

## Walk No 2

# *Coalport to The Hay Inclined Plane to Haywood Pastures to Silkin Way*

**This delightful country walk** is a real pleasure all year round. Haywood has the benefit of a south-facing aspect and the open meadow land through which the walk passes is often bathed in glorious sunshine. The walk encompasses the land of the former **Hay Farm**, owned by the **Darby family** in the 18C. The initial woodland ride gives way to grassland, passes on to the historic **Hay Inclined Plane** with the remains of its engine house and chimney. The walk then traverses three traditionally-managed fields of grassland, the first of which is an old **anthill meadow**, reminiscent of earlier days and **now increasingly rare**. A bench and viewpoint at the mid-point of the walk provide spectacular views of the Severn Gorge in both directions. The walk concludes via the **Silkin Way**, today a local long-distance footpath and cycleway which runs along the bed of the **old branch line of the London & North Western Railway**.

 **Accessibility:** There are frequent muddy stretches to this walk and boots are recommended all year round. There is a reasonably steep climb at the beginning of the walk and three kissing gates to negotiate.

*Note: from April to November the fields are stocked with a small herd of grazing cattle, which can be inquisitive.*

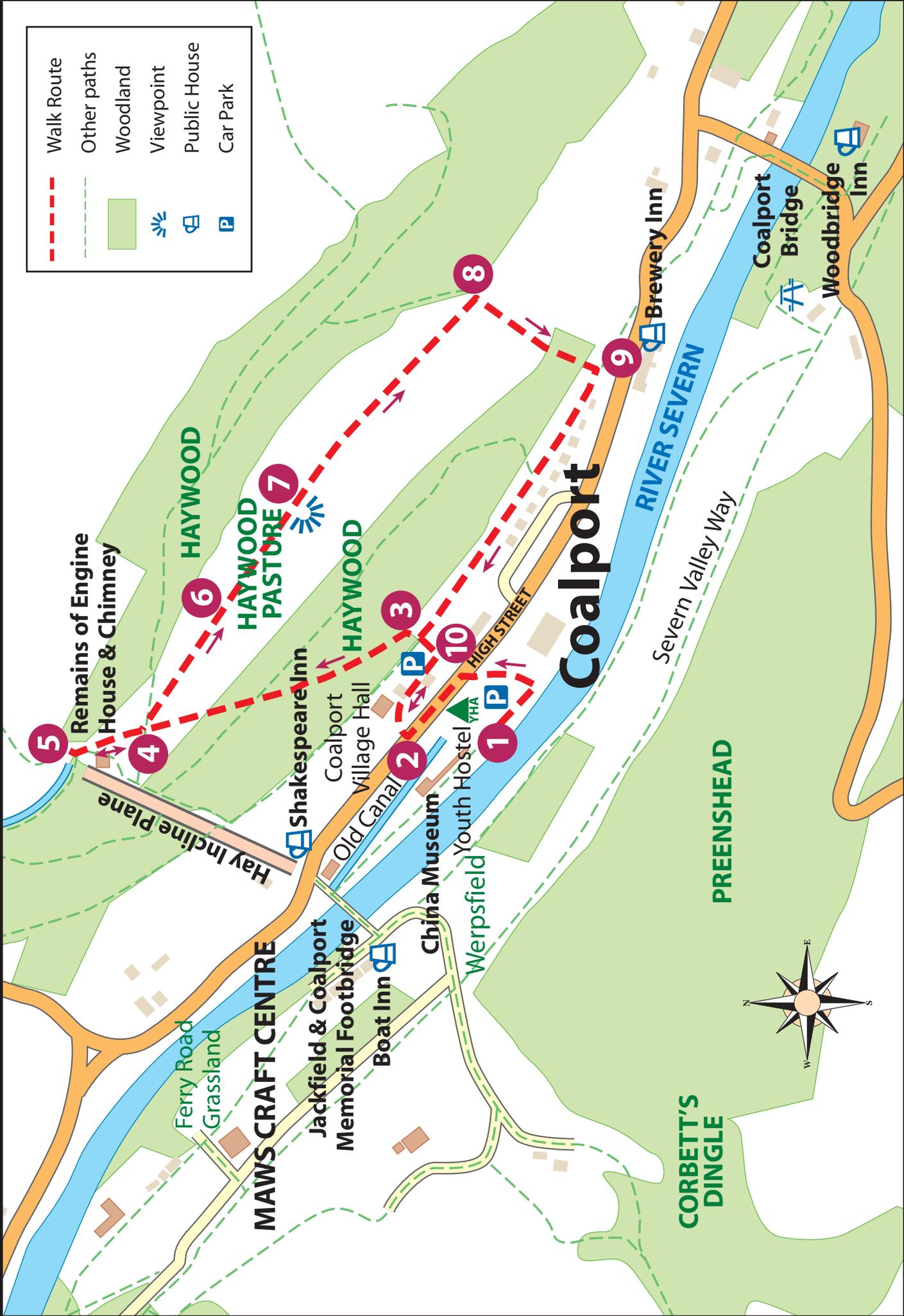
 **Key Features:** Nature, viewpoints, industrial and social history

 **Length & Time:** 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> km about 1-1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hours

 **Public Transport:** Buses to Coalport

 **Refreshments:** Shakespeare Inn (Coalport), The Brewery Inn (Coalport), The Boat Inn (Jackfield).

 **Toilets:** Coalport China Museum, John Rose Building (Youth Hostel)



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- 1** Starting at the Coalport China Museum car park, the John Rose Building, a rectangular building with cast-iron windows, is of historical interest. Walk out of the car park and turn left into Coalport High Street.
- 2** Continue on down the road for about 50 metres until you come to a sign post indicating right to Coalport Village Hall. Turn right here in front of the new Village Hall and subsequently follow the path through the car park to the Silkin Way.
- 3** Cross over the Silkin Way to the gate opposite. Pass through this and turn sharp left up a broad woodland ride. Continue on up the ride until you come to a 5-barred gate and kissing gate. Pass through the gate and continue up towards the brick chimney through a contrasting landscape of open grassland and scrub. After about another 70 metres you will come to a marker post on your left.
- 4** There are several paths from this marker. We will be turning sharp right, taking the lower, less definite path through the grassland [**Consult Walk Map for the line of this path**] but first, as an interesting extension, our walk goes straight on up for another 100 metres or so to the top of the historic Hay Inclined Plane with the surviving remains of its engine house and chimney.
- 5** Pause for a moment here to look down on the rails of the Inclined Plane. Now retrace your steps back to the marker post below and thence along the path through the meadow/scrub as indicated earlier. The area you are walking through is sometimes referred to 'anthill meadow'.
- 6** Pass through the wooden gate into a large sloping meadow. After a few metres if you look up to the left, you will spot a bench higher in the field. Make for this where you will be rewarded with a rest and magnificent views of the whole of this stretch of the Severn Gorge.  
  
When you have taken in enough of the views, continue on the path through the field, passing through into another field and eventually to the gate in the middle of the hedge.
- 7** Do not proceed into the last meadow but turn sharp right and follow the fence down to another kissing gate in the corner of the field [**Consult the map for the line of the path**]. The area here can be very muddy. Pass through the gate and subsequently down a pleasant track, flanked by tall hedges, to meet the Silkin Way.
- 8** Turn right down the Silkin Way and continue walking for about 350 metres until you come to the gap on the left (opposite a seat and gate on the other side of the Silkin Way) leading back to the car park to the side of the new Village Hall from where you came earlier.
- 9** From the Village Hall car park return to the High Street and thence to the China Museum car park and the John Rose Building.