

Rempstone Ride – Route from Norden to Studland and Shell Bay

Distance: 12 miles +

Time needed: 3 hours to a full day

Difficulty: Off-road route, difficult in wet weather. Children should be carefully supervised.

Suggested starting point: Norden Park and Ride

Suitability: for families with children older than ten. A good hybrid or 'off road cycle' is sufficient, a mountain bike is easier.

Circular route starting at either Norden or Studland or as a through route linking Shell Bay to Norden. An exhilarating, mainly off-road route, passing through fields, wood, sand and heath land, including sites of special scientific interest with rare flower species and wildlife habitats.

Please take care on roads and follow the Highway Code. Please ensure that you stick to the identified route and marked bridleways as the route crosses a protected area and borders a National Nature Reserve that could easily be damaged.

Directions

Starting from Norden Park and Ride

- From Norden take the old Corfe to Arne Road for 1½ miles where you will find the start signposted as the Hartland Way **(1)** GR 962848. (This is 4 miles from Wareham approaching via Ridge and Arne).
- Within a few yards pass through a gate into an avenue managed by the National Trust, following the blue and yellow arrows.
- Go through a smaller gate down to a brook where the track becomes rough and narrow.
- You will now cross a very special meadow containing rare flower species that could easily be destroyed: riders should on no account veer off the path.
- Cross Sharford Packhorse Bridge **(2)** GR 967847 going through a gate on either side.
- The bridle way now goes through a rather boggy section, passes into a hilly field where low gear is needed and through a metal gate. At the next gate the track improves.
- At the road ahead cross straight over onto a bridleway through spruce forest, still following the blue signs.

- Cross a small road (Thrashers Lane) **(3)**. There is now an easy tarmac section which is fairly level. Turn a right bend.
- At the road junction turn left along the marked bridleway. Go past a farm and start climbing.
- At the barrier follow the bridleway signed as Ower 1½ miles. This is a mainly good surface except for a muddy hollow.
- From the forest track take a left fork onto sandy gorse land. This section can be difficult to ride and you may have to push for a few metres.
- Cross the road and continue the bridle path to Ower ¾ miles. There is a sign saying that the road is closed to vehicles.
- You will come to a bridleway sign marked Ferry Road 2 miles, carry along this path. Fork right at Ower Farm **(4)**. Along this section you will catch glimpses of Poole Harbour and the BP drilling rig.
- You are coming to Newton **(5)**. You will cross an open field with a single tree in the middle and a cottage on the other side. Before you reach this cottage, bear right at the oak tree (which has a small green sign on the trunk stating 'permissive path'), avoiding the house. Pass through the gate and bear to the left until you reach the gravel path - ride up the hill and you will eventually come to a tarmac road **(6)** GR: 008848
- Here you can either turn right to continue the circular route back through the forest or continue on to Studland or Shell Bay.

Circular Route

- From Point **(6)** turn right along the tarmac road, signposted to Bushey.
- After about 2 miles you will come to a crossroads sign **(7)**, where you will carry straight over onto the barred forest track ahead.
- You will pass a divide in the track with a fork off to the right - ignore this and carry on straight ahead (left track).
- After a mile you will come to a half barred gate and a bridleway crossroads: again carry straight on. You are now travelling on a permissive path courtesy of the Rempstone Estate Trust. Continue until you reach a tarmac road. Turn right, descending gently.
- When the road divides take the left fork, marked 'Estate Traffic Only' but also as a bridleway to Hartland Moor - 1½ miles. This will bring you back to point **(3)** from which you will retrace your route back through the spruce forest, signposted to Hartland Moor 1¼ miles, across the fields down to Sharford Bridge and up through the avenue back to the road.

Through route continuing to the Studland Peninsula

- From Point **(6)** turn left following the sign to Ferry Road 1¼ miles.
- Turn right onto a bridleway signposted to Ferry Road 1 mile.
- Turn right over a bridge. (4 miles from the beginning of the off-road route)
- You will shortly see a white painted barrier ahead. Go past this barrier and continue straight on. (Do not bear right, this leads to private property).
- You will enter a rough climbing section Take care to avoid any metal objects protruding from the track. These are possibly WW2 defences or the remnants of old mineral lines leading to Brand's Bay.
- Continue past Greenlands Farm and follow the track until it emerges on the Ferry Road. Take great care here: sometimes cars late for the ferry race along at great speed, and there are often parked cars.
- At the road you can either turn left for Shell Bay and the chain ferry (1½ miles) or right to enjoy the amenities and refreshments at Knoll, Middle or South Beach - park your cycle in one of the racks and relax.

Starting from Shell Bay/Studland

- Visitors from Poole, Studland or Swanage can link into the circular route from the Ferry Road where the track leads to Greenlands Farm GR 025844, about 1½ miles from the ferry and ¾ mile from the Knoll Beach. Follow the track all the way past Greenlands Farm and the white barrier gate, taking care to avoid any metal protrusions on the bumpy descent.
- After 1 mile there is a blue bridleway sign to Rempstone Forest.
- Follow this until you join the circular route at Point **(6)**. Turn left here and follow the directions for the route until you reach Point **(3)**. Here you can either continue on to the Corfe-Arne Road or complete the circuit following the instructions from **(3)** to **(6)** above.

Please follow the Countryside Code:

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
Leave gates and property as you find them
Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
Keep dogs under close control
Consider other people

Parking

Streche Road - off West Street, Wareham. Long stay car parking is available.

Norden Park & Ride - Steam trains leave regularly for Corfe Castle and Swanage.
For opening times ring Purbeck or Swanage Tourist Information.

Railway Stations

There are railway stations on the London to Weymouth line at Wareham, Wool and Morton.
Telephone 08457 48 49 50 for train times.

Maps

This route can be followed on the Ordnance Survey Outdoor Leisure Map No.15 (Purbeck and South Dorset)

Tourist Information Centres

Purbeck Information and Heritage Centre, Holy Trinity Church, South Street, Wareham

Tel: 01929 552740

Website: www.purbeck.gov.uk Email: tic@purbeck-dc.gov.uk

Swanage Tourist Information Centre, Shore Road, Swanage

Tel: 0870 4420680

Website: www.swanage.gov.uk Email: mail@swanage.gov.uk