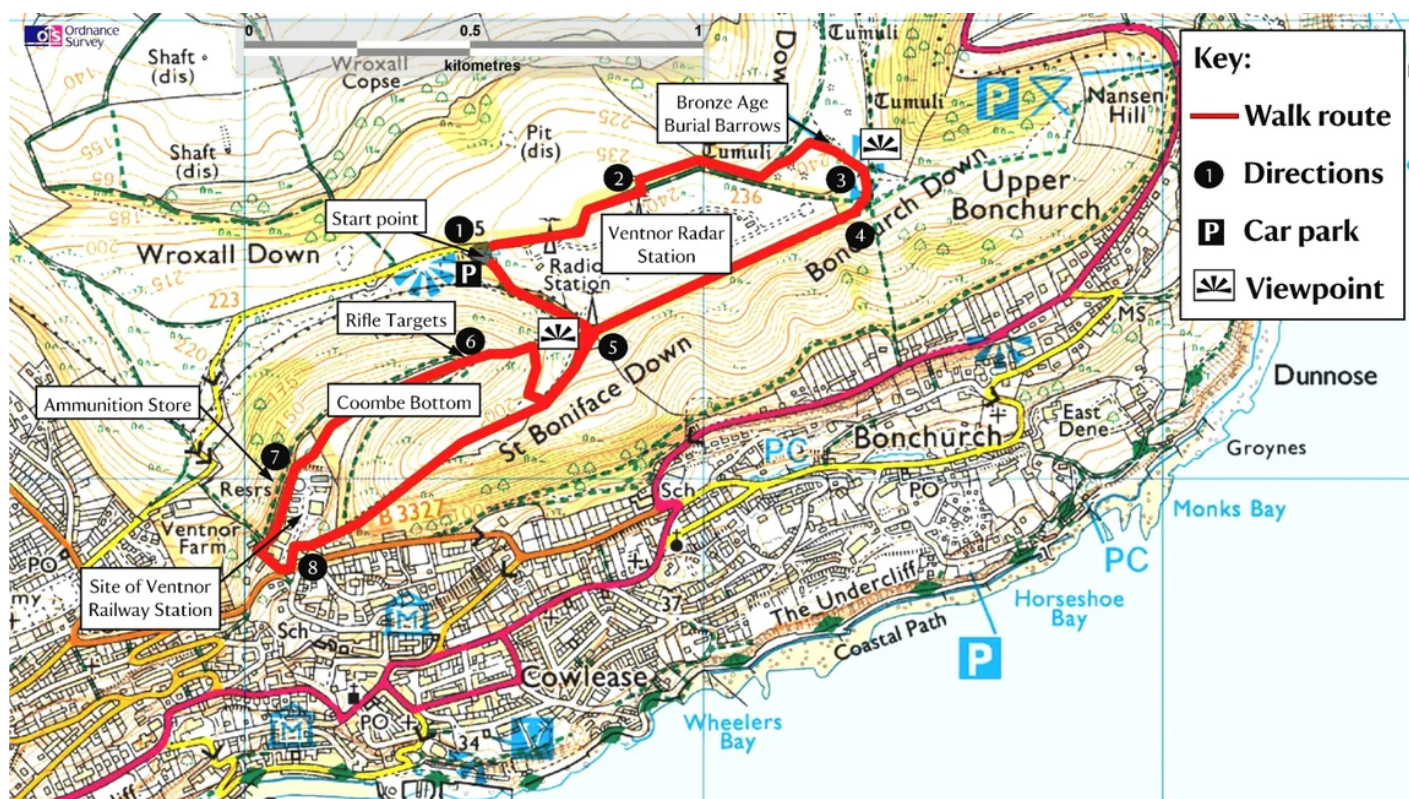


ISLE OF WIGHT

Ventnor Downs prehistory and wartime walk

This short but challenging walk on the south side of the Isle of Wight takes in a Bronze Age burial site and reminders of the island's wartime history.



Information

Address: Ventnor Down National Trust car park, off Down Lane, Ventnor, Isle of Wight.

OS map: Landranger 196, Explorer OL29

Activity: Walking

Challenging: Hilly, grassy terrain. For further details, see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs are welcome but please keep them on a lead around wildlife and livestock, and take any dog waste home with you.

Full trail: Miles: 2.6 (km: 4.16)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 1 hour 30 mins - 2 hours

Terrain

This short but hilly route is mostly on grassy paths, including one of the steepest paths on the Island. It can be slippery in wet weather. Total ascent is 185m (600ft).

Total steps: 8

Start point: Ventnor Downs car park, grid ref: SZ565784

1. In the car park, look out for the plaque commemorating the Channel Airways Dakota plane that crashed here in fog in 1962. To start your walk, turn right out of the car park and follow the road to the entrance gates for the National Air Traffic Services (NATS).
2. Continue along the road by the NATS fence for 10yds (10m), then turn off close to a water trough on the left. Turn right to follow the grassy path parallel to the road. When the path divides, take the left fork. After 65yds (60m) take the faint path through the bracken on the right. It goes past a solitary tree and crosses a track before passing through gorse-covered Bronze Age burial mounds. Continue on this path as it bears right to reach an area of open land. You are now at the highest point on the Isle of Wight with public access.
3. Walk straight across the open land towards a signpost 90yds (85m) away. After a further 80yds (75m), turn 90° right to reach a kissing gate by the corner of the NATS fence. Go through the gate.
4. Follow the path immediately to the left of the NATS fence until you reach a tall mast and another kissing gate. Go through the gate.
5. From here, head 40yds (40m) downhill and through another kissing gate where there's a viewpoint bench. Carry on downhill for about 190yds (175m), following the track to the right that zigzags down to the base of Coombe Bottom.
6. Continue along the coombe, keeping to the right. About 110yds (100m) before you reach the trees at the far end, the path divides. Take the right fork and shortly afterwards the left, staying close to a wire fence on the left.
7. Continue along the path by the wire fence and go through the kissing gate and down the steps to the road. Go through another gate and turn left and left again into the industrial estate.

8. About 30yds (27m) along on the left is the Coastguard Rescue Station. With your back to it, you'll see the Terminus Hotel on the corner to the right. Just behind the hotel, there's a steep flight of stone steps on path V1. Take the steps up to a kissing gate at the base of the hill, then continue up the steep slope of St Boniface Down, and eventually through another kissing gate, until you reach the mast. Turn left and follow the path to the immediate left of the wire fence, taking you back to the car park by the Dakota plaque.

End point: Ventnor Downs car park, grid ref: SZ565784
