

Poole Harbour Trails - Future Work and enhancements

Our group was formed both to waymark existing trails, and to seek enhancements to the routes. This page summarises current progress.

Cordite Way

a) Right of Way

Our main ambition between Wareham and Hamworthy is for a preferred scenic, shared path, avoiding the busy A351, and utilising the route of the Cordite Military Railway.

The Admiralty built a military railway line from what is now the Holton Heath Industrial Estate to transport Cordite, a propellant used in munitions from their Cordite Factory to Rockley Jetty. This ran alongside and then crossed the mainline, ending with a pier to transfer the Cordite by ship to Gosport. It has been well used by the public since the rails were taken up, but was not designated as a public right of way. When an extension to the Industrial Park was built, and the way blocked off, we collected evidence of people walking and cycling the route over many years. Initially Dorset Council rejected our claim, but this was appealed successfully. The link is now confirmed as a Public Footpath, the Council did not uphold the level of cycling as adequate, although the landowner has been supportive of both uses.

However, just before confirmation of the right of way, Network Rail demolished the bridge over the mainline, and its supporting pillars. Whilst in need of some attention, the bridge was very solid, being constructed to convey industrial trains, so is very disappointing to lose.

A group – Friends of Cordite Way - has been formed with the intent of working to clear the route, which with the closure and Covid period, has been little trodden. This will be done with the help of the Dorset Council Countryside Rangers.

b) To make a strategic link for a shared walking and cycling bridge across the mouth of Lytchett Bay entrance.

This would extend the Cordite Way to cross to Hamworthy, and would provide the shortest cycling and walking trail from Wareham Station to Rockley, Hamworthy Station and Poole.

Given the removal of the over-bridge, we are keen to explore options on whether we can cross to the north or south of the Railway Viaduct. Both have challenges, but there is an existing walking and cycling link before Hamworthy station that would connect with either option.

A35 Bakers Arms to Organford

This short section of very busy and fast major road has no pavement, or cycle space. There is a wide verge, with a narrow dirt path worn into it. This does not seem to currently feature high on Dorset Council's priorities, but improvements would unlock both the PHT walking and cycling links, and also general access to Wareham Forest from the conurbation by bike.

Sandbanks Ferry Road to Studland

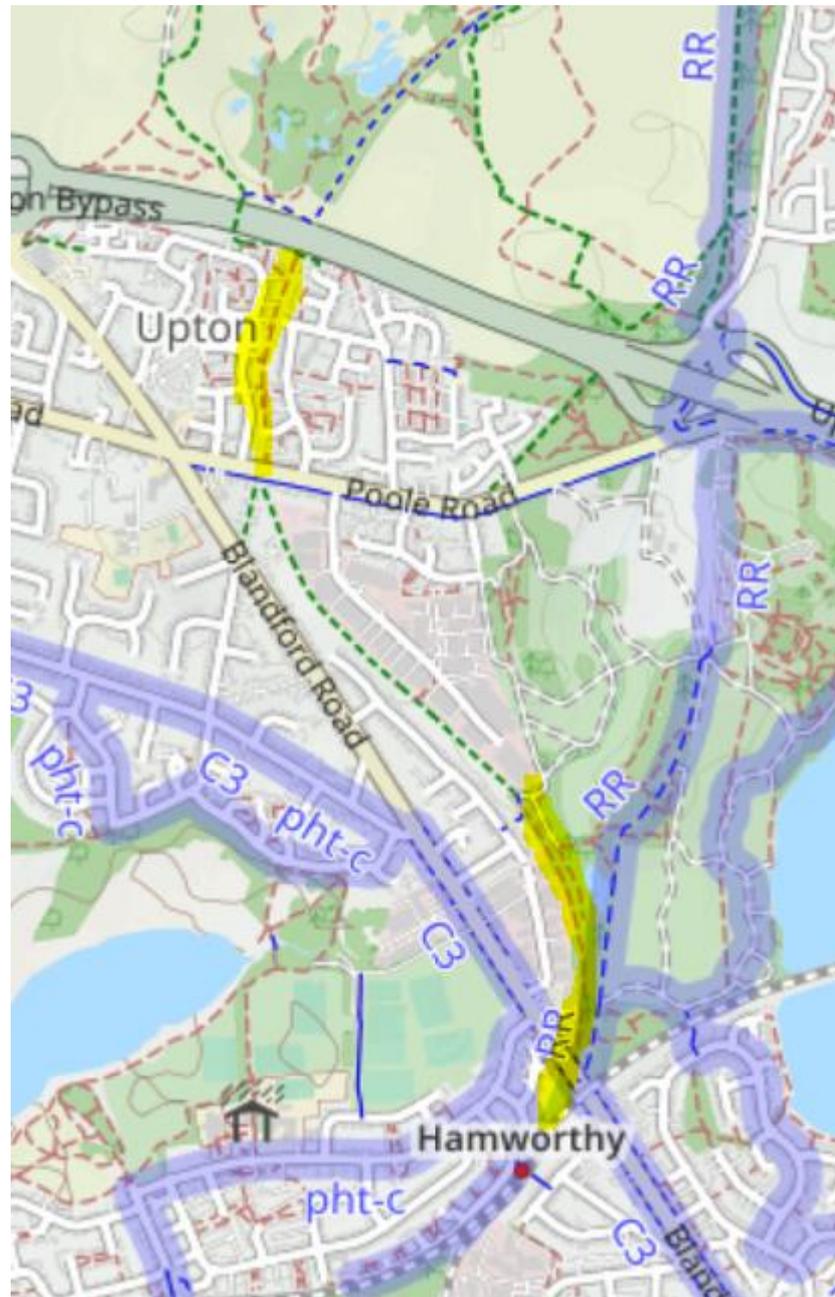
The National Trust, Dorset Council and other partners are seeking to improve the walking and cycling links onto the Studland peninsula from the Sandbanks Ferry. We welcome these aims, and would support enhancements to safety and desirability of these links. There are

paths running alongside and close to the road, but they are very sandy and not currently well connected or waymarked.

Hamworthy Station to Upton Heath

Before the mainline was built to serve Poole, trains went from Brockenhurst via Ringwood, Wimborne and Hamworthy Junction, on towards Dorchester. This was known as the Castleman line, named after a Wimborne Solicitor who was influential in achieving the route. For much of its route, it is now a walking and cycling route.

There is an unused viaduct, and a well used, but partly unofficial trail from Hamworthy up to the Upton Bypass on the line of the railway. We seek to establish this as a link for sustainable travel, which would serve to link the communities of Upton, Corfe Mullen and Broadstone with Hamworthy Station.



Other routes

We are keen to support and contribute to the development of other links around the harbour, however, we are a small community group, with limited funds. We have achieved waymarking for walking routes, and also have the main PHT walking route added to the Ordnance Survey maps. It is likely that our input to further links will be to support the work of others.

We welcome anyone interested to help with these ambitions to get in touch.

<http://www.pooleharbourtrails.org.uk/>

Andy Hadley, Chair, PHT 2023