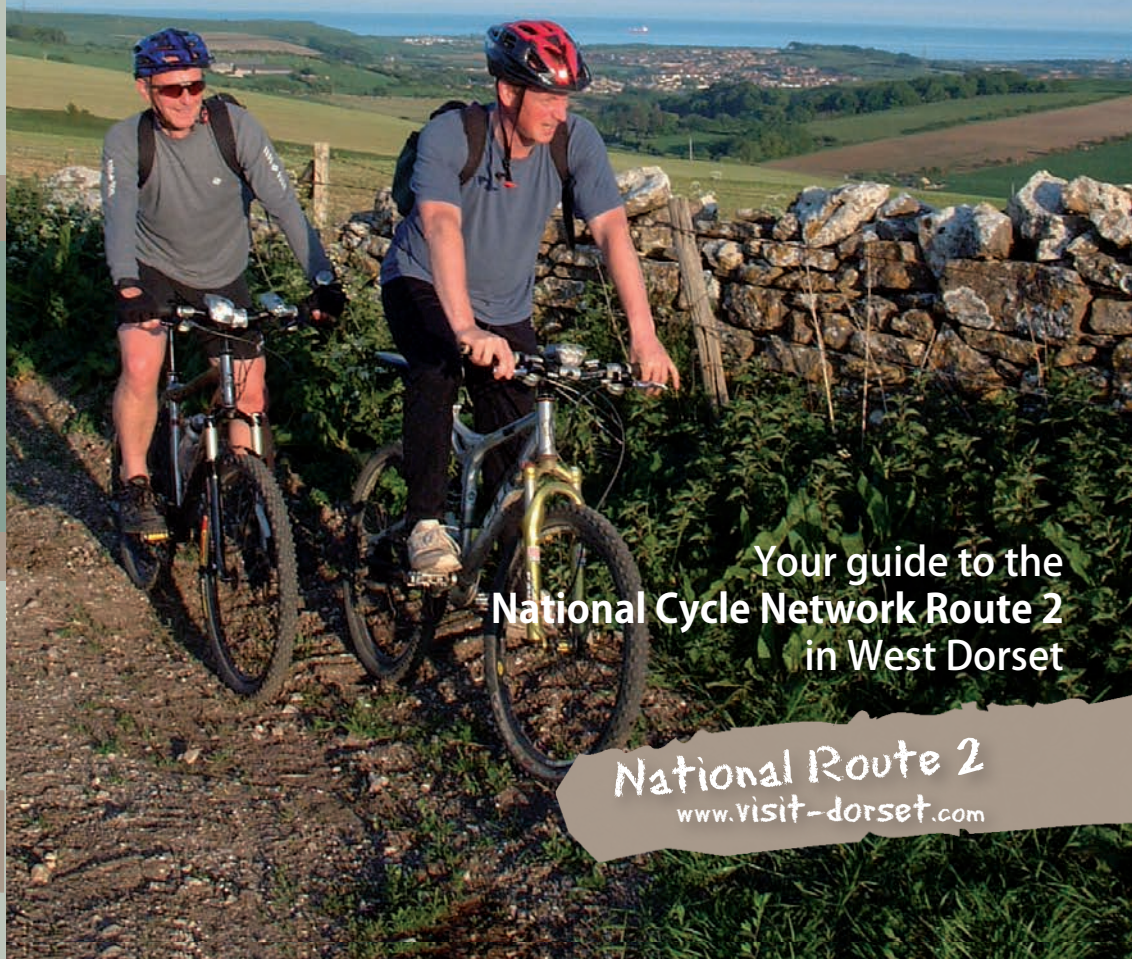




Your guide to

Cycling in DORSET WEST

30 Mile Route from Lyme Regis to Dorchester



Sustrans is the charity making it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle. Simply taking a walk or bike ride to get where you need to go is a great way to keep healthy in body and mind, save money and make new friends. For tips on how to get started and find safe local routes near you visit www.sustrans.org.uk. The National Cycle Network is a UK-wide network of signed paths and routes to help you explore the outdoors, just follow the blue signs and red route numbers to start your adventure.



TOURIST INFORMATION POINTS



DORCHESTER: Shire Hall Museum, High West Street, Dorset. DT1 1UY

BRIDPORT: Town Hall, Bucky Doo Square, South Street, Dorset. DT6 3LF
t: 01308 424901 email: bridport.tic@bridport-tc.gov.uk

WEYMOUTH: Information Shop, 98 St. Mary Street, Dorset. DT4 8NY
email: info@weymouthinformationshop.co.uk

PORTLAND: Portland Visitor Information Centre, Crabbers' Wharf, Castletown, Portland. DT5 1BD

WHERE TO GO | HOW TO GET THERE | WHERE TO STAY | OPEN ALL YEAR



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For more details mailto:tourism@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

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www.visit-dorset.com

Your guide to the
National Cycle Network Route 2
in West Dorset

National Route 2
www.visit-dorset.com

be free

to explore West Dorset at your own pace



With 400 square miles of countryside almost entirely designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, West Dorset is a great place to explore on two wheels. Here you'll find sleepy villages, bustling market towns, serene river valleys and green rolling hills. Our world famous Jurassic Coast is not far away and offers dramatic cliff-top views.

National Cycle Network Route 2 is a long-distance route that runs along the South Coast of England between St Austell and Dover. You can use this leaflet to follow the route in West Dorset between Lyme Regis and Dorchester.

The entire route covers approximately 30 miles and is manageable in a day, but you can do as much or as little as you please. The route includes the fascinating towns of **Lyme Regis, Bridport and Dorchester** and many pretty villages along the way.

If you are looking for somewhere to stay overnight, visit www.visit-dorset.com. Featuring an impressive range of high quality accommodation throughout West Dorset, our website allows you to search availability and book online. Alternatively, contact them for a copy of the West Dorset Visitor Guide, or visit our website www.visit-dorset.com. Both feature an impressive range of high quality accommodation throughout West Dorset.



Remember to look out for the cycle friendly logo. This indicates accommodation with special facilities like a room to dry wet clothes and a secure place to store your bike.

Details of places to eat out, free town centre maps, events, attractions and other cycle routes in West Dorset are also available on our website or from our Tourist Information Points (see back cover).

Although most of National Route 2 is signed, you should use Ordnance Survey Landranger maps 193 & 194 or Explorer 116 and OL15 alongside this leaflet.

To report missing signs or for queries/comments on the route, please email activetravel@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or contact the Sustainable Transport Team on 01305 224552.

Travelling by train:

South Western Railway
London (Waterloo) to Weymouth services call at Dorchester South Station. London (Waterloo) to Exeter services call at Axminster (for Lyme Regis).

First Great Western
Bristol to Weymouth services call at Dorchester West Station.

For all rail enquires call 03457 484950 or visit www.nationalrail.co.uk

Safe cycling advice:

Remember to be visible, wear a helmet and bright clothing and carry a waterproof. Take refreshments, OS maps and a cycle repair kit. Always follow the Highway Code and remember country lanes can be narrow and busy with farm and local traffic at times so please be extra vigilant.



Tour De Manche

Explore further and discover the beautiful scenery of France and South West England on the cross-channel Tour de Manche route. More information at www.tourdemanche.com



Cycle Repair Centres: Dorchester

Halfords
Unit 3, Weymouth Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2RY
T / 01305 251732
www.halfords.com



Cycle Hire and Repair Centres: Bridport

Bridport Cycles (hire and repairs)
Manor Yard, Symondsburry, Bridport, DT6 6HG
T / 01308 808595
bridportcycles@gmail.com

Ride Bridport Ltd
40 East Street, Bridport, DT6 3LJ
T / 01308 421264



Your Guide to National Route 2 in West Dorset

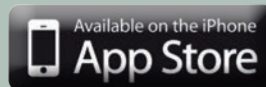


This map shows National Cycle Network Route 2 between Lyme Regis and Dorchester and its detours. You can choose to do the entire route in either direction, select a part of the route nearest to your holiday accommodation, or simply use this map as a guide to explore West Dorset for yourself. The map has been split into four sections and described in more detail below. The roads can be busy with traffic so please take care and always follow the Highway Code. For a guide to attractions in the area check out www.visit-dorset.com

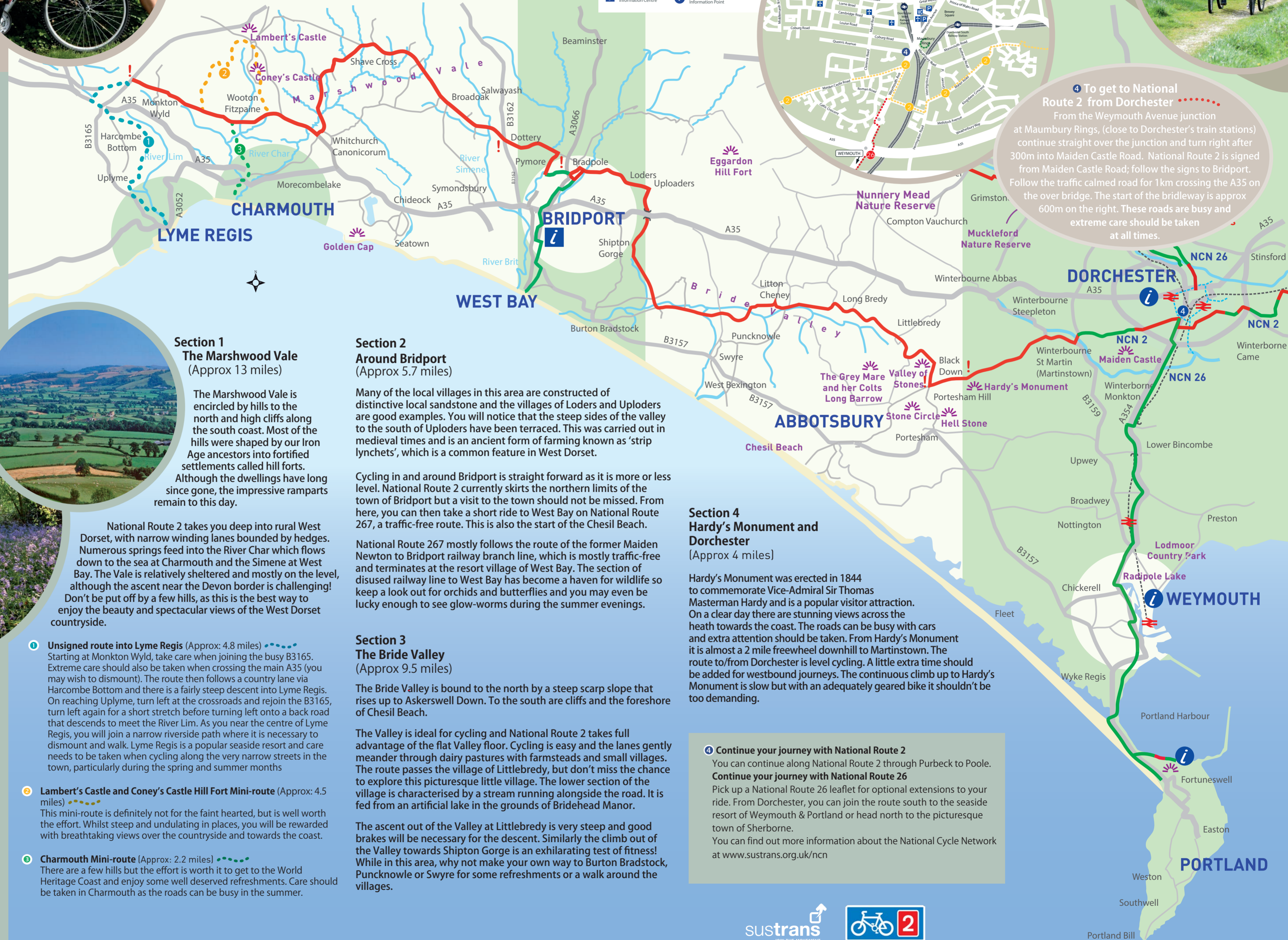
Note: mileages are included only as a guide.



Download your FREE Discover Dorchester App - your 'Guidebook on the Go' Our free app is crammed with details on places to stay, where to eat, shopping, attractions, activities and events. Visit discoverdorchester.co.uk to find out more.



To discover more about Lyme Regis, visit: visit-dorset.com/lyme-regis



Key to Map

- National Cycle Network on-road route
- National Cycle Network traffic-free route (including some forest tracks and paths alongside busy roads)
- Train Track
- River
- Roads leading off-route
- Extra care needed
- Non-NCN shared used path
- Tourist Information Centre
- Tourist Information Point

4 To get to National Route 2 from Dorchester
From the Weymouth Avenue junction at Maumbury Rings, (close to Dorchester's train stations) continue straight over the junction and turn right after 300m into Maiden Castle Road. National Route 2 is signed from Maiden Castle Road; follow the signs to Bridport. Follow the traffic calmed road for 1km crossing the A35 on the over bridge. The start of the brideway is approx 600m on the right. These roads are busy and extreme care should be taken at all times.

Section 1 The Marshwood Vale (Approx 13 miles)

The Marshwood Vale is encircled by hills to the north and high cliffs along the south coast. Most of the hills were shaped by our Iron Age ancestors into fortified settlements called hill forts. Although the dwellings have long since gone, the impressive ramparts remain to this day.

National Route 2 takes you deep into rural West Dorset, with narrow winding lanes bounded by hedges. Numerous springs feed into the River Char which flows down to the sea at Charmouth and the Simene at West Bay. The Vale is relatively sheltered and mostly on the level, although the ascent near the Devon border is challenging! Don't be put off by a few hills, as this is the best way to enjoy the beauty and spectacular views of the West Dorset countryside.

1 Unsigned route into Lyme Regis (Approx: 4.8 miles)
Starting at Monkton Wyld, take care when joining the busy B3165. Extreme care should also be taken when crossing the main A35 (you may wish to dismount). The route then follows a country lane via Harcombe Bottom and there is a fairly steep descent into Lyme Regis. On reaching Uplyme, turn left at the crossroads and rejoin the B3165, turn left again for a short stretch before turning left onto a back road that descends to meet the River Lim. As you near the centre of Lyme Regis, you will join a narrow riverside path where it is necessary to dismount and walk. Lyme Regis is a popular seaside resort and care needs to be taken when cycling along the very narrow streets in the town, particularly during the spring and summer months

2 Lambert's Castle and Coney's Castle Hill Fort Mini-route (Approx: 4.5 miles)
This mini-route is definitely not for the faint hearted, but is well worth the effort. Whilst steep and undulating in places, you will be rewarded with breathtaking views over the countryside and towards the coast.

3 Charmouth Mini-route (Approx: 2.2 miles)
There are a few hills but the effort is worth it to get to the World Heritage Coast and enjoy some well deserved refreshments. Care should be taken in Charmouth as the roads can be busy in the summer.

Section 2 Around Bridport (Approx 5.7 miles)

Many of the local villages in this area are constructed of distinctive local sandstone and the villages of Lodgers and Uploders are good examples. You will notice that the steep sides of the valley to the south of Uploders have been terraced. This was carried out in medieval times and is an ancient form of farming known as 'strip lynchets', which is a common feature in West Dorset.

Cycling in and around Bridport is straight forward as it is more or less level. National Route 2 currently skirts the northern limits of the town of Bridport but a visit to the town should not be missed. From here, you can then take a short ride to West Bay on National Route 267, a traffic-free route. This is also the start of the Chesil Beach.

National Route 267 mostly follows the route of the former Maiden Newton to Bridport railway branch line, which is mostly traffic-free and terminates at the resort village of West Bay. The section of disused railway line to West Bay has become a haven for wildlife so keep a look out for orchids and butterflies and you may even be lucky enough to see glow-worms during the summer evenings.

Section 3 The Bride Valley (Approx 9.5 miles)

The Bride Valley is bound to the north by a steep scarp slope that rises up to Askerswell Down. To the south are cliffs and the foreshore of Chesil Beach.

The Valley is ideal for cycling and National Route 2 takes full advantage of the flat Valley floor. Cycling is easy and the lanes gently meander through dairy pastures with farmsteads and small villages. The route passes the village of Littlebredy, but don't miss the chance to explore this picturesque little village. The lower section of the village is characterised by a stream running alongside the road. It is fed from an artificial lake in the grounds of Bridehead Manor.

The ascent out of the Valley at Littlebredy is very steep and good brakes will be necessary for the descent. Similarly the climb out of the Valley towards Shipton Gorge is an exhilarating test of fitness! While in this area, why not make your own way to Burton Bradstock, Puncknowle or Swyre for some refreshments or a walk around the villages.

Section 4 Hardy's Monument and Dorchester (Approx 4 miles)

Hardy's Monument was erected in 1844 to commemorate Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy and is a popular visitor attraction. On a clear day there are stunning views across the heath towards the coast. The roads can be busy with cars and extra attention should be taken. From Hardy's Monument it is almost a 2 mile freewheel downhill to Martinstown. The route to/from Dorchester is level cycling. A little extra time should be added for westbound journeys. The continuous climb up to Hardy's Monument is slow but with an adequately geared bike it shouldn't be too demanding.

4 Continue your journey with National Route 2
You can continue along National Route 2 through Purbeck to Poole.
Continue your journey with National Route 26
Pick up a National Route 26 leaflet for optional extensions to your ride. From Dorchester, you can join the route south to the seaside resort of Weymouth & Portland or head north to the picturesque town of Sherborne.
You can find out more information about the National Cycle Network at www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn

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PORTLAND

So much to discover along the way...

En route through West Dorset's towns & villages...

Lyme Regis

Lyme Regis is an ancient town with a long and varied history dating back to the 8th Century. The town is made up of a narrow tangle of streets, which tumble down to its 13th Century Cobb Harbour. It boasts excellent independent shopping, including art galleries, fossil shops and gift stores.

Lyme Regis is a fantastic place to stop for lunch. All the restaurants and cafes have access to fresh locally caught fish and shellfish straight off the fishing boats, which operate from the harbour. The town also offers fun for all the family with its sheltered beaches, bustling harbour and many attractions. You can join a fossil hunting walk or, why not simply enjoy an ice-cream while admiring the view of Golden Cap. At 626ft it's the highest point on the south coast.



Marshwood Vale

This particular area of the cycle route can be quite steep at times, and here you will find many narrow roads so please take care. The views however are stunning across the lush green countryside, real Dorset! If you need refreshments there are pubs at Shave Cross and Whitchurch Canonicorum.

Lambert's Castle and Coney's Castle Hill Forts

These two Iron Age hill forts show evidence of ancient human occupation. They command strategic positions over the Marshwood Vale and offer breathtaking views over the countryside and towards the coast. Lambert's Castle is so vast that it was used as a racecourse during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Charmouth

(Pub, Shop & Post Office)

Charmouth is world famous fossil hunting territory and also a great spot for rock pool rambles. Find out more at the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre where you can hire a hammer to help you hunt for your own fossil or join a guided fossil hunting walk, the best and safest way to get started.

Bridport

Bridport is a friendly and vibrant market town which has its own thriving artistic and literary community. The town is just over one mile inland from the busy harbour at West Bay and is well placed as a Gateway Town for the Jurassic Coast. Bridport offers plenty to see and do as well as a fascinating history to discover. You can find out more about the town, once renowned as the centre of the country's rope and net-making industry, at the Bridport Museum.

The town is dominated by a Georgian town hall and broad streets where the regular Wednesday and Saturday markets, as well as the thriving Farmers' markets, are held. Bridport is recognised as a Beacon Town for the quality and variety of its locally produced food and is the ideal place to browse, shop and stop for a bite to eat.

The town hosts a wide range of colourful events throughout the year. Find out more at the Tourist Information Centre.

When cycling into Bridport, you will notice that it is mostly unsigned and includes some town centre roads, which can be busy in the summer and on market days.

West Bay

(Pubs, cafés & Shops)

West Bay is recognisable as being the setting for ITV's detective drama 'Broadchurch' and the 1990s TV series, 'Harbour Lights'.

Once known as Bridport Harbour, this resort village has a busy waterfront with bright kiosks, fishing and pleasure boats. The mostly traffic-free route from Bridport is a very pleasant, gently sloping ride to the sea. West Bay is the perfect spot for coast and countryside walks, fishing / angling trips, scuba diving, paragliding, golfing, river boating and so much more. It's also the perfect place to take a stroll and enjoy a pub lunch or a fresh seafood supper whilst overlooking the sea and admiring the fantastic views.

The Bride Valley – From Bridport to Hardy's Monument

There are many places of interest in this area known as The Bride Valley. It is ideal for cycling and National Cycle Network Route 2 takes full advantage of the flat Valley floor.



Hardy's Monument

The Hardy Monument is a 72-foot high monument erected by public subscription in 1844 in memory of Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, a commander at the Battle of Trafalgar. The monument is situated on a high chalk hill overlooking the English Channel. On a clear day, enjoy the stunning views across the heath towards the coast.



Dorchester

Dorchester is a bustling market town with a vibrant cultural life, bursting with lots to see and do, and once home to the famous literary genius Thomas Hardy. The town has so much to offer in relaxation, entertainment and rural charm.

You can find out more from the Tourist Information Point inside Shire Hall Museum and pick up leaflets and trails to help you explore the town and its attractions and details of guided walks in the town and countryside. If you want to explore the heart of Thomas Hardy Country, then visit Hardy's Cottage, the birthplace of the famous author. Or pay a visit to Max Gate, his later home of his own design (both are National Trust properties).

Dorchester makes a great place to stop for lunch with so much choice in the town. If you prefer, you could take a short stroll to one of the towns many green spaces with a picnic. The Borough Gardens and Salisbury Fields are only a short distance away from the shops. Both offer play parks and plenty of space for the children.



If you would like to further explore the towns of Bridport and Dorchester by bike, town area cycle maps for these towns can be browsed online at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/cycling



Maiden Castle, a vast hill fort on the outskirts of Dorchester, the largest in Europe.