

**The St Edith Pilgrimage Walk** was created in 2021 as a walk of around 36 miles beginning at St Mary's, Limpley Stoke BA2 7GH, close to the city of Bath (a church dedicated to St Edith in the Saxon era and remaining so for five hundred years until renamed during the Reformation) and finishing near Salisbury at Wilton House, built on the site of Wilton Abbey. Another church, toward the end of the pilgrimage, is also dedicated to this Saint - St Editha, Baverstock. The Walk takes some four days to complete and goes through delightful Wiltshire scenery, including uplands and the Wylde Valley and is well served by public transport for those wishing to break it up into sections. The route also passes near other sites of interest and the 36 miles can easily become 40....!

St Edith was a nun who died in AD 984 at the age of just 23. She loved to wear fashionable clothes even though under criticism from others. After her death she was associated with various miracles, chiefly to do with people with sight problems and inspired unknown numbers of pilgrims, to the extent of providing Wilton Abbey with the highest income of any other English abbey just a hundred years after her death.

**St Mary's, Limpley Stoke** (usually open daily) contains very early pilgrimage crosses carved (as graffiti, it must be said) on the door jambs of the original Saxon doorway, now marooned in the middle of the church since the building of the south aisle in 1921. The Saxon door had already been replaced by the current door and porch in the fifteenth century and subsequently blocked up. The doorway is the start of the route with pilgrims invited to take a photograph of themselves coming through the doorway as a highly evocative record of the start of the journey.

**The pilgrimage ends at Wilton House** the location where St Edith spent most of her short life in the abbey and nunnery. <https://www.wiltonhouse.co.uk> Some people from the Saxon era church at Limpley Stoke would no doubt have made a pilgrimage to Wilton. Traces of the nunnery are still visible in the grounds of Wilton House during dry summers and this makes an excellent location to sit and reflect at the end of the pilgrimage.

**The St Edith Pilgrimage Wristband** Those who have walked the whole pilgrimage have been granted one free access to the grounds by the current Earl of Pembroke if they are wearing the pilgrimage wristband. These wristbands, which you plait yourself, can only be purchased at St Mary's Church Limpley Stoke on the day you set out. They are sold in a blue envelope which also includes an explanation of the colours, components and instructions on how to assemble them. Payment for the price of each wristband marked on the envelope should be made to the collection box set in the wall. It is only for purchase by pilgrims and we ask that this purchase is made only on the start day of your walk. Upon showing your wristband at entry to Wilton House it will be marked to record entry and completion of your walk. (Please note that the grounds at Wilton House are not open all year round – check their own website for details.)

**The walk route can be accessed free of charge** (although a donation to the Trust would be welcomed) from the British Pilgrimage Trust (BPT) website at [britishpilgrimage.org](http://britishpilgrimage.org) and can be downloaded to a free App that gives an easy to follow map. Details of how to do this on various devices can be found on the BPT website.

## Further information

**The life of St Edith** There are particularly good records of St Edith's life because she was of noble birth and clearly fondly remembered.

See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_of\\_Wilton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_of_Wilton)

**Limpley Stoke Its Church and Its People** is a booklet in pdf format and provides photographs and historical detail relating to St Mary's. This booklet is freely available to download from the village website <https://limpleystoke.com/history> See also <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1364104>