
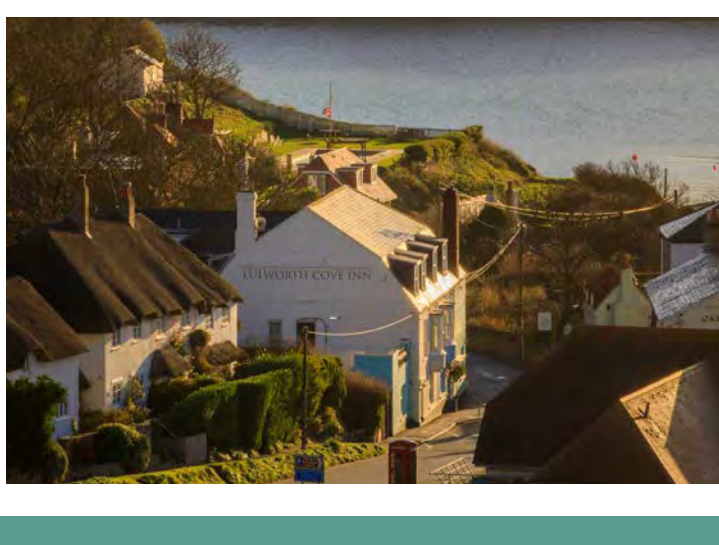


# HALL&WOODHOUSE

## Lulworth Cove Inn to Smugglers Inn bike ride

Part of the Woodhouse Walks & Badger Trails Series.  
Walks & Trails produced with thanks by 'Tess of the Vale'  tessofthevale.com



### Key Facts

**Distance:** 9.5 miles/15km.

**Time:** 3 hours.

**Total climb:** 950ft.

**Max height:** 540 ft.

**Min height:** 0 ft.

**Terrain:** Track, path, road and field.

**Exertion:** Medium. Some steep but short climbs.

**Map:** OL15 Purbeck and South Dorset.

**Start:** The Lulworth Cove Inn (Postcode: BH20 5RQ, Grid Ref: SY822800, What Three Words: hops.grunt.bulky).

**How to get there:** From Dorchester, head South West on the A352, signposted for Wareham. At the Warmwell roundabout, take the second exit onto a dual carriageway. After just under 4 miles, at the junction marked by the Red Lion pub, turn right cutting through the small village of Winfrith Newburgh. At the church, follow the road around to the left and along the dry valley. Pass Daggers Gate and the turning to Durdle Door to head down the hill into West Lulworth. Follow the road around to the right to find the car park on the right and the Lulworth Cove Inn straight ahead.

**Dogs:** Dogs are permitted accordance with the Countryside Code and any notices on route.












**Refreshments:** You always need a drink and a bite to eat at the start and end of an epic bike ride! Starting at the Lulworth Cove Inn and finishing at the Smugglers Inn, you'll find a range of light bites and main meals available. Or if it's just a quick pic-stop, come and enjoy a pint or even a coffee and cake with us instead.



### Lulworth Cove to The Smugglers Inn

1 Mile



Key					
	Main Road		Water		Tracks
	Country Lane		Buildings		Earthworks & cliff tops
	Woodland		The Route		Start Point
	The Smugglers Inn & Lulworth Cove Inn				The Coast

### The Ride

#### Lulworth Cove Inn to Smugglers Inn Bike ride

From the Lulworth Cove Inn cycle the chalk hills and absorb the sights along the Jurassic coastline to the Smugglers Inn. Climb out the valley to Daggers Gate, with its own little legend, to begin the rural route along paths of the original Customs Officials while they patrolled the cliff tops for smugglers. Pass Durdle Door, Bats Head and the slopes of Scratchy Bottom as the wide views stretch from St Aldhelm's Head in the East to the Isle of Portland in the West. Skim the small settlement of Ringstead to descend and rise again to Coombe Bottom with views of the White Horse. Cut through the small village of Osmington before following the narrow river valley to the coast and the Smugglers Inn.

#### The Lulworth Cove



From the geologically unique cove, make your way back along the village road and turn left when it splits. Bindon Hill rises to the east, topped with earthworks of an ancient settlement, while on the opposite side, Hambury Tout towers with a lonely Bronze Age burial mound marking its peak. Pass the church of Holy Trinity, designed with help from the poet Thomas Hardy, as he trained as an architect in his younger years. It was built to replace a medieval version that was no longer suitable for use come the Victorian times. However, remains of the graveyard still exist, deeper in the village.

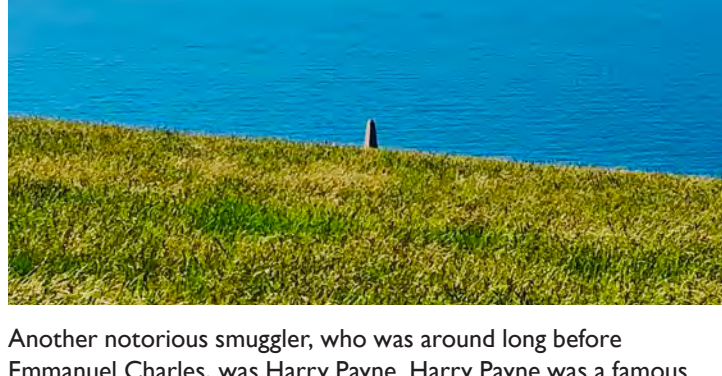
Begin the climb up the hill, passing the entrance to Durdle Door on your left to then reach Daggers Gate. This ancient crossroads is believed to mark a witch's grave. Her ghost is said to haunt the area and appears in the form of a hare. After her death, her own daughter, back in 1789, returned to this exact spot, not to wish her mother well, but instead to brutally murder Sam Varnell, a local farmer, stabbing him to death. It was this tragedy that gave the crossroads its name.

Turn left onto the track, passing the farm buildings on your right. At the peak, the views stretch for miles, looking along the UNESCO World Heritage Site, part of the world famous Jurassic Coast, towards the Isle of Portland and Weymouth. Behind you the coast continues to the east to be met by the limestone peninsula of St Aldhelm's Head. Head down the slope to skim past Scratchy Bottom and the Portland stone and chalk rock formations of Durdle Door and Bats Head below. Scratchy Bottom was used as a location in the 1967 Thomas Hardy film 'Far From The Madding Crowd', where, in the opening scene, Gabriel Oak's sheep are driven off the cliff to their death by his own sheep dog, which he then shot.

#### Bindon Hill



#### The tip of the southern beacon



#### Daggers Gate

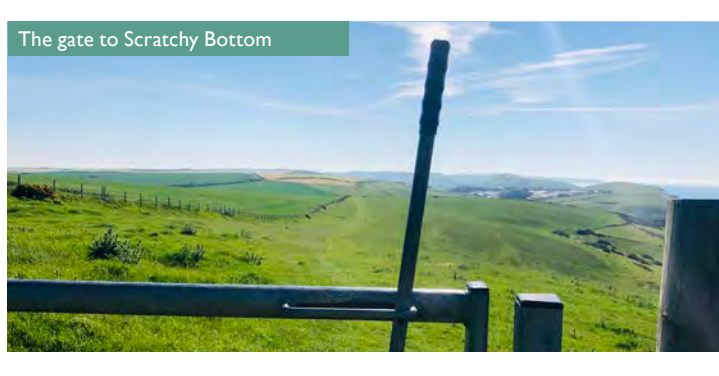


Make your way back up the slopes to meet a gate at a telegraph pole. Continue to follow the route running along the top boundary of the fields while the cliffs peak and trough down on your left. Cut between two large pyramidal shipping beacons, the tip of one only visible as the cliff drops to the sea, the other higher up the slopes and in the company of more Bronze Age barrows.

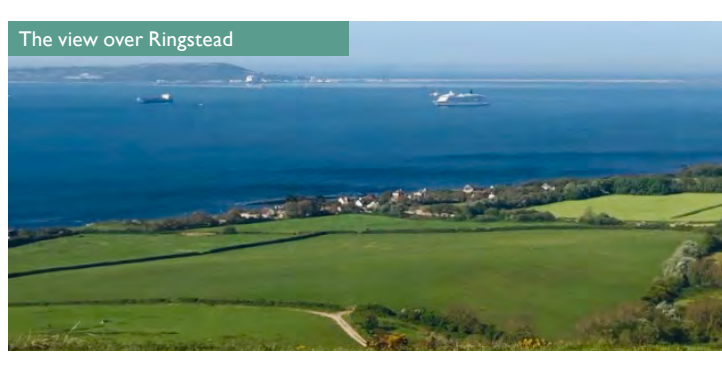
This old route, known as Daggers Gate Road was once much more utilised than it is today. Now, less popular than the coastal path, users are few and far between. However, it would have originally not only been the main medieval road between the coastal settlements, but also the patrolling paths of 18th century customs officers.

One of the most infamous of smugglers was Emmanuel Charles, who had complete control over the coastline from Portland to Swanage during the 18th to 19th centuries. He was the landlord of The Crown (now known as The Smugglers), later to be run by Richard Champ, another of the gang. The Customs Boards at Poole struggled to halt the illegal activity and were desperate to catch the elusive mob, but Charles was often helped in his exploits by gentry, vicars, commoners and even the odd customs official. One day some determined officers managed to track him down to the Smugglers Inn, armed with fresh evidence of his adventures. He managed to outsmart them by hiding in the chimney as a fight developed outside. He survived, but sadly his daughter was shot on the steps.

#### The gate to Scratchy Bottom



#### The view over Ringstead



#### Poxwell Manor



#### Osmington White Horse



(Melcombe Regis to be precise). The village's important trading links with the local and bustling, international fishing port meant that there would have been no escape for the residents. Today the majority of the village consists of earthworks, strip lynchets and scattered

remains hidden down ancient tracks in the woodland. The old church has been converted into Glebe Cottage and the present buildings have more of a modern coastal retreat feel rather than medieval fishing village. Nevertheless, the peaceful location is one of the forgotten beaches along the Jurassic coastline meaning it's a perfect place to escape the crowds who are attracted to more popular spots.

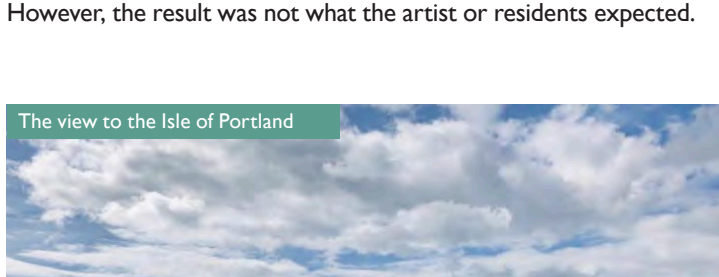
Despite its beauty there is danger too. Hidden under the water lie a number of shipwrecks. The King of Prussia (1753), Sally (1777) and Suky (1772) are some of the earliest recorded. At low tide the iron shell of The Minx rises above the water. In November of 1927, filled with coal, The Minx broke free from its anchor in Portland Harbour and, under control of the tides, was washed up on the Kimmeridge Ledges. The villagers were very warm that Christmas.

Follow the road along South Down, passing another collection of ancient burial mounds. Head down the hill and then up a short sharp climb to meet the A353. Turn right and, after about 200m and as the road bends, turn left through a gate to start another climb up the hill. The ground is not only steep but bumpy too, so take your time to then arrive at a crossroads of tracks at Pixon Barn.

To your right are the small village of Poxwell and its early 1600's Manor house. Poxwell Manor was another property that was touched by Thomas Hardy, but this time in a literary sense as he immortalised it as Oxwell Hall in his novel 'The Trumpet Major' (1880).

Turn left and through a gate, passing the Manor house. Continue to climb and slowly the views reappear. Your Isle of Portland reaching out into the English Channel, connected by the famous Chesell Beach that continues to run along the coastline westwards. Across the bay sits the Georgian façade of Weymouth. The town was made fashionable by King George who encouraged bathing in the sea as a means to wellbeing. Inland, the White Horse appears on the slopes, carved into the chalk in 1808 to honour the visiting King. However, the result was not what the artist or residents expected.

#### The view to the Isle of Portland



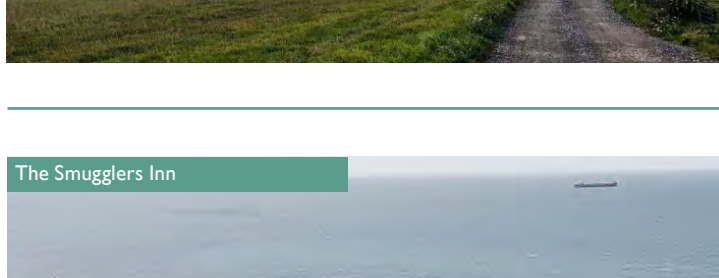
#### Lulworth Cove



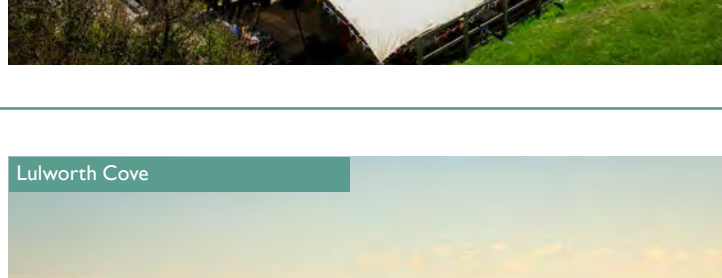
#### The Smugglers Inn



#### The Smugglers Inn



#### Lulworth Cove



By providing cycling routes, we are not guaranteeing usability or safety for any particular cyclist and you must be responsible for your own safety. Whilst care has been taken to include routes that are on rights of way, or paths or access areas where permission exists, inclusion of a route is no evidence of a current right of way or permissive access. There are inherent risks in any outdoor activity, and cyclists should take into consideration conditions on the day as well as their own fitness and experience levels to ensure they enjoy these routes safely.

### HALL&WOODHOUSE

The Lulworth Cove Inn

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 01929 400333

 [hall-woodhouse.co.uk/woodhouse\\_walks](http://hall-woodhouse.co.uk/woodhouse_walks)