



Chillerton Down, Berry Shute,
Chillerton, Isle of Wight PO30
3HA

TRAIL
Walking

GRADE
Hard

DISTANCE
**9.25 miles (16km), or
4 miles (7km) shorter
route**

TIME
**3 hours 30 minutes to
4 hours**

OS MAP
**Landranger 196;
Explorer OL29**

Contact

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Facilities

**National
Trust**

nationaltrust.org.uk/walks

Up for the challenge of a Chillerton Down walk?

This walk takes you off the beaten track in the middle of the Island – through woods and valleys, and across the downs with distant sea glimpses to enjoy. It's a bit of a challenge, so be prepared. For a shorter walk of just 4 miles (7km), after Step 2 turn right along the track for 65 yds (60m) then continue from Step 6.



Terrain

Total ascent is 1150ft (350m). There are six stiles and three stock gates. Please take great care and walk single file on roads. It can be slippery under the trees; the exposed downs can be windy. Dogs are welcome, but please keep your dog on a lead around wildlife and take any mess home with you.

Things to see



Sea Views from Chillerton Down

At 751ft (229m) high, the mast of Chillerton transmitting station is visible from all over the Isle of Wight. It was erected in 1958 as a VHF TV transmitter but now broadcasts FM and DAB radio. Stand near the mast on the top of Chillerton Down and look around you for amazing panoramic views: to the south you see Chale Bay where many a ship has gone down over the years on the notorious Atherfield Ledge; to the east is Sandown Bay with its glorious sandy beaches; and to the north is the yachtsmans paradise of Cowes at the head of the River Medina.

Iron Age Settlers

Little is known about Iron Age settlements on the Island but there is evidence of the rampart and ditch of an unfinished Iron Age promontory fort on Chillerton Down lying along a steep-sided spur on the chalk hill. It is known locally as the 'five barrows' as depressions in the bank give the impression of five separate mounds. Flowers typical chalk grassland are found on the downs, and the teasel is common on disturbed land along field edges.

Withy Beds

We hold covenants on much of the land through which this walk passes. This includes the Gatcombe withy bed, neglected for many years but now being actively managed once again. Withy beds are small pockets of low-lying land planted with willows which are coppiced every one or two years. They provide supple stems for weaving baskets or, in coastal areas such as the Island, lobster pots. Rising above the withy beds is the tower of the old Whitcroft hospital, the Isle of Wight County Asylum founded in 1894.



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Start/end

Start: Lay-by on side road off Berry Shute, Chillerton, grid ref: SZ481829. Nearest postcode is PO30 3HA

End: Lay-by on side road off Berry Shute, Chillerton, grid ref: SZ481829. The nearest postcode is PO30 3HA

How to get there

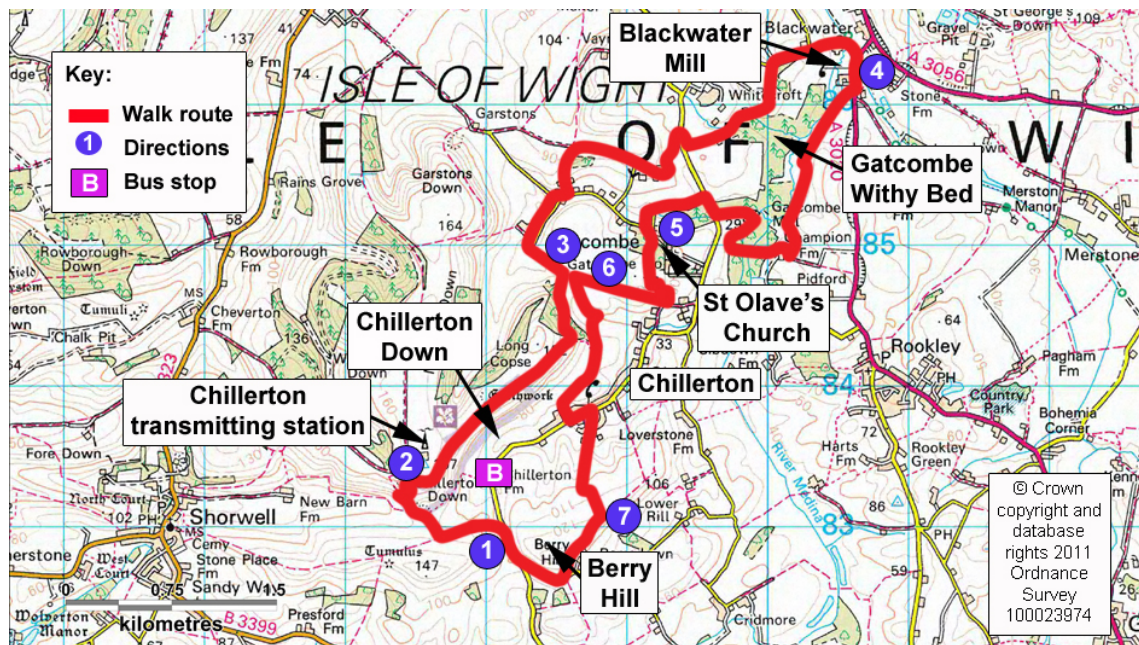
By foot: Part of this route follows the waymarked 'Shepherd's Trail' between route steps 7 and 2, and it crosses the Stenbury Trail at step 4 and the Worsley Trail at step 7

By bike: National Cycle Route 23 (Reading to Sandown) meets this trail at step 4 (Blackwater) (Sustrans)

By bus: Southern Vectis (tel: 01983 827000) service 6 from Newport to Ventnor, hourly, alight at Chillerton Farm

By ferry/boat: Fishbourne-Portsmouth (Wightlink 0871 3761000) 13 miles (21km); East Cowes-Southampton (Red Funnel, tel: 0844 8449988) 10 miles (16km)

By car: Take the road from Carisbrooke to Chale (which joins the B3399 near Chale Green). Chillerton Down is just south of Chillerton village



1. Take the G13 bridleway to the base of Chillerton Down, ignoring a path to the left. After a gate follow a grassy track to the left. Just before another gate, bear right onto the open access hillside and climb steeply up the grassy bank to the right of an old pit area. Pass an isolated gorse bush and continue climbing to reach the perimeter fence of the Chillerton transmitting station.
2. Turn right and follow the fence. At the boundary corner, cross a stile and head diagonally left to a wooden bench and viewpoint at the fence corner. Follow the ridge to a stile near to the top field corner and continue onwards, descending slightly to the far lower corner of the next piece of open land. Cross the stile and turn immediately left for 25yds (25m) then over another stile and follow the path through the copse. Go straight on at the signpost and reach a crossing track.
3. Turn left as far as a minor road, then turn right. At the road junction turn right for 50yds (45m) then turn left up bridleway G6. At a path junction at the top of the hill, turn right along bridleway G10. Carry on at a road in the same direction to meet a main road. Turn right for 150yds (140m) then left along footpath G5 as far as a minor road. Turn right and head downhill as far as a major road. Turn right for 240yds (220m) using the pavement then take footpath A42 on the right, behind the bus stop in front of Blackwater Mill.
4. Cross two stiles, keeping to the field edge with Gatcombe Withy Bed on the right. Turn right through a metal stock gate just before farm buildings and shortly a second gate. Continue through the wood, then over a bridge to reach a wooden gate in a gap in the hedge on the right. Go through and proceed along the grassy track, the path bending left around private buildings. Turn left at a track then right at the main road. Take the first road on the left after 150yds (140m).
5. When the road bends right by St Olaves church, carry straight ahead on footpath G11. Bear right after two houses and right again to follow a gently rising bridleway.
6. Turn sharp left on reaching the last field before a wood and follow its left edge. Continue onwards along bridleway G6. Turn left at the road for 190yds (175m), using the footpath on the far side of the road. Turn right by Chillerton village hall and up the sunken path, bridleway G15a. Bear left then right when it emerges into the open, still rising.
7. At the path junction at the crest of the hill, take the gently rising footpath G15 just to the right of the hedge on the right. Continue along the ridge top almost to the summit of Berry Hill, then descend diagonally left just below a line of scrub. At the road turn right as far as a main road. Turn right for 220yds (200m) and back to the start.

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