Long Mynd Long

This mountain bike route of 29 miles traverses almost the whole length of the [Long Mynd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_Mynd) ridge. It has some great descents but with over 4600ft of ascent make sure you take your climbing legs. 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 that isn't expensive.

1. Leave the car park [(GR454936)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345380&y=293634&z=120&sv=345380,293634&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. After a little while take the road on the left with the brown sign pointing to Carding Mill Valley [(GR453942)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345345&y=294164&z=120&sv=345345,294164&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=345345&ay=294164&lm=0). Climb up through the houses. As the lane leaves the houses behind go almost to the far end of the car park on the left then turn hard right on the singletrack that climbs steeply back towards the entrance of the valley. As it exits the valley follow the track left where it flattens off and follows the fence on the right to a gate. Go through the gate to a junction a short distance later [(GR451946)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345122&y=294604&z=120&sv=345122,294604&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=345122&ay=294604&lm=0).

2. Turn left and climb the steep doubletrack through the golf course. The track flattens off after a bit and bears right before a short kick up to the left to the top of the climb. Bear slightly right and descend a short way towards a small plateau (golf hole). Just before the doubletrack comes to an end, as it reaches the plateau, turn right along a thin track through the rough, marked by some low yellow posts [(GR446952)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344597&y=295239&z=120&sv=344597,295239&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=344597&ay=295239&lm=0). Go around the right hand side of the low bank on the opposite side of the fairway. Turn left and follow the low bank, keeping it on the left, then take the singletrack on the right that drops into the gully. At the junction in the bottom of the dip, before the trail kicks up to another bit of the golf course, turn left and descend the fast, grassy singletrack down the right hand side of the gully. At the bottom go straight on at the gate to the rocky doubletrack [(GR452955)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345242&y=295484&z=120&sv=345242,295484&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=345242&ay=295484&lm=0).

3. Turn left onto this track then after a while bear right over the stream to continue up the valley. 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 to a junction where the trail starts climbing up to the head of the valley [(GR447961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344727&y=296054&z=120&sv=344727,296054&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=344727&ay=296054&lm=0). Turn hard right and climb the singletrack up 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 go straight up the short but steep slope. Continue straight on at the top using the small wooden bridge across the boggy section of trail, to a junction with a wide trail at the other end [(GR451961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345122&y=296154&z=120&sv=345122,296154&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. At the junction at top of this short climb take the right hand fork. Go over the rocks and on to another junction a short distance later. Take the left hand fork up the steeper slope for a long, gradual, grassy climb. Follow this track up to a wide junction close to a fence that comes in from the right [(GR440967)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343997&y=296699&z=120&sv=343997,296699&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=343997&ay=296699&lm=0).

5. Turn left on the rutted double track following the line of the ridge. Climb straight up this track then at the crest bear right to a long left hander that leads 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=342737,295834&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342737&ay=295834&lm=0). Jink right and go straight on along the wide gravel track. At the next a junction, just before the main track turns left, go right through the low wooden posts to continue following the track along the ridge line [(GR424956)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342392&y=295649&z=120&sv=342392,295649&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342392&ay=295649&lm=0).

6. Follow this track straight on across two roads to stay on the ridge all the way to the trig point at the summit of Pole Bank [(GR414940)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341522&y=294439&z=120&sv=341522,294439&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=341522&ay=294439&lm=0). After the summit continue straight on down a rocky track to a junction with the lane at the other end. Turn right onto the lane and descend a short way to a stand of trees on the right in a dip. Directly after the trees turn right into a car park [(GR413937)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341307&y=293749&z=120&sv=341307,293749&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=341307&ay=293749&lm=0). Cut diagonally across the car park and follow the double track out the other side. This track soon points down hill for a fast, loose and rocky descent. The track goes through a number of bends before bearing gently left for a fast finish down to the gate at the bottom [(GR403931)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340317&y=293164&z=120&sv=340317,293164&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340317&ay=293164&lm=0).

7. After the gate and turn left onto the lane. Go straight on at the next junction, with a lane on the right. At the farm continue straight on through the gate to follow the doubetrack below Long Mynd, on the left. At the junction at the next farm keep going straight on. The track eventually descends to a junction with a lane [(GR399912)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339892&y=291244&z=120&sv=339892,291244&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=339892&ay=291244&lm=0). Turn right and descend to the junction in Asterton a short distance later. Turn left to continue underneath the hill. After following the lane through a small wood go past a signposted steep and grassy bridleway on the left then descend gently along the lane to a wide gravel track on the left, climbing steeply up the flank of Long Mynd [(GR392893)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339257&y=289364&z=120&sv=339257,289364&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=339257&ay=289364&lm=0).

8. Turn left and climb this track up the side of the hill. It is hard going but doable, just. The track eventually flattens off and bears left to a junction [(GR392886)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339257&y=288684&z=120&sv=339257,288684&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=339257&ay=288684&lm=0). Turn left and climb the grassy doubletrack, keeping the fence on the right. Continue straight on along this track to a junction just before the glider club [(GR402907)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340247&y=290694&z=120&sv=340247,290694&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340247&ay=290694&lm=0). Follow the second track from the left that stays on the ridge and heads around the left hand side of the glider club, signed as the ‘Starboard Path’. The gravel gives way to grass as the track descends through a dip. Climb out of the dip then bear left to follow the line of the fence on the right, then bear right across the lumpy grass. Pick up the gravel track a little while later and bear right through a couple of bends to a junction with a lane [(GR404918)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340467&y=291854&z=120&sv=340467,291854&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340467&ay=291854&lm=0).

9. Turn left over the cattle grid then bear right through the ditch and follow the grassy trail to a junction a short distance later. Take the first track on the right, a thin bit of singletrack that heads towards the lone tree at the top of valley. Just before the tree drop through a quick right then left hand bend before riding through a stream, over a tricky rock section then across the raised planking that marks the start of the Minton Batch descent. Once past this the track becomes flowing, quick and occasionally off camber with roots and rocks thrown in. Follow the trail all the way down the valley, keeping to the left hand side of the stream all the way to the farm at the bottom. Continue straight on past the farm and then follow the lane along the right hand side of the stream to where it ends at a junction with another lane [(GR424901)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342462&y=290069&z=120&sv=342462,290069&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342462&ay=290069&lm=0).

10. Turn right and follow the lane to a crossroad junction in the village of Hamperley. Turn right and head straight up the tarmac. Go past a farm on the right to the gate at the entrance to the forest [(GR413894)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341307&y=289369&z=120&sv=341307,289369&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=341307&ay=289369&lm=0). A low gear is required as this firetrack climbs all the way back to the top of the hill again, although it is the easiest climb of the route. Stay on the main track and follow it through a series of bends. A long right hand bend leads to a flatter section, then a long left hand bend. Keep left and go past two forest tracks on the right, then a grassy track on the right. The track then climbs along a line of trees on the right to a crossroad junction at the top [(GR406903)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340632&y=290299&z=120&sv=340632,290299&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340632&ay=290299&lm=0).

11. At the crossroad turn right and ride slightly down hill to a gate on the left. Go through this gate and follow the grassy track in the direction of the glider club. There are some helpful bridleway markers set into the grass. Near the road, on the left, there is a junction marked with three blue arrows on a white circular plate set into the ground. Follow the arrow pointing left to the road [(GR402907)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340247&y=290694&z=120&sv=340247,290694&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340247&ay=290694&lm=0). Cross the road and take the previously ridden gravel track leading off to the right, signed as the ‘Starboard Path’ around the back of the glider club. As before follow this track all the way to the lane at the far side of the glider club [(GR404918)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340467&y=291854&z=120&sv=340467,291854&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340467&ay=291854&lm=0).

12. Turn left over the cattle grid to the road junction then turn right to follow the lane uphill. Follow this road for about 1 mile and at the bottom of the second descent go past the previously visited car park by the stand of trees, on the left. Climb to the next junction and turn left to climb the rocky trail back to the trig point at the summit of Pole Bank [(GR414940)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341522&y=294439&z=120&sv=341522,294439&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=341522&ay=294439&lm=0).

13. From the summit go straight on and descend the track along the ridge. Take the next track on the left and descend down the grassy double track that steepens and becomes rocky [(GR417946)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=341697&y=294634&z=120&sv=341697,294634&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=341697&ay=294634&lm=0). Go through the gate by the house and onto some very patchy tarmac. Follow this lane down to a junction at the bottom [(GR401946)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=340127&y=294594&z=120&sv=340127,294594&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=340127&ay=294594&lm=0). Go straight on to the next junction with a muddy track on the left, at the farm, and follow the lane to the right. Go straight on through the next gate and descend steeply through a dip in the road. Go through the gate at the bottom and up a short, steep climb. Bear right over the crest then go through a gate to follow the lane to a junction at the next farm [(GR393954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=339287&y=295419&z=120&sv=339287,295419&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=339287&ay=295419&lm=0).

14. Turn right and go through the metal gate to climb the steep double track through a couple of bends. At the top of the bends the track straightens out,becomes less steep and turns muddy and grassy. Follow the line of trees on the right and continue straight on past Priory Cottage on the right, where the track kicks up for a short distance to a gate. After the gate follow the track over a crest for a gentle descent. Go through the muddy section at the bottom of the dip then climb again as the track kicks up to the left. At the junction with the lane at the top turn right to the following junction a short distance later [(GR421953)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342092&y=295324&z=120&sv=342092,295324&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342092&ay=295324&lm=0).

15. Turn left onto the wide hardpack trail that follows the ridge line. At the junction with the low posts go left and continue along the ridge to the junction at the top of Mott’s Road [(GR427958)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=342722&y=295819&z=120&sv=342722,295819&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=342722&ay=295819&lm=0). Take the second track from the left to bear slightly right, going past the right hand side of the maker post. Follow the track as it bears right around the line of the hill, then bear left over the crest. After the crest go straight on down the rutted, grassy track to a wide junction near a fence straight ahead [(GR440967)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=343997&y=296699&z=120&sv=343997,296699&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=343997&ay=296699&lm=0). At this point follow the wide grassy track that sweeps around to the right away from the fence. It is then time to really put the hammer down on this undulating grassy track, although keep an eye out for horses and walkers. Keep going straight on down the trail. After some distance go over the rock section, at speed this can be tricky as it suddenly appears from nowhere. After the rocks follow the track over a small rise then drop down a short descent to a junction in the bottom of the dip, just before the house on the left [(GR451961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345122&y=296154&z=120&sv=345122,296154&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=886&ax=345122&ay=296154&lm=0).

16. Turn right to cross the short, slightly boggy section towards the steep sided valley. Near the end of the plateau take the track that drops into the cutting on the left. The tight singletrack bears right across some off camber bedrock before coming out to a small plateau. Go straight on to the junction at the far side [(GR450961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345032&y=296087&z=120&sv=345032,296087&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=345032&ay=296087&lm=0). Turn right for a sweet bit of singletrack that clings to the side of the hill and weaves its way down to a junction at the valley floor [(GR448961)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=344767&y=296072&z=120&sv=344767,296072&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=344767&ay=296072&lm=0).

17. Turn hard left and follow the wide grassy track down the valley, along the left hand side of the stream. The track soon bears right and becomes hardpack. After crossing the ford turn left then continue straight on down the valley. Go across the next ford to where the track becomes a tarmac lane. Follow the lane down through the houses to a junction with the main road at the bottom [(GR459954)](http://www.streetmap.co.uk/map.srf?x=345957&y=295412&z=120&sv=345957,295412&st=4&ar=y&mapp=map.srf&searchp=ids.srf&dn=615&ax=345957&ay=295412&lm=0). Turn right and follow the main road all the way back to Church Stretton. Go straight on at the crossroad in the middle of town then at the mini roundabout turn left and return to the car park 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 gliding club is not on the map but it is on the ground. It may also be noted that the second climb/final descent uses a footpath and another unmarked track. I have included these in as they are shown as concessional tracks in the trail guide available from the Tourist Information Centre.