

TENNYSON TRAIL

DISTANCE 14 MILES

A long and challenging walk which climbs up the downs and generally follows the crest through forests, past ancient burial sites, the Tennyson Monument, and The Needles to Alum Bay. Superb views in many directions.

- 1** The trail starts at Carisbrooke about two kilometres (1¼ miles) south west of Newport town centre. On the B3401 Alvington Shute, turn left into Nodgham Lane where a sign indicates the Tennyson Trail. Turn right opposite Park House and proceed uphill in a southwesterly direction along the ancient road which has banks on each side. Carisbrooke Castle can be seen on the left and later, again on your left the fertile Bowcombe Valley.
- 2** After about 1500 metres (1640 yards), continue through a gateway, crossing bridleways N125 and N127. Continue on level ground in the same direction following the hedge to your left. On reaching two field gates side by side, take the left and continue along the lane, going through another two gates on the way, and keeping the hedge to your right. Ignore Footpath N140 where the television transmitter mast is visible. The track starts to descend before reaching a gate to a crossing track at the bottom.
- 3** Cross straight over, following the sign for Bridleway N136a to Brighstone Forest, to another gate 80 metres (90 yards) beyond. Proceed ahead, passing under an overhead electric cable, and follow a narrow beech plantation on the right. Ignore bridleway N198 on the right and continue straight ahead and uphill through open fields before levelling off at a gate where you follow the signpost for Bridleway N139 to Brook and Freshwater. Continue ahead, passing through two more.
- 4** On reaching Brighstone Forest, a sign for the Tennyson Trail indicates straight ahead on the main forest track passing Bridleway Brook BS6 on the right. Ignore all other tracks crossing and follow signs for the Tennyson Trail. As the track starts to descend it crosses Bridleway BS58 shortly before reaching a five-way crossing gates.
- 5** Continue ahead, soon reaching a gate and signpost showing left to the Worsley Trail and Shorwell and right to the Tennyson Trail. Here you emerge onto Brighstone Down.
- 6** Continue west on the track with the sea to your left before descending steadily to exit by a picnic area into Lynch Lane. Turn right for 30 metres (35 yards) then left into the National Trust Jubilee Car Park going through the gate opposite next to the National Trust information board. Pass the Forestry Commission Brighstone Forest entrance to your right then climb the Down following the ancient road to the summit.

- 7** Leave the National Trust land through a gate and continue ahead on level ground, immediately passing ancient burial mounds or tumuli on the right. The track then descends to a further gate into a field where the Tennyson Trail is signposted onward. Descend through the field, to reach the B3399 to Freshwater and Yarmouth to the right and Brook to the left.
- 8** Turn right into the road then immediately left into the track by a bus stop or car park then take the left of two gates onto The National Trust Brook and Compton Down. The track immediately starts to climb steeply passing a chalk pit on the right then bears right to diverge from overhead electric cables. The Tennyson Trail continues ahead undulating gently, but steadily gaining height to Afton Down. Proceed to a further gate at the eastern boundary of the golf course, continuing along Afton Down, with the golf course on each side. The track descends to Freshwater Bay.
- 9** The Tennyson Trail joins the westbound Coastal Path next to the public toilets, on the lane to Fort Redoubt. Where the lane turns sharp left, pass through two consecutive stiles onto Tennyson Down then climb very steeply uphill to the information board. Although following the coastline from here on, one should keep away from the cliff edges. The incline lessens but continues to rise to the Tennyson Monument.
- 10** Continue ahead as you now descend. At the bottom cross a stile then climb steadily up West High Down until a radio aerial comes into view. Cross the stile by the aerial then pass it to the right onto a tarmac road. To your left is the Needles Battery. Follow the road a short distance until it turns sharply left below a row of cottages, cross a stile then bear left downhill to another stile leading back onto the road. Continue downwards on the road to Alum Bay which marks the end of this trail.

Route created by www.visitisleofwight.co.uk

THE SOLENT

YARMOUTH

NEWPORT

FRESHWATER

FRESHWATER BAY

THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

A3020

A3054

A3055

SHALFLEET

B3401

CARISBROOKE

CARISBROOKE CASTLE

CHEVERTON COPSE

CHESSELL

SHALCOMBE

B3399

TENNYSON MONUMENT

ALUM BAY

NEEDLES BATTERY

BERRY SHUTE

SHORWELL

BRIGHSTONE

B3399

APPLEFORD ROAD

CHALE GREEN

START

FINISH

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

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