbury Castle Country Park

**Nearest town** Swindon

**Refreshments** Café at Barbury Castle Country Park; Patriots Arms, Chiseldon; several pubs in Wroughton

**Public toilets** Barbury Castle Country Park

**Public transport** Bus no.70 Swindon-Marlborough stops at Chiseldon. Bus no.49 Swindon-Trowbridge stops in Wroughton. For further details contact Wiltshire Bus Line, tel 08457 090899

### MAPS

Ordnance Survey Explorer 157 Marlborough & Savernake Forest