



CHALE GIANT HISTORY DETECTIVE TRAIL



We need your help!

The Giant of Chale, notorious chaos merchant of myth and legend, has angrily returned to West Wight and threatened to spoil its beauty unless we share what this landscape means to us.

The Giant has challenged you to find as many historic locations on our Trail as you can, take a photo inspired by past stories in each place, and post them on Instagram with the hashtag #iwbiosphere

He will be watching and waiting!

Between us all, hopefully we can calm the Giant of Chale and keep this landscape beautiful for future generations to enjoy!



TRAIL WAYPOINTS

1. Yarmouth Castle

Postcode: PO41 0PB

Coordinates 50.7064713660512, -1.5001218539649728

Have you heard about the Mary Rose which sank off Portsmouth in 1545 during a battle with the French Navy? Although the Mary Rose was lost, the battle against the French was won. However, King Henry VIII was spooked by the close shave. He built Yarmouth Castle in 1547 to guard the western entrance to the Solent, together with Hurst Castle on the mainland.

Instagram Pose

The stone used to build Yarmouth Castle includes a limestone quarried from near Quarr on the Isle of Wight. When Quarr Abbey was demolished by Henry VIII, stone was sold for reuse in building this Castle.

Imagine you are a builder lifting these heavy stones into position. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

Follow the river towards the hills;
Look for a place with a history of mills.

Directions – Car and Bike; Bus and Walk

Walk to your next location through Yarmouth and along the river path. Pop into The Earth Museum office along Wheatsheaf Lane and say hello 😊; buy an ice-cream from Scoops next door!

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

2. River Yar Tidal Mill, Yarmouth

Postcode: PO41 0QY

Coordinates: 50.70244884852279, -1.4966457110065197

Archaeologists have discovered cereal grains underwater in the Solent which are over 8,000 years old. Whoever built and used this mill 300 years ago was continuing a long tradition of importing and using wheat for food. A large waterwheel was powered by the tide and moved a large grinding wheel to make flour for bread.

Instagram Pose

Today the millpond has silted up and become a haven for birds and other wildlife. Look out over the water for inspiration.



Imagine you are a fish, bird, insect, plant – or other living thing – and act out your role. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

Marching feet at one time passed through;
Now I am a place of nature with a view.

Directions – Car and Bike

You will need transport to take you to location 3. Public toilets are available near Yarmouth Bus Station before you set off (cost 20p). Follow the A3054 out of Yarmouth towards Totland. Look out for signs to Golden Hill Fort where there is a free carpark, walks and a picnic area.

Directions - Bus and Walk

Catch the 1050 No. 7 bus from Yarmouth bus station (near the ferry) and get off at the Heathfield Close stop – walk along Colwell Road to Golden Hill Fort (5 minutes)

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

3. Golden Fort

Postcode: PO40 9UJ

Coordinates: 50.69013453845908, -1.5230815629312824

Home to 136 soldiers in Victorian times when it was built and played a role in defending the Island during World War 1. Can you guess how many red bricks were used in its construction? The chalky soil on which it stands supports flowering plants that attract a wide range of butterflies.

Instagram Pose

Soldiers based at the fort operated the large guns of Hatherwood Battery overlooking Alum Bay.

Imagine you are on detail to man the Battery and are marching away from the fort towards the Needles. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

Seagulls fly above me and perch
My strong iron pillars the seabed search

Directions – Car and Bike

To find location 4, continue on A3054 towards Totland and then keep straight on the B3322 towards the Broadway War Memorial. Turn right onto Madeira Road at the



roundabout down to the sea. There is a small cost for carparking (c. £2/ hour). Public toilets, café and convenience store are available close by.

Directions - Bus and Walk

Catch the 1200 No. 7 bus from Heathfield Close stop and get off at Totland Bay War Memorial (or walk 30 minutes to Totland Bay along the road).

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

4. Totland Pier

Postcode: PO39 0AS

Coordinates: 50.68313385116875, -1.5443119484267562

Once a small rural farming and fishing community, Totland became a popular holiday resort when Queen Victoria lived on the Island at Osborne House. Daytrippers arrived by paddlesteamer and walked the boards of this pier built in 1880, to reach dry land. The sandy tidal bay at Totland is a haven for sea hares (marine slugs) living in lush seagrass meadows.

Instagram Pose

Victorian holidaymakers loved eating ice-cream as a treat at the seaside.

Imagine you are walking along the pier enjoying the sunshine. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

My coloured sands are so well known
A famous scientist once called me home.

Directions – Car and Bike

To find location 5, continue on B3322 to the Needles. There is only one carparking option here (£6 for the day, nothing shorter), although you can spend a little time here if you wish. Another option is to park for free at Warren Farm (unless they are closed for a wedding), take the short walk along to location 5, then come back and have a snack before you head off on the trail again! NB Warren Farm is closed for a wedding 29th/30th June 2024.

If you wish to avoid location 5, just go straight to the location 6 information below.

Directions - Bus and Walk

Catch the 1310 No. 7 bus from Totland Bay War Memorial to Alum Bay.

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.



5. Marconi Station Memorial

Postcode: PO39 0JD

Coordinates: 50.66809711723371, -1.5681117733130288

The world's first permanent wireless station was operated from the Royal Needles Hotel on this spot by Guglielmo Marconi in 1897-9. He sent radio transmissions to ships at sea and across the English Channel, experiments that changed our world. Marconi also fell in love with the heritage, natural beauty and landscape of West Wight.

Instagram Pose

Marconi's first experiment was to send a radio signal to a small boat moored in Alum Bay less than 1 mile away.

Imagine you are on board the boat waiting for the first message and then it arrives. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

Quietly I stand in this tranquil space

Gently reflected by a photographer's gaze

Directions – Car and Bike

Make your way along Alum Bay Road, Moons Hill and past Lord Tennyson's Farringford Farm to arrive at location 6, where you can park at Dimbola Lodge. Dimbola Lodge Museum and Gallery has a good café and tells the fascinating story of Victorian photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron.

Directions - Bus and Walk

Catch the 1425 No. 12 bus from Alum Bay to stop at Dimbola Lodge/ Freshwater Bay.

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

6. Jimi Hendrix Statue

Postcode: PO40 9QE

Coordinates: 50.67246255367424, -1.5150898655185798

Jimi Hendrix was a world-famous American musician who played his last performance on Afton Down at the Isle of Wight Festival, less than 3 weeks before he died in 1970. 600,000 people sat on the grassy hillside not far from here listening to a unique performance, now commemorated by this statue in bronze.



Instagram Pose

Hendrix was well known for using a Fender Stratocaster electric guitar.

Imagine you are Hendrix strutting your stuff at the Festival. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

Against my guardian stormy waves crash
Pebbles thrown up and together smash.

Directions – Car and Bike; Bus and Walk

Walk from Dimbola Lodge down to your next location, 7. Public toilets are available on the way

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

7. Ancient Cliffs

Postcode: PO40 9RA

Coordinates: 50.67035468338449, -1.5102833468775636

Look carefully at the cliff at the far end of Freshwater Bay beach. You will see, even from a distance, a clear line at the top of the cliff. Most of the cliff is chalk formed millions of years ago from small creatures when this area was a sea bed. The top few metres has been deposited by a river much more recently in the last Ice Age showing the River Yar was once much bigger and the Island was once part of the mainland.

Instagram Pose

A famous Victorian poet, Alfred Lord Tennyson, spent many years of his life at Freshwater. It was the perfect place to write poetry including 'Charge of the Light Brigade'.

Read a few lines from this poem aloud to the sea. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

*'Half a league, half a league, Half a league onward.
All in the valley of Death Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade! Charge the guns!" he said.
Into the valley of Death Rode the six hundred.'*

Clue to your next location



Along the military road you must drive
To discover where I once was alive.

Directions – Car and Bike

Take the Military Road south along the coast. This is a beautiful drive over Compton Down. After 5 minutes or so, park in the National Trust carpark at Compton Bay (free for NT members; c. £2 per hour non-members). Walk down the short flight of stairs to the beach. Be careful of tides – check tide times.

Directions - Bus and Walk (this is the end point of your trail)

Walk through Afton Marshes back to Freshwater and pick up a No. 7 bus to Yarmouth at the junction of Hooke Hill and School Green/ Afton Road. Alternatively catch the 1619 Island Coaster from Freshwater Bay for a round the Island journey to Ryde, driving along Military Road, passing Compton Bay and Chale. To return to Yarmouth from Ryde, catch the No. 9 bus (1835) to Newport and the No. 7 bus (1935) from Newport to Yarmouth, arriving 2004.

Take Care: Be careful when crossing roads and being close to water.

8. Dinosaur Beach

Postcode: PO30 4HB

Coordinates: 50.65533846899434, -1.466359492088607

125 million years ago the coast you see stretching out in front of you was a series of muddy lagoons. Dinosaurs roamed these lands, leaving footprints in the mud and bones when they died, which have fossilised over time. The best place to search for fossils is between Brook Bay and Compton Bay at low tide. Be careful of tides – check tide times.

Instagram Pose

A large three-toed iguanodon left its footprints on this beach, which can still be seen at low tide.

Find a picture of an iguanodon online and imagine you are this creature walking across the beach. Capture that pose! Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere

Clue to your next location

As tall rock sentry I stand
Watching over this beautiful land.

Directions – Car and Bike

From Compton Bay turn right and drive along Military Road before turning left up towards Mottistone via Brook or Brighstone. Park at Mottistone National Trust carpark (free) and follow public footpath signs to the Longstone.



Take care: You can be caught out by tides along this stretch of coast, so know your tide times. Keep to marked paths and don't get close to the cliff edge.

9. Neolithic Standing Stone

Postcode: PO30 4EH

Coordinates: 50.65243056276925, -1.428577895905694

This large standing stone marks the entrance to a Neolithic long barrow. 6,000 years ago this was a place where people living on the Island buried their dead in a communal grave. About 1,000 years ago this stone was probably used as a meeting place for local affairs. The village of Mottistone is a corruption of 'Moot Stone'.

Instagram Pose

In Saxon times, West Wight was part of the Wessex Kingdom ruled from Winchester. On occasion, King Alfred's representatives may perhaps have attended meetings in this place.

Imagine you are an important person giving a speech by the stone. Capture that pose! Post an Instagram with #iwbiosphere.

Clue to your next location

Old gravestones in lines all a muddle
Hide secrets of those who did smuggle.

Directions – Car and Bike

Drive back the way you came to the Military Road and drive along it towards Chale to find location 10. This road takes its name because it was built in Victorian times to help move soldiers quickly from south to north of the Island for defence.

10. Chale Churchyard

Postcode: PO38 2HA

Coordinates: 50.59585556250342, -1.3184303005612978

Over 100 years ago smuggling was one way that local people earned a living along the rugged and remote coastline of West Wight. Hidden gullies ('chines') caused by water draining from the land provided easy access down to the beach. Here Islanders waited to collect contraband goods unloaded from trading ships headed into Cowes and Southampton.

Instagram Pose

Chale was the home of a notorious smuggling family called the Wheelers. Legend has it that they used the churchyard to store their contraband and scared people off with



ghost stories. There may even have been an entrance to a tunnel from the beach here!

Imagine you are a smuggler acting out a ghost story. Capture that pose!. Post on Instagram with #iwbiosphere.

Clue to your next location

Congratulations! You have successfully calmed the Giant of Chale! He is very content with how you have reconnected with the landscape and histories of West Wight. Take a celebratory picture and post on Instagram!

Directions – Car and Bike

You are now at the end of the trail. Congratulations! Thank you for exploring West Wight with us!.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Designed for families and active adventurers who are young at heart!

You can complete all or part of this trail.

There is a 20-minute uphill walk to the Longstone at Mottistone.

By Car or Bike

This trail will take about 3 hours to complete if following by car and 4 hours by bike if powered by electric/ a good cyclist.

Distance: 34.5 miles return to Yarmouth. Cyclists please note there is a steep hill out of Yarmouth and a climb up Compton Down on route (return journey to Yarmouth can avoid this climb if preferred).

Allow a full day if you spend time visiting a selection of attractions including Dimbola Lodge Museum and Gallery, the Needles and Mottistone Gardens on route.

Car parking costs: up to c. £12 if all locations visited.

Visiting attractions extra.

Bus and Walk

If you prefer to follow part of this trail by a combination of bus and walking, you will find guidance for each location on the map itself. (NB Timetable accurate at time of publication but please check live timetable and plan before you set out).

In summary you will need to start the trail in Yarmouth by 0945 and your route will involve:

Catching the No. 7 from Yarmouth to stop at Golden Hill Fort, Totland Bay and Alum Bay.

Catching the No. 12 from Alum Bay to stop at Freshwater Bay.



Option of returning to Yarmouth via a walk and the No. 7 bus at Freshwater, or picking up the Island Coaster for a scenic circular route around the Island to Ryde; and returning to Yarmouth via the No. 9 and No. 7 buses from Ryde.

We recommend you purchase a [Vectis Day Rover Ticket](#) providing unlimited travel over 24 hours

TRAIL CARBON FOOTPRINT

By car: average 3.5kg per car

Consider offsetting your carbon footprint
Help lock up carbon with a donation to the [Woodland Trust](#)