Long Mynd – Little Stretton

This mountain bike route of 20 miles is a great alternative to the [Long Mynd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_Mynd) Classic route. Even though it doesn’t use Minton Batch it has some fantastic descents and uses some of the fastest these hills have to offer. The ride starts off in the centre of [Church Stretton](http://www.churchstretton.co.uk/), conveniently next to a Co-op and some public toilets, at a pay and display car park which isn't expensive, and free on Sunday.

1. Leave the car park [(GR454936)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345380&y=293634&z=120&sv=345380%2c293634&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=774&ax=345380&ay=293634&lm=0) from the exit by the supermarket and turn right. A short distance later at the mini roundabout, turn right again. At the following crossroads continue straight on. Stay on the main road and go past the lane to Carding Mill Valley on the left. Follow the road to the next village, All Stretton. After passing two small lanes on the right take the lane on the left signed to the YHA, just before the main road goes through a right then left ‘S’ bend [(GR459954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345960&y=295404&z=120&sv=345960%2c295404&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=345960&ay=295404&lm=0).

2. Stay in the bottom of the valley and follow the lane up through the houses, ignoring any tracks off to the side. Continue up the valley when the lane turns into a dirt track by a car park on the left. Go past the YHA on the right and through a ford. Follow the stream up the valley. Eventually bear right and cross the stream using the bridge or the ford [(GR448957)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344885&y=295714&z=120&sv=344885%2c295714&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=344885&ay=295714&lm=0). Continue up the valley and go past the thin track that climbs away on the right and follow the track left where it gives way to grass. Go across a small wooden bridge and on to a junction where the valley splits [(GR447961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344727&y=296054&z=120&sv=344727%2c296054&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=344727&ay=296054&lm=0).

3. Turn hard right and climb the singletrack across the side of the valley. Keep straight on up the climb then go through a few bends to where it flattens off and comes to a junction at a small plateau. Turn left and climb the grassy trail to a short but steep slope. Climb the steep slope then at the top continue straight on and use the planks to cross the bog before coming to a junction with a wide trail [(GR451961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345122&y=296154&z=120&sv=345122%2c296154&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=345122&ay=296154&lm=0).

4. Turn left and climb the grassy double track. A short distance later, at a junction after a crest, take the right hand fork. Climb the rocks to another junction then take the left hand fork to climb the steeper grassy slope that leads on to a long, gradual climb. Follow this track up to a wide junction close to a fence on the right [(GR440967)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343997&y=296699&z=120&sv=343997%2c296699&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=343997&ay=296699&lm=0).

5. Turn left along the rutted double track that follows the line of the ridge. Climb straight up this track then at the crest bear right and follow it all the way to a four way junction at the top of Mott's Road [(GR427958)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342737&y=295834&z=120&sv=342737%2c295834&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342737&ay=295834&lm=0). Go straight on along the wide gravel track that continues along the top of the hill. At the next a junction, just before the main track turns left, go right through the low wooden posts and climb the dirt track that continues to follow the ridge line [(GR424956)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342392&y=295649&z=120&sv=342392%2c295649&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342392&ay=295649&lm=0). Continue along this track to a crossroad junction with a lane [(GR421953)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342080&y=295329&z=120&sv=342080%2c295329&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=342080&ay=295329&lm=0).

6. Turn right on the lane to a junction with a double track on the left directly after. Turn left and follow the long, fast double track through some bends. At the around halfway down the trail the descent is broken by a short grassy climb. Just after the climb continue along the double track and descend to a gate. Go straight on through the gate and descend past the building on the left. Continue straight on at the following muddy junction to follow the line of the fence on the left to a gate at the far side of the field. Go straight on through the gate and descend a wide rocky track through a few bends to the farm at the bottom [(GR393954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339275&y=295414&z=120&sv=339275%2c295414&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=339275&ay=295414&lm=0).

7. At the junction at the farm turn left through the gate and follow the lane. After a while descend through a steep left then right hand bend to a gate in the bottom of the dip. After the gate climb the steep lane and go through the gate at the top. After the gate follow the lane left and ride between some buildings to a junction just after [(GR400946)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340060&y=294584&z=120&sv=340060%2c294584&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=340060&ay=294584&lm=0). Turn right and continue along the lane that follows the bottom of Long Mynd, on the left, to a junction where the lane turns right [(GR403930)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340320&y=293009&z=120&sv=340320%2c293009&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=340320&ay=293009&lm=0).

8. Continue straight on into the trees to a junction with a muddy bridleway on the left, a short distance later, just before a farm [(GR403928)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340325&y=292859&z=120&sv=340325%2c292859&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=340325&ay=292859&lm=0). Turn left through the gate and push up the right hand side of the muddy field to another gate a short distance later. After this gate the trail becomes rideable, although not easy. Climb the grassy track following the line of the fence on the right then, after it leaves the cover of the trees, bear left for the steepest part of the climb to a junction. Take the track on the left and follow the singletrack through the heather to a junction with a lane at the top [(GR407922)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340730&y=292229&z=120&sv=340730%2c292229&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=340730&ay=292229&lm=0).

9. Bear slightly right across the road then go through the small ditch to a grassy track. Ride directly away from the road and descend gently along the grassy track that winds through the heather to where it ends at a junction with another grassy track [(GR409921)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340935&y=292124&z=120&sv=340935%2c292124&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=340935&ay=292124&lm=0). Turn left and follow the trail as it climbs over the flank of the hill. Keep going straight ahead along the trail, which after the crest becomes fast, flowing singletrack fun. The trail eventually comes to a vague junction, with a track on the right and where straight on seems to peter out. Continue straight on and the singletrack soon becomes defined before traversing a steep bowl in the hillside, with a lot of exposure on the right. Go straight on at the junction directly after for a very fast grassy descent. Go over a little crest and bear slightly left, for the fastest part of the trail, to a vague open junction. Keep bearing left down the wide grassy trail then follow it all the way to the bottom. At this point BE VERY CAREFUL! The grassy track gets steeper but comes to some rocky hollows where it can be very hard to scrub off speed. After the hollows the descent finishes at a gate at Minton village [(GR430908)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343005&y=290849&z=120&sv=343005%2c290849&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=343005&ay=290849&lm=0).

10. Go through the gate and bear right through the farm to a triangular junction. Just keep bearing right to the final junction at the far side of Minton. Turn right and descend the lane to a junction at the bottom, with a gravel track on the right directly after crossing a stream [(GR424901)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342460&y=290069&z=120&sv=342460%2c290069&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=342460&ay=290069&lm=0). Continue straight on and climb the lane through the tunnel of trees to a crossroad junction in Hamperley. Turn right and climb the lane back up the hill. Go straight on past a track on the left to a three-way junction by a farm on the right [(GR413894)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341317&y=289377&z=120&sv=341317%2c289377&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=341317&ay=289377&lm=0). Take the middle track then go through the gate to climb the fire track through the forest. Stay on the main track and follow it through a series of bends, past a couple of tracks on the left. The track eventually flattens off a bit and goes through a long left hand bend before reaching a junction [(GR413903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341357&y=290307&z=120&sv=341357%2c290307&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=576&ax=341357&ay=290307&lm=0). Bear left at this junction, and left at the next junction a short distance later. Climb straight on up the wide forest track to a crossroad junction at the top [(GR406903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340632&y=290307&z=120&sv=340632%2c290307&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340632&ay=290307&lm=0).

11. Turn right at the crossroad and ride slightly down hill to a gate on the left. Go through the gate and follow the double track through the heather, in the direction of the glider club. At the following grassy junction before the Glider Club, marked by a white circular bridleway marker set into the ground, turn left to a junction with a lane a short distance later [(GR403907)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340262&y=290707&z=120&sv=340262%2c290707&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340262&ay=290707&lm=0). Go across the lane and take the track leading off to the right, signed as the ‘Starboard Path’. Descend the grassy double track through a dip then climb to a junction just before the trees at the top. Bear left then right along the lumpy grass, keeping just to the left of the trees, to ride around the back of the glider club. Pick up the gravel track a little while later then bear right before going through a couple of bends to a junction with a lane [(GR405919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340462&y=291847&z=120&sv=340462%2c291847&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=340462&ay=291847&lm=0).

12. Turn left over the cattle grid to the road junction. Turn right and follow the lane uphill. Climb the lane over a crest then descend through a dip. At the top of the next climb take the concessional bridleway on the right [(GR413935)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341310&y=293554&z=120&sv=341310%2c293554&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=341310&ay=293554&lm=0). Follow the wide grassy track along the top of the hill to the next junction. Bear right up the wide rutted grassy track then, at the junction with the bridleway marker post immediately after, bear left. Follow this track to a short grassy climb that leads to the top of the hill. At the top bear left to cross the open grassy area of Round Hill. At the opposite left hand corner of the grassy descend the steep grassy track. Go straight on through the dip at the bottom and try to keep your speed for the short, sharp climb that follows. At the top the track becomes rocky as it descends across the right hand side of the hill, before bearing left to the next saddle on the ridge [(GR430922)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343065&y=292224&z=120&sv=343065%2c292224&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=343065&ay=292224&lm=0).

13. Follow the trail straight on across the saddle then bear right over a rocky section before dropping down a very fast and straight trail that traverses the hill above a  valley on the left. Be careful as it is all too easy to go too fast on this section. About 2/3rds on the way down, where there’s a gate straight on, follow the track left. Near the bottom take care on the water channels before reaching a gate at the bottom [(GR440919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344005&y=291954&z=120&sv=344005%2c291954&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=344005&ay=291954&lm=0).

14. Go through the gate and then a small ford before going past some cottages on the left. At the junction at the next ford turn right to a junction with a lane in Little Stretton. Turn left to a crossroad junction with the main road [(GR443919)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344340&y=291904&z=120&sv=344340%2c291904&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=887&ax=344340&ay=291904&lm=0). Turn left and follow the main road through the valley all the way back to Church Stretton. At the mini roundabout by the Bucks Head turn right and return to the car park by the Co-op to complete the ride.

All of this route can be plotted on OS Landranger 137 although there will be some anomalies. From the start of the climb at Priors Holt, through the forest, the OS map and the streetmap links give a good enough idea of where to go without getting lost but some of the forest tracks seem to have changed slightly. The permissive path around the back of the glider club is not on the map but it is on the ground. It may also be noted that the first climb uses a footpath and another unmarked track, as does the final descent to Little Stretton. I have included these in my route because they are shown as concessional tracks on the trail guide available from the Tourist Information Centre.