



# Walk on the WILD SIDE

## INFORMATION GENERAL

**CLUB SITE:** Haycraft, Haycrafts Lane, Swanage BH19 3EB. Tel 01929 480572.  
Open 27 March to 9 November  
**DISTANCE:** 6.5 miles/10.5km  
**TERRAIN:** Some rough fields but mostly good footpaths  
**NUMBER OF STILES:** 8  
**ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:** Ordnance Survey Explorer map OL15 – Purbeck & South Dorset  
**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:** Moderate – one steep climb  
**REFRESHMENTS:** Corfe  
**TOILETS:** Corfe

## INFORMATION TOURISM

Purbeck Information & Heritage Centre, South Street, Wareham BH20 4LU. Tel 01929 552740

## JO VAUGHAN EXPLORES HISTORIC CORFE AND ITS SURROUNDS ON A BEAUTIFUL DORSET RAMBLE

**A**T THE heart of the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset is one of the National Trust's most alluring castles – Corfe. Built by William the Conqueror just after the grand battle of 1066, it was perfectly situated to protect the county against attack from the sea.



The only invasions these days are from tourists, who never fail to fall in love with these romantic ruins. Caravanners are among them, thanks to the Club's nearby Haycraft site. Our walk takes us directly from the site, across the Swanage Railway line and up the strenuous path to the top of the ridge. We then stroll along the top of the downs, before heading down to the village of Corfe and some easier walking.

If you fancy a shorter walk, it's possible to get the steam train from Corfe back to Harman's Cross station – a five-minute walk from the site's entrance. Of course, from this station you can catch the 'chuffer' all the way to Swanage to enjoy a day on the beach for some old-fashioned fun, and fabulous fish and chips.



Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 195

The Club currently offers a 30% discount on Ordnance Survey Landranger and Explorer Maps – see [caravanclub.co.uk/books](http://caravanclub.co.uk/books) for details

## DIRECTIONS

**1** Leave the site's main entrance and turn left up the lane. Beside the yellow 'Primrose Hill Farm' sign, turn left and follow the bridleway to 'Wilkswood 3/4'. Just before the metal gate marked 'Private - No Public Right of Way' turn left following the blue arrows down a small muddy footpath, to the right of Hazel Cottage. Enter the field and turn left down its edge. Enter the field and turn left down its edge.

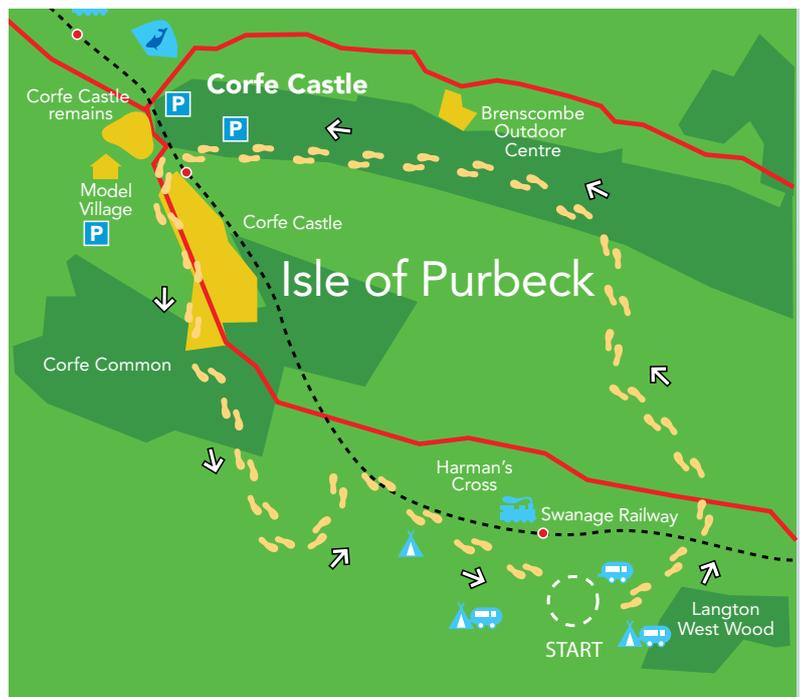
**2** Follow the field's perimeter until the metal gate. Pass through this and veer right diagonally across the field. At the farm buildings follow the blue arrow once again, and a green public bridleway sign to pass to the right of these buildings. Go through a rusty metal gate signed with a blue arrow, past buildings on the left. At the last of these buildings follow the path to the railway and 'Ailwood Down' sign, very soon following a yellow arrow around to the left.

**3** Continue down the tarmac farm track towards the railway crossing. Having traversed the crossing and reached the road, go straight across and follow the yellow arrow (signposted 'Ailwood, Woolgarston'). Pass over a stile in the field's left-hand corner and fork to the left, following the arrow towards the farmhouse. At the far side of the field, behind the gorse, go over a little wood bridge and then immediately cross a stile. Continue heading towards the farmhouse on the horizon.

**4** Go through two metal gates together, where there is another yellow arrow. Go through another metal gate just to the right of the farmhouse. Follow the path around to the left, through the farmyard and past the front of Westwood Farm and up the track. Where the track splits take the right-hand fork to join the tarmac lane. Turn right onto this and continue past Tabbitt's Hill Farm.

**5** At the T-junction turn left by the '11ft 6in' height sign. By the sign that says 'Underhill', take the muddy track uphill on your right. Continue through a wooden gate and straight on where another path joins from the right.

**6** At the top of the hill, fork left following the milestone marked 'Corfe 1 1/4', and walk along the ridge. Go through a metal gate and keep to the left of the gorse. Continue through another metal gate



(signposted 'Purbeck Way'), which is by a tall transmitter. Continue downhill on a smaller path, following a blue arrow on a milestone stating 'Corfe 1'.

**7** At the bottom of the hill go through a wooden gate and fork right onto the tarmac lane. Go under the railway bridge and at the main road cross over onto the pavement and turn left, towards the church. At The Square, fork right, past the Greyhound Inn, and at the cross turn left. Walk past the model village and the Fox Inn. Where the road bends to the right follow the sign to the left marked 'Purbeck Way', down a narrow alley (signposted 'Ballard Down 6 1/4, Chapman's Pool 3 3/4'). Turn right (signposted 'Kingston 2 3/4'). Continue through a kissing gate following a green 'Purbeck Way' arrow, but pass almost immediately through a second kissing gate. Then pass through a third kissing gate (signposted 'Kingston, Chapman's Pool'). At the road go straight over and follow the pavement on the right, between houses.

**8** Go through an opening in the fence beside a metal gate and continue ahead. When you come out onto open common land, and past the last house, look out for a concrete marker with a National Trust

symbol on it. Fork left. Go through a wooden gate and cross the road (signposted 'Kingston'). Go through another wooden gate on the other side of the road.

**9** At a concrete marker with a National Trust symbol on it, take a right fork (signposted 'Purbeck Way') and keep to the right. At the footpath sign continue straight on over a little bridge and a boardwalk. Go through a kissing gate and carry on. Then go through a small wooden gate by a farm. Go through another wooden gate, over a wooden bridge and through another kissing gate (signposted 'Purbeck Way').

**10** At the end of the field go through another wooden kissing gate and fork right (signposted 'Purbeck Way'). Keep to the right of the field to go through another kissing gate in the top right-hand corner. Continue up the right side of the next field for another kissing gate, and then the path turns to the left. Go through a kissing gate on your right and then almost immediately, when you've reached the track, turn left. Continue down the track to the farm. Follow the track around the farm until it becomes a tarmac lane.

**11** Before you get to the main road you'll see a metal gate on your right - go over the stile next to this, following a yellow arrow. Continue over a short boardwalk and then a stile, all the time following the line of the railway. Go over a stile next to a railway bridge and continue ahead (signposted 'Downshay 3/4'). Go through the campsite and exit it over a high stile in the far corner. The path then veers slightly right away from the railway line.

**12** At the next gate the path veers right. Cross a stile and go across another field. Cross another stile and turn right onto the tarmac lane. Continue to the site.

## INFORMATION | ATTRACTIONS

■ **Swanage Railway, Station** House, Swanage, Dorset BH19 1HB. Tel 01929 425800 or see swanagerailway.co.uk. Open at selected times throughout the year. Return fares for entire line - adults £9, children (5-15) £7. This beautiful railway runs between Norden and Swanage, but make sure you check the timetable carefully. Full disabled access

■ **Corfe Castle**, The Square, Corfe, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5EZ. Tel 01929 481294 or see nationaltrust.org.uk. Open all year. Adults £5.90, children £2.95, families £14.75, National Trust members free. This 1000-year old castle is a survivor of the English Civil War. Partial disabled access due to general landscape

■ **Farmer Palmer's Farm Park**,

Wareham Road, Organford, Poole, Dorset BH16 6EU. Tel 01202 622022 or see farmerpalmer.co.uk. Open 7 Feb to 20 Dec. Adults and children from £5.95, OAPs from £5.75. Many exciting activities, such as bottle feeding and meeting various animals, pony grooming and trailer rides. Full disabled access