



# 06 ISLE OF WIGHT TENNYSON TRAIL

▶ Distance: 15¼ miles/24.5km ▶ Time: 7 hours ▶ Grade: Challenging



Tennyson Down, heading towards The Needles.



PHOTO: AVAILABLE LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY\*

## PLAN YOUR WALK



## ROUTE

**Start/parking** Newport Bus Station, grid ref SZ499889. Parking nearby at Coppins Bridge, PO30 2BX. Or park at end (Alum Bay, PO39 OJD) and catch bus to start

**Is it for me?** Long, gently undulating linear route on well-signposted trail over coastal downs, bridleways, farm & forest tracks  
**Stiles** None

## PLANNING

**Nearest towns** Newport/Freshwater  
**Refreshments** Newport/Carisbrooke, pubs/cafés at Freshwater Bay, NT kiosk at Needles New Battery.  
**Public toilets** Carisbrooke High St, Freshwater Bay  
**Public transport** Return on Southern Vectis bus No.7 Alum Bay-Newport [www.islandbuses.info](http://www.islandbuses.info)  
**Maps** OS Explorer OL29; Landranger 196



**CHOSEN BY...**  
**PHILIP THOMAS**  
Alfred Tennyson famously remarked

that the air here is “worth sixpence a pint.” And even today, a walk across the breezy hilltop named in his honour still leaves you feeling quids in. Tennyson Down is not alone on the Isle of Wight in being named for the Victorian poet laureate, who lived at Farringford in Freshwater. Completing our east-west traverse of the island, the Tennyson Trail follows an undulating crest of chalk downland from the centre to the iconic Needles at its westernmost tip. It’s a walk awash in sumptuous scenery and intriguing landmarks, from

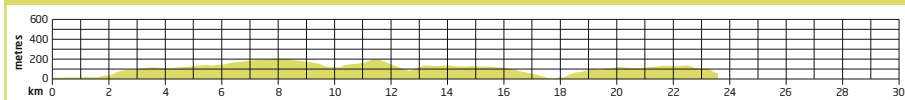
Bronze Age barrows to gun batteries, and a rocket test site.

**1 Start**  
From bus station, turn L onto South St (B3323), then R into St James’ St, L onto Pyle Street and finally L onto Carisbrooke Road. Follow for 1 mile through Carisbrooke (where it becomes High Street, B3401) and fork L into Nodgham Lane at end (SZ482 881), signposted ‘Tennyson Trail’.

**2 1¼ miles/2 km**  
After 100 yds, fork R up byway (Down Lane). This sunken lane emerges atop Bowcombe Down where the Tennyson Trail continues roughly on SW course for about 4 miles on farm

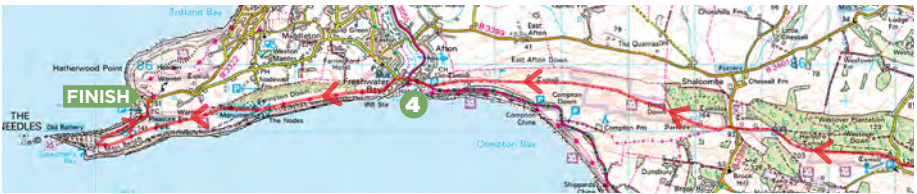


## GRADIENT PROFILE



# 06 ISLE OF WIGHT TENNYSON TRAIL

► OS Explorer map OL29 ► Buy maps at: [ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop](http://ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop)



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tracks/woodland bridleways, until Brighstone Down. It's signposted all the way and breaks in the hedgerows give glimpses Carisbrooke Castle to your L. Continue straight on at junctions and through Brighstone Forest.

### 3 5¼ miles/9.25km

Emerging from the trees, you're greeted by a view of the sea. Follow the Tennyson Trail R and as the trail dips onto Lynch Lane, turn R then L to pick up the path again over Mottistone Down and straight onto Pay Down, descending to the B3399. Carefully cross to the farm track opposite and follow the chalk ruts of the

Tennyson Trail through NT gate and around an old pit, forking R uphill. After passing the Bronze Age Barrows of Brook Down, a long and level stretch across Compton Down gives fine views over the broad arc of the bay, before the trail descends steadily through the golf course on Afton Down and into Freshwater Bay.

### 4 11 miles/17.7km

As you meet the A3055 (Military Road), turn R on verge/pavement, following the road beside the short promenade and past the Albion Hotel. Turn L onto lane by public toilets/bus shelter, after which the trail shortly

turns R through gate for the final climb onto Tennyson Down. Reaching the Tennyson Monument, bear R to Nodes Beacon, forking L through gate over West High Down towards the Needles. Arriving at the New Battery, make time to explore the fortifications and rocket test site before road/path around to bus stop at Needles Park/Alum Bay. **CW**

**GET THIS WALK  
ON YOUR PHONE:**  
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IN ASSOCIATION WITH



OS MAPS



Ordnance Survey

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