



The route is marked by way markers; please keep to the indicated path and follow the Countryside Code as well as the Share This Space advice overlaid.

Much of The Castlemans Trailway follows the route of the old Southampton to Dorchester railway line, which was closed in the 1960s. The Trailway can take you on foot, bike or horse through some of South Dorset's most varied and interesting countryside. Parts of the route are also open to cyclists and wheelchair users.



The Castlemans Trailway is a shared use, 16 mile (26km) path from Upton Country Park in Poole ending a few miles east of Moors Valley near Ringwood. The route crosses through river, woodland, forest and wildlife habitats.



THE CASTLEMANS TRAILWAY

ARCHAEOLOGY

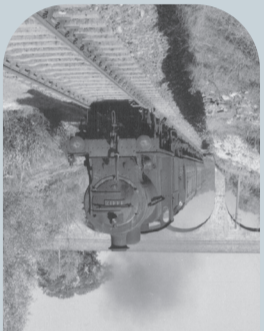
Along the Trailway, there are some interesting archaeological sites that are well worth a look. Three Scheduled Ancient Monuments are located on the ridge near the southern boundary of Cannon Hill Plantation (see map). All are Bronze Age Barrows (Funerary Monuments) and have current management plans approved by English Heritage.



The railway was opened to the public on 1 June 1847, with festivities along the route. The company was taken over by the London and South-Western Railway in 1848 and in 1888 a new main line was opened from Bournemouth through Bournemouth to Poole. Due to the new line and an increase in passenger numbers and the Castlemans Corkscrew became known to railwaymen as the 'Old Road'. The final passenger service ran on 2 May 1964.



In 1844 the "Southampton and Dorchester Railway Company" was formed to build a line between these two towns. The route chosen snaked across the New Forest to Ringwood, then via Wimborne to Hamworthy (the junction for Poole) before heading west to Dorchester.



Due to its twists and turns, the line was nicknamed "Castlemans Corkscrew" after Charles Castlemans, the Wimborne solicitor for the building chiefly responsible for the building of the line.

HISTORY



Due to the proximity of heathland sites, there are regular sightings of reptiles along certain areas of the Trailway. Again these are seasonal, with most reptiles not emerging until early March. On warm days keep an eye out for Common Lizards, Slow worm, Adder and Grass Snake, basking in the sunshine.



Spring and summer bring the opportunity to enjoy butterflies along the Trailway; different species will prefer different habitats. Keep an eye out for White Admiral, Silver Wash Fritillary and Speckled Wood.



During the summer, the Nightjar are more likely to hear it than see it. It makes a "churring" noise at dusk. Later in the evening you may hear the distinctive "to-whit-to-who" call of the Tawny Owl. Their small wings help them negotiate the trees in the woodland areas.

There is a good variety of bird life to look and listen out for each season. Look out for a flash of blue as a Jay passes by, listen for the mewing sound of a Buzzard, or see its 5ft wingspan as it soars overhead. Goldfinches, Goldcrests and Greater Spotted Woodpeckers are frequently seen.



WILDLIFE

Share this space



This joint code of conduct encourages all Trailway users to be polite, considerate and take responsibility for their actions on shared paths and roads.

Please...

- Take your litter home or bin it
- Respect local wildlife
- Be careful around corners, narrow gaps and bridges
- Keep to the left

Cyclists

- Slow down or stop for other users, pass wide and slow
- Use a bell, horn or friendly greeting
- Be patient as some might not hear, see or move well; allow time for them to call young children or a dog(s)
- Use lights in dawn, dusk, dreary weather and dark

Walkers, wheelchair users & mobility scooters

- Leave space for cyclists to pass you

Dog owners

- Keep dogs on a short lead or very close control around others
- Stop your dog from jumping up, let people choose to meet your dog
- Extendable leads can be a hazard across the path for cyclists and others
- Clean up after your dog

Horse riders

- Ride at a sensible pace for the path e.g. walk or trot
- Use high vis at dawn, dusk, dreary weather and dark

The code of conduct is supported by:



Greenspaces Team (East)
Ranger Workbase
Birch Road
St Ives
Ringwood
BH24 2DA
t: 01425 483809
e: dorsetcountryside@dorsetcc.gov.uk
www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
castlemansrailway

Supported by:



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CASTLEMANS TRAILWAY

A shared use 16 mile (26km) path following much of the route of the old Southampton to Dorchester railway line.

The Trailway is a permissive path and, except where it follows existing rights of way, there is no legal public right of access, nor can one be created by prolonged use. The Trailway is available for public use for the foreseeable future by kind permission of the landowners.

The Trailway is managed in partnership by Dorset Council, the Forestry Commission and Hampshire County Council with support from other organisations.

The Castlemans Trailway links into the **National Cycle Network (NCN)** which is over 14,000 miles long. It can be used for every kind of journey - from the school run and commute to weekend bike rides and long-distance challenge rides. It is popular with walkers, joggers, wheelchair users and horse riders as well as people on bikes.

www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/national-cycle-network

The Great Heath is a partnership led by Dorset Wildlife Trust and involves Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Poole Harbour Commissioners, The Erica Trust, Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

www.thegreathath.org
f dorsetwildlife
t @TheGreatHeath





The Trailway follows the old railway line as closely as possible, but in some places the line is inaccessible. Alternative routes have been found; please follow the waymarkers, even when they are leading you away from the old railway line.

- KEY**
- Walkers
 - Cyclists
 - Horse-riders
 - Greenspace
 - National Cycle Network
 - Parking
 - Pub



Moors Valley Country Park



- 1000 acres of managed woodland and country park near Ringwood
- Walking and cycling routes
- Adventure play areas, treetop and play trails
- Cycle and mobility scooter hire
- Restaurant, visitor centre, ice creams
- Picnic areas
- Activities throughout the year

moors-valley.co.uk

Avon Heath Country Park



- 580 acre heathland site near Ringwood
- Large play area & waymarked trails
- Cafe and shop
- Reptile vivarium
- Picnic benches & BBQ hire
- Kids Love Nature Kindergarten
- Programme of events

dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/avonheath

Upton Country Park



- 140 acres of parkland, shoreline and formal gardens near Poole
- Grade II listed Upton House
- Cafe and shop
- Woodland Play Trail
- Walled Garden
- Picnic areas
- Programme of events

uptoncountrypark.com

Upton Country Park to Merley

4 miles, 6.5kms
Leave the country park via the main gate and carefully cross the slip road. Go through the gate opposite following the cattle track under 4 roads. Follow the Roman road north to the railway bridge. Turn right up the slope onto the line and follow it through Broadstone to Merley. Parking available at Upton Country Park.

Merley to Stapehill

2.4 miles, 4kms
Walk north down Poole Road towards Wimborne, right just before the bridge and through large wrought iron gates of Canford School. Follow the footpath under the gothic Lady Wimborne Railway Bridge. Pass under a road bridge, shortly afterwards turn left and cross the River Stour using the suspension bridge. Follow the footpath to your right into Ham Lane, turn right, then left up Fox Lane to Wimborne Road West.

Stapehill to Dolman's Crossing

3.3 miles, 5.3kms
Turn down Wimborne Road West and then turn left up Uddens Drive. Left again onto forestry tracks which will take you over the Ferndown by-pass and eastwards, through Uddens Plantation to Dolman's Crossing. Limited parking available in Ameysford Road.

Dolman's Crossing to West Moors

1mile, 1.6kms
There is a car park in Station Road, off Park Way, West Moors.

West Moors to Ashley Twinning

4.5 miles, 7.2kms
Follow the waymarkers through the small town of West Moors to Arnold Close, where you re-enter the Trailway (open by kind permission of the Ministry of Defence). From West Moors Plantation the route follows the disused railway to Ashley Cottages on the Ringwood Road (B3081). Ashley Twinning car park is on the right under the road bridge.