

Poole Harbour is said to be the second largest natural harbour in the world. This national treasure provides access to some stunning countryside as well as providing stupendous views around the harbour itself. It is rich in wildlife and has attractive towns and villages set in some of the best walking areas in South West England.

WALK 5

Ordnance survey map: OL15 Grid reference: SY 932 899

Transport (check current timetables):

Wilts & Dorset bus: 40 Poole/Swanage, 9 Poole/ Turlin Moor.

South West Trains: Hamworthy, or Wareham Station.

Car Parking: side roads in Sandford, side roads in Turlin Moor.

Approximate distance: 8 km allow 3 hours.

Facilities en route:

Nature of route: roads, lanes, bridleways, footpaths and a bridge.

Special interest:

Connecting harbour walks: Walk 4 Wareham Quay to Sandford,

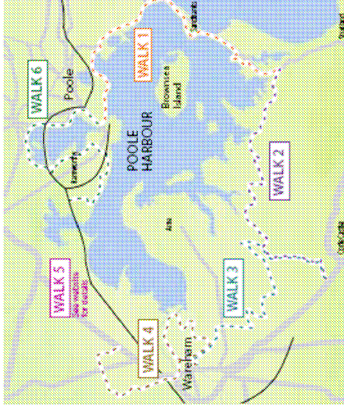
Walk 6 Turlin Moor to Poole Quay.

To find out more or get involved please see our website

www.pooleharbourtrails.org.uk

Routes 1 to 4, and 6 can be obtained from Tourist Information offices. For other connecting routes, please see our website.

Parts of Route 5 are well used, but not confirmed as public rights of way. If you have used this path in the past, we would like to know.



Walk 5 : Sandford to Rockley Point “The Cordite Way”



View out from Cordite Way onto Wareham Channel

Important Note : This walk represents the aspirations of the Round Harbour Trails group to complete the circuit around the Harbour by providing a great walking and cycling route away from traffic, with lovely harbour views. There are significant issues to be addressed; confirming rights of access, engineering challenges, safety of the public, and protection of the natural environment.

It is produced to show the potential of this valuable route, and to inspire work to complete the trail. It is not a route that can be walked or cycled in entirety today.



Sandford to Rockley Point

Starting at the bus stop by Sandford Middle School, walk down Keysworth Drive on the opposite side of the road to the school.

Towards the end of this road turn left onto the footpath by the Labour club buildings. This path (the line of an old roman road), goes behind the houses.

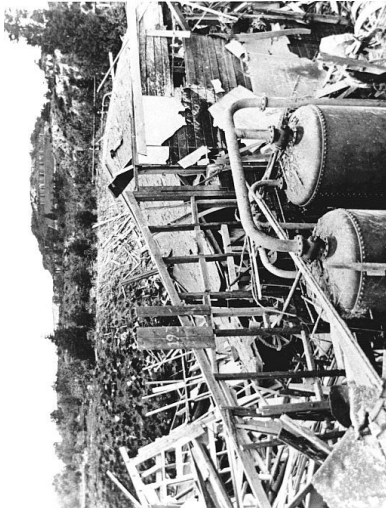
Continue past the houses and into the woods. You will go over a bridge, ignore the path from the left, and eventually exit onto the station road at Holton Heath opposite the old MOD establishment. Turn right (SE) towards the station.

At the station turn left and follow the road through the industrial estate. This bears around to the left and then right at a roundabout into Holton Road. Unfortunately, this is not a scenic bit. Continue to the far end and ahead is a roundabout.

Beyond this point is a Nature England national reserve. From 1914 to 1965 this whole area (including the Industrial Park) was the Cordite Factory, making shells for the Royal Navy. This was dangerous work, conducted in wooden

buildings separated by earthen blast walls. A single spark would demolish a hut, as in the picture.

Unfortunately during demolition of the site, asbestos was dispersed from the pipe lagging. The area is therefore contaminated, and out of bounds to the public.



Remains of a wooden hut following an explosion



“The Cordite Way”

To the right of the roundabout is the road layout for an extension to the Industrial Estate. Follow the main roadway, with the chain fence on your left, and in the corner, this leads to the disused railway track. This was a military line, using hand-propelled carts within the works, and electric powered trucks. The path leads through the trees, and across a bridge over the mainline railway. Now on an embankment, the path gives excellent views of the harbour.



You can see across to the RSPB Arne Nature reserve, Brownsea Island, and the Purbeck Ridge beyond. Keep walking along the embankment.

The Cordite railway took munitions out to a jetty opposite Rockley Park. From here, the shells were shipped to Gosport to provision the fleet.

The following section is our aspiration. Currently you would need to arrive with a boat at slack tide !

A path leads along the foreshore alongside the mainline railway. A bridge takes us across the mouth of Lyckett Bay, and across between Rockley Boatyard and the Rockley Watersports Centre.

At low tide, one can follow the foreshore around to Ham Common, but care must be taken along this route. There is an alternative link along the road through the caravan park.

Just to the right of the Boatyard is a tarmaced path. This takes you up the hill to a t-junction. Turn left onto the path. Across the Railway bridge, and into Foreland Road. The bus stop is the end of route 5.