

Earth Energies Special Interest Group -Visit to Cam Peak Saturday 16th May 2026

Cam Peak – Facts, myths and Legends

Cam Peak, or Peaked Down, is part of the Cotswold Escarpment and is 602 feet high. It's almost perfectly conical appearance makes it look unnatural, as if man-made. The Victorians certainly thought so, and apparently dug tunnels into the hill, but found nothing to suggest it was. In fact, the pyramid shape arises from the erosion of its capping and its underlying Cotswold sand. The nearby Cam Long Down meanwhile retained its shape due to a more durable capping of limestone. Cam Peak became further separated from the main Escarpment due to river or stream erosion.

The top of Cam Peak offers magnificent views of the Severn Vale, and on a clear day distant views of the Brecon Beacons and Malvern Hills.

At the end of April and into May Cam Peak is covered in Bluebell blooms.

To the Southeast is another lesser hill, Downham or Smallpox Hill. In the 18th and 19th centuries it was the site of a smallpox isolation hospital, hence its name. It is believed to have played a role in Edward Jenner's studies of the disease and aided his eventual discovery of the smallpox vaccine.

An interesting local custom is for the local churches as part of the "Procession of Witness" to carry a large cross up Cam Peak and leave it there on Good Friday until the Easter Sunday. The local churches have been doing this for well over 55 years. You will see a metal structure at the top of the hill which has been placed there to support the cross.

Cam Peak resides on the Cotswold Way and is very popular with walkers, so can be busy at times.

There is a legend that locals were told as children that the devil decided to dam up the River Severn and drown the people of Gloucestershire in revenge for them building too many churches. He filled his wheelbarrow with a big chunk of the Cotswold's, but while taking a rest he met a shoemaker with lots of shoes around his neck to mend. The devil asked the shoemaker direction to the river. The shoemaker told him it was a long way and that he himself had worn out so many shoes getting there. The devil lost heart and dumped the wheelbarrow full of the stone which became Cam Peak.

A local myth is that Cam Long Down is thought to be associated with King Arthur and might be the site of the legendary battle of Camlan.

A few years ago, at one of our regular Slimbridge Dowsing Group meetings when Patrick MacManaway was our guest speaker, a local farmer suggested that Cam Longdown was the Yin to Cam Peak's Yan.

Dowsing at Cam Peak – Previous Findings

On a previous visit to Cam Peak Slimbridge Dowsers were able to locate several different phenomena, broadly split into two different areas as follows:

At the top of Cam Peak

At the area at the top of the hill several energy lines were identified.

At the bottom of Cam Peak adjacent to the road and along from the car park

Dowsing showed the presence of Barrows, Energy lines, and Labyrinths.

Suggested Methodology

I suggest we split into 3 groups. While the first group dowses the top of Cam Peak, the second group can dowses the bottom area adjacent to the road, while the third group has a roving commission to explore the remaining area looking for any other evidence of energy lines, burrows, labyrinths etc. but I also suggest to look for any underground springs, streams or other water courses. After approximately 30 – 45 minutes the groups swap areas.

Dowsing in groups enables the more experienced to help the less experienced and enables people to validate each other's findings

Suggestions on what to look for

At the top of Cam Peak, it is of interest to know how many energy lines there might be, what their orientation is and whether they cross. If they do cross, where is this and is there a node, vortex or portal, and can the energy be detected. Is there a blind spring associated with it. Also are the energy lines the same, and can you guess what landscape features they might connect e.g. local churches in Dursley and Slimbridge, other local hills such as Downham Hill, Cam Long Down or even Miserden Hill. Perhaps even landmarks further afield such as The Roman Temple of Sabrina at Littledean or the Roman Temple at Lydney. Maybe even the Tortworth Chestnut Tree.

In the other area where the presence of Barrows, Energy lines and Labyrinths was found, it would be good to have confirmation of their existence, to know where they are, how many there are, what size they are and how old they might be.

Also is it true that Cam Longdown is the Yin to Cam Peak's Yan. What do you think.

Summary

At the end of the day, it's up to you to decide what you want to do. The above are just suggestions for those of you not sure where to start. Overall, the important thing is to have fun and enjoy the afternoon. If there isn't time to explore fully, we can always come back.