

Moorland Ramblers Walking Week – Isle of Wight – Sat 12 to Sat 19 May 2012 Andrew Brightwell
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We spent very pleasant week on the IoW in 2011, staying in Carisbrook overlooking the castle where Charles I was imprisoned. The island has a good bus service, one public rail line and one preserved steam line. A ridge of chalk downs runs from the Needles at the west end to Culver Point in the east. To the south it's green sand – unstable Jurassic Coast type cliffs and to the north gently rolling wooded sandstone/clay. Lots of way marked walks. Red squirrels if you are patient.

I'm organising a trip Saturday 12 to Saturday 19 May 2012 based in Newport as it's the centre of the bus network. Make your own accommodation and transport arrangements (nowhere is more than 30-40 minutes away by car). It is sensible to car-share given the ferry costs. The cheapest daytime car ferry is from Southampton (~£70). The nearest to Devon, and nicest trip, is Lymington to Yarmouth (~£100 return, 35 mins); lots of space and little queuing. Alternative is public transport to Portsmouth or Southampton, passenger ferry to Cowes and then bus. Book return crossing on the web; discounts available with *some* accommodation bookings or discount vouchers.

I propose 4 days organised walking, the other days sightseeing, cycling, eating garlic icecream, etc. We'll meet up on the Saturday evening at a pub in Newport – I'll need your contact details – and probably for another meal on the Friday evening. I'm open to suggestions, offers, etc. If you're interested give me a call (01837 52332).

Organised Walks (not finalised yet):

Circular to the west to Newport, through woodland (red squirrels) to north coast, bit of coast path and back. Easy, 8-10 miles. Probably the first walk on Sunday 13th.

Shanklin to Ryde (or Newport) – bus/car to Ryde, Metropolitan line underground train to Shanklin, walk along under cliff to Sandown (coffee) then footpaths to Ryde (or Newport) 10 miles (or 12 to Newport), mostly easy. The Shanklin to Newport variant follows the Yar and Medina Rivers partway. Very rural for central part of walk.

Tennyson Way – bus to Alum Bay (now a tourist repellent), walk back via Needles, chalk cliffs and ridge with good views over the SW of the island, then woodland track and old road to Carisbrook – 14 miles easy walking with a couple of climbs. Pub at end, then road walk/bus for another 2 miles to Newport.

Circular round Culver Down (steep climb), Whitecliff Bay, Bembridge and (East) Yar River, 6-10 miles. Possible option of visiting Brading Roman Villa – nice mosaics.

Other suggested walks:

Short circular on south-west coast walking on the beach (tide needs to be out) as lots of fossils in the cliff. Walking back along top of cliff. Van selling tea and ice cream, toilets – unless the cliff has fallen again.

Circular walk coastal cliff path from Yarmouth to Freshwater (coffee and cake), then back along old rail line by (West) Yar River. Possible on last day if you have a late crossing as you park near Yarmouth ferry.

Other places to visit:

Carisbrook Castle – donkey operated 400 year old well, Civil War memorabilia, Chapel, ruins of where King Charles was held, garden and small museum – English Heritage, good, needs 1/2 day. Easy walk from Newport.

Newport Roman Villa – small late Roman, down market farm house in the middle of a 1920s council estate. But has a well preserved Roman baths in the UK. Combine with walk to Carisbrook Castle. Signposted.

Osborne House – Queen Victoria's Italianate summer house (haven't been there).

Glassworks near Ventnor. Several tatty glassworks on the island but this is in a different league (and price). 1/2 mile down track from main road. Could walk back, with very steep climb in Ventnor, to Newport, ~10 miles.

Bike hire and cycle to Cowes (2*6 miles) or Sandown (2*11 miles) on old rail lines.

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