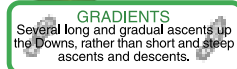
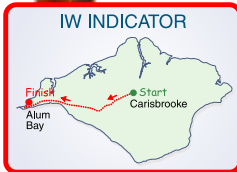


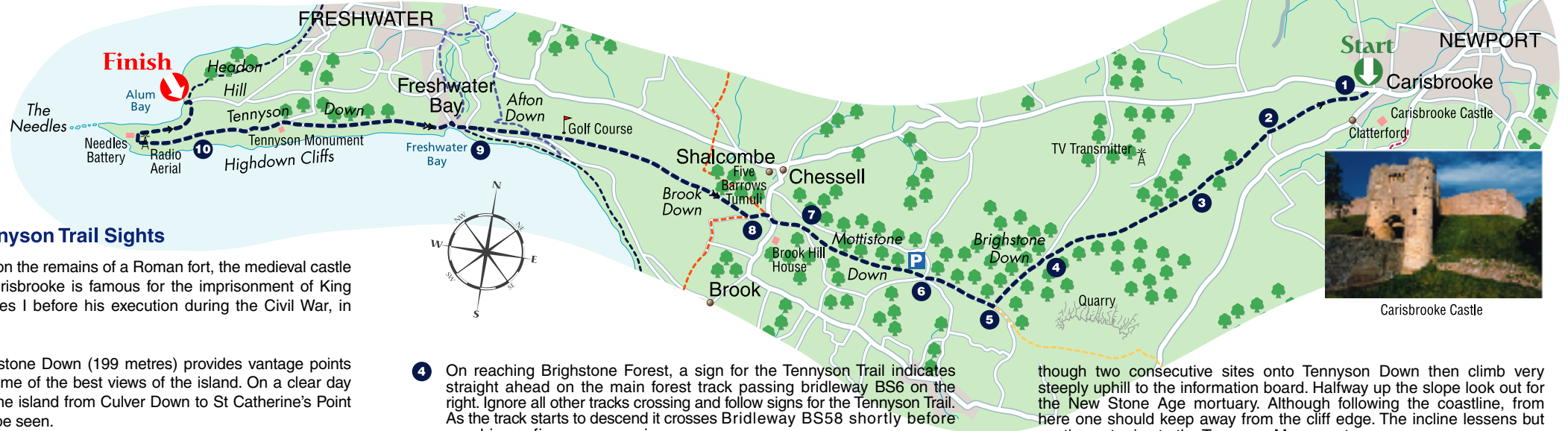
Tennyson Trail



A long and challenging walk, which climbs up the downs and generally, follows the crest through forests, past ancient burial sites, the Tennyson Monument and The Needles to Alum Bay. Superb views in many directions.



The Needles



Tennyson Trail Sights

Built on the remains of a Roman fort, the medieval castle at Carisbrooke is famous for the imprisonment of King Charles I before his execution during the Civil War, in 1649.

Brighstone Down (199 metres) provides vantage points for some of the best views of the island. On a clear day the whole length of the island from Culver Down to St Catherine's Point to Freshwater – can be seen.

The Longstone (dated 3000 – 2000 BC) can be found at the tumuli on Mottistone Down.

The Needles Battery, which is open to visitors during the summer months, is a Palmerstonian fort built in the 1860's. It still houses two 12-ton gun barrels and has a 60m tunnel leading to dramatic views of The Needles. It is in the care of the National Trust.

- 1 The trail starts at Carisbrooke about one kilometre (1¼ miles south west of Newport town centre. On the B3401 Alvington Shute (G.Ref:482881) turn left into Nodgham Lane where a sign indicates the Tennyson Trail. Turn right opposite Park House and proceed uphill in a southwesterly direction along the ancient road, which has banks on each side. Carisbrooke Castle can be seen on the left and later again on your left, the fertile Bowcombe Valley.
- 2 After about 1.5 km (1 mile) continue through a gateway, crossing two bridleways N125 and N127. (Note: The path to the right leads to the 'Blacksmith's Arms' Public House on the main Newport-Calbourne Road). Continue on level ground in the same direction following the hedge to your left. On reaching two field gates side by side, take the left and continue along this lane, going through another two gates on the way, and keeping the hedge to your right. Ignore the footpath N140 where the television transmitter mast is visible. The track starts to descend before reaching a gate to a crossing track at the bottom.
- 3 Cross straight over; follow the sign for bridleway N136a heading towards Brighstone Forest, to another gate 80 metres beyond. Proceed ahead, passing under an overhead electric cable, and follow a narrow beech plantation on the right. Ignore bridleway N198 on the right and continue straight ahead and uphill through open fields before levelling off at a gate where you follow the signposts for bridleway N139 to Brook and Freshwater. Continue ahead, passing through two more gates, as the track gradually becomes enclosed by trees as you enter Brighstone Forest.
- 4 On reaching Brighstone Forest, a sign for the Tennyson Trail indicates straight ahead on the main forest track passing bridleway BS6 on the right. Ignore all other tracks crossing and follow signs for the Tennyson Trail. As the track starts to descend it crosses Bridleway BS58 shortly before reaching a five-way crossing.
- 5 Continue ahead, soon reaching a gate and signpost showing left to the Worsley Trail and Shorwell and right to the Tennyson Trail. Here you emerge onto Brighstone Down.
- 6 Continue west on the track with the sea to your left before descending steadily to exit by a picnic area into Lynch Lane. Turn right for 30 metres then left into the National Trust Jubilee Car Park going through the gate opposite the National Trust information board. Pass the Forestry Commission

Brighstone Forest entrance to your right then climb the Down following the ancient road to the summit.

- 7 Leave the National Trust land through a gate and continue ahead on level ground, immediately passing ancient burial mounds or tumuli on the right. In a southerly direction is the Longstone, dating 3000-2000 years BC. The track then descends to a further gate into a field where the Tennyson Trail is signposted onwards. Descend through the field, to reach the B3399 to Freshwater and Yarmouth to the right and Brook to the left.
- 8 Turn right into the road then immediately left into the track by a bus stop or a car park then take the left of two gates onto The National Trust's Brook and Compton Down. The track immediately starts to climb steeply passing a chalk pit on the right then bears right to diverge from overhead electric cables. The Tennyson Trail continues ahead undulating gently, but steadily gaining height to Alton Down. Proceed to a further gate at the Eastern boundary of the golf course, continuing along Alton Down, with the golf course on each side. The track descends to Freshwater Bay.
- 9 The Tennyson Trail joins the westbound Coastal Path next to the public toilets, on the lane to Fort Redoubt. Where the lane turns sharp left, pass

though two consecutive sites onto Tennyson Down then climb very steeply uphill to the information board. Halfway up the slope look out for the New Stone Age mortuary. Although following the coastline, from here one should keep away from the cliff edge. The incline lessens but continues to rise to the Tennyson Monument.

- 10 Continue ahead as you now descend. At the bottom cross a stile then climb steadily up West High Down until a TV Transmitter comes into view. Cross the stile by the transmitter then pass it to the right on the tarmac road. To your left is the Needles Battery. Follow the road a short distance until it turns sharply left below a row of cottages, cross a stile then bear left downhill to another stile leading back onto the road. Continue downwards on the road to Alum Bay which marks the end of this trail.



Carisbrooke Castle

For Red Funnel ferry information and places to stay, visit www.redfunnel.co.uk or phone the Travel Centre on 0844 844 9988

