

# Castle Ride

*'Out of Car Experience - Cycling in Purbeck'*

Circular route from Wareham to Corfe Castle - 12 miles



*Corfe Castle Village  
The Blue Pool  
Cottage at Corfe*

*Time needed: 2 - 3 hours*

*Degree of difficulty:  
One steep hill.  
No off-road sections.*



# Castle Ride

Distance: 12 miles

Explore this route across Hartland Moor, enjoying views of Corfe Castle, then cycle on through leafy lanes to the village of Church Knowle and the tranquil Blue Pool.

Suggested starting point: Wareham Quay

Time needed: Average, 2 to 3 hours

Degree of difficulty: No off-road sections. Steep hill between Church Knowle and the Blue Pool

*Please take care on all roads and follow the Highway Code*

## Directions

### Section 1: Wareham to Norden

- Leaving Wareham Quay **1**, turn left, over the bridge travelling south toward Stoborough through water-meadows on both sides **2**.
- Head into the village between the two 30mph signs, passing the Kings Arms on your left.
- Take the first turning on the left into the interestingly named Nutcrack Lane.
- Follow this road passing the red phone box on the left, and continue straight over the first crossroads.
- Carry on past the entrance to Stoborough Heath **3**, and head straight on past the next turning on the right, which has a cattle grid.
- At the next junction turn right, signposted Corfe Castle and you will pass Slepe Farm on the left. Follow this road for a while, taking time to stop and appreciate the fantastic views across Hartland Moor **4** to Corfe Castle. At Norden, **5** turn right towards the roundabout then follow the signs towards Corfe Castle.

### Section 2: Church Knowle

- At the foot of the castle mound **6**, opposite the National Trust car park and visitor centre, turn right (signposted Church Knowle and Creech) and follow this winding road up the hill, past the Woodland Caravan Park on your right and head into the village of Church Knowle.
- Carry on through the village past St. Peter's Church on your right and later past The New Inn on your left.
- The road will lead you to a crossroads, take the turning to the right signposted Wareham, and climb through the tiny hamlet of Cocknowle.

*Take care this is a very steep hill and on-coming traffic could be a danger.*

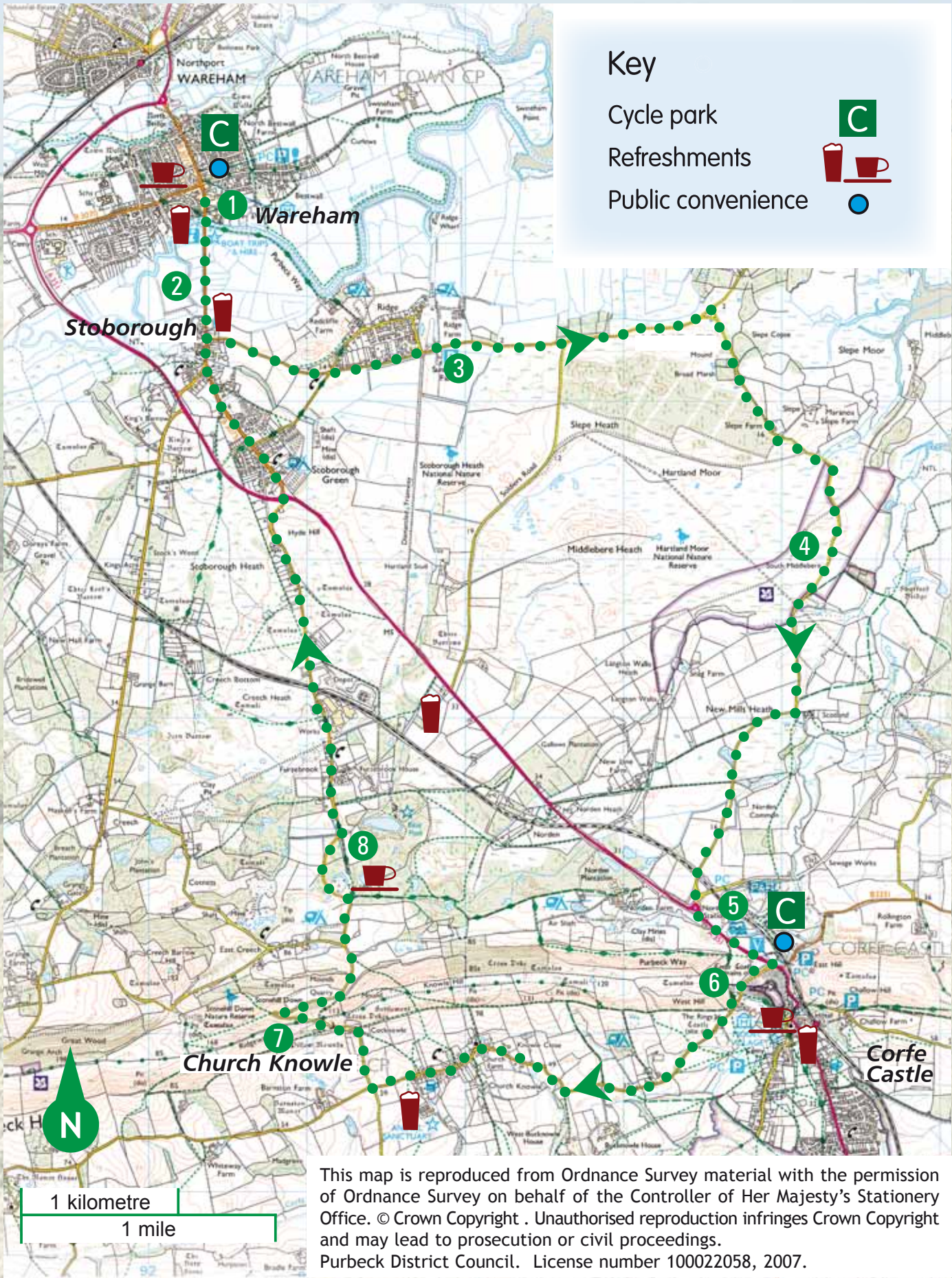
### Section 3: Blue Pool

- Head on up to the summit of the chalk ridge where you are blessed with a panoramic view of the Purbecks **7**. Ride gently down the other side on the ridge, taking care when approaching the hairpin bend.
- Carry straight on past the turning to East Creech on your left.
- Continue past the entrance to The Blue Pool on your right **8**, however this may be an opportune moment to purchase refreshments, and take a breather! (Entry fee applies).
- From The Blue Pool continue to the roundabout, taking the second exit, signposted Stoborough. Travel towards the village centre past the Lookout Caravan Park and Stoborough First School.
- Follow this road all the way back along the south causeway to Wareham, take the first turning on your right after travelling over the bridge and you will be back on Wareham Quay.



### Campsite Links

[Redcliffe Farm](#)  
[Ridge Farm](#)  
[Norden Farm](#)  
[East Creech Farm](#)



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## Corfe Castle

Corfe Castle is one of England's most dramatic ruined castles and is a major tourist attraction in the Isle of Purbeck. Although the ruins suggest the castle is falling down, it was in fact demolished deliberately during the English Civil War, over 350 years ago. The Old Hall dates back to the time of William the Conqueror with later additions from Henry I, King John and Henry III.

*National Trust literature*



## Swanage Railway

The railway first came to Swanage in 1885 and was operated by the London and South Western Railway Company. Having survived the Beeching axe, British Railways closed the line in 1972. However a group of enthusiasts formed the Swanage Railway Society and re-opened the line, initially running from Swanage to Harman's Cross and later to Nordon, via Corfe Castle.

*Swanage Railway Society literature*



## St Peter's Church, Church Knowle

Built for the most part between 1200 and 1250, it is of a type familiar then in the South of England, consisting of a table tomb of Purbeck Stone, supported on columns. On the centre of its back wall is the figure in brass, of a man in armour praying, with a kneeling woman on either side and two armorial shields above, which is a rare find in such good condition.

*Dorset Churches, Dorset Historic Churches Trust, 1975.*

# Information

## Safe Cycling

- Check your cycle is in good working order
- Always carry refreshments and a cycle repair kit
- Wear reflective material, carry lights and take waterproofs
- It is advisable to wear a cycle helmet
- Increase the gap between cycles and cycle slowly when going downhill, especially on narrow lanes
- On narrow lanes always ride in single file and be ready for fast traffic as well as when crossing main roads
- Follow the Highway Code at all times

## 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

Photographic credits: Peter Booton, John Farnar, Nicholas James, Mark Simons and Purbeck District Council.

## Parking

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

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 Moreton. Telephone 08457 48 49 50 for train times or visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk)

## Maps

This route can be followed on the Ordnance Survey Explorer Map No.OL15 (Purbeck and South Dorset)

## Tourist Information Centres

Free leaflets on where to eat and drink, beaches and events happening in Purbeck as well as guidebooks, maps, postcards, stamps and a small selection of gifts are available from:

Purbeck Information and Heritage Centre  
Holy Trinity Church, South Street, Wareham  
Tel: 01929 552740

Website: [www.purbeck.gov.uk](http://www.purbeck.gov.uk)  
Email: [tic@purbeck-dc.gov.uk](mailto:tic@purbeck-dc.gov.uk)

Swanage Tourist Information Centre  
Shore Road, Swanage  
Tel: 0870 4420680

Website: [www.swanage.gov.uk](http://www.swanage.gov.uk)  
Email: [mail@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:mail@swanage.gov.uk)



THE NATIONAL TRUST



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