

Wimborne Greenspace Trail



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Welcome to the Wimborne Greenspace Trail!

The idea of the trail is to celebrate the areas of publicly accessible greenspace within the town of Wimborne Minster, which provide wonderful areas for recreation and a valuable home for wildlife. Hopefully the trail will provide you with some ideas of places to visit and enjoy. Some of these areas may be new to you, as Wimborne has recently expanded in size owing to the creation of new housing developments. Many of these developments

have resulted in the creation of new areas of greenspace, which we have included in this trail.

Note that this trail focuses exclusively on areas of greenspace located within the boundary of Wimborne Minster Town Council. There are other marvellous greenspaces to explore in neighbouring council areas, including Colehill, Corfe Mullen, Merley, Holt, Stapehill and Ferndown. For example the [Castleman Trailway](#), running as it does along the old railway line, connects several of these areas together.

What is greenspace? The term refers to areas of vegetated land or open areas. Here we focus on *accessible greenspaces*, which are available for the public to use free of charge. This includes spaces such as parks, gardens, playing fields, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments, green corridors and riversides.

How best to explore the trail? The locations listed below are illustrated on the image above. The numbering provides a suggested sequence of greenspaces to visit, but you are encouraged to develop your own routes between them, or simply to explore them one at a time. Many people receive significant mental health benefits from visiting greenspaces; to assist with this, we have tagged especially tranquil areas with a **T** symbol.

Greenspace locations

1. Dogdean SANG. The term 'SANG' refers to '*Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace*', which are natural recreational areas that are typically created to mitigate the impacts of new housing developments. The Dogdean SANG was created in the early 2020s alongside the construction of the [Wimborne Chase housing development](#) by Bloor Homes. Active landscaping and tree-planting projects by the community group [Trees for Wimborne](#) have continued to develop its habitats, including major hedge- and tree-planting initiatives in recent years. Much of the area was previously pasture land, but since the removal of livestock it is developing into a wonderful mixed grassland and woodland habitat, with some excellent pathways providing access. It's a great site for birds and butterflies - see how many species you can spot.

2. Dogdean Allotments. An area of recently established allotments neighbouring the Dogdean SANG. Allotments can provide valuable habitat for wildlife, especially pollinating insects. They can also provide physical and mental health benefits; research has shown that even a single session of allotment gardening can significantly increase self-esteem, improve mood, and lower stress hormones such as cortisol. We have include allotment areas on this trail as they qualify as accessible greenspace, but note that you may need to be a member of the relevant allotment association in order to be able to gain access.

3. Catley Copse SANG. As part of the Wimborne Chase development, some new areas of accessible greenspace are being created. We have here referred to the area on the northern side of Wimborne Chase as 'Catley Copse SANG', as the woodland of Catley Copse is situated nearby. The SANG is still under development - one to keep an eye on until the process of creating the footpath network is complete. At present, a young birchwood is establishing here, together with many wayside plants, which are providing a fine nectar resource for insects. There is connection to a permissive footpath, which runs through the neighbouring Catley Copse. This connects with a footpath to High Hall and Cranborne Chase; it's possible to walk a loop and return to Wimborne via Pamphill.

4. Wimborne Chase. Additional greenspace areas are being established as part of the Wimborne Chase housing development, running along its western and southern edges, and including some areas within the development itself. A newly developed network of footpaths now provides access to some of these areas. This is another greenspace where tree planting is being undertaken, and many wayside plants have established, providing valuable habitat for insects.

5. Catley SANG. [T](#) This is an area of former pasture land, along the banks of the River Allen. The vegetation is being allowed to recover naturally, providing valuable habitat for wildlife, especially birds, butterflies and other pollinating insects. Access is provided by a series of gates, and rides have been mown; however there are no formal footpaths. Nearby farm buildings have been converted into a coffee bar and tap house, providing a potential source of refreshment while exploring the area. There is also [a sauna situated on this site](#). There is a footpath to the River Allen and High Hall adjoining the SANG, which connects to Badbury Rings and Cranborne Chase and their network of walking routes.

6. Land to north of Walford car park by River Allen. Strictly this isn't an area of publicly accessible land, although it is frequently used by local people; it belongs to Dorset Council. It's a small rectangular piece of land, with wooded riverside vegetation providing useful habitat for local fauna. There is no formal public footpath.

7. Walford Mill. The Mill ceased operation in 1966, and was acquired by the District Council in 1983, who then restored it. Today it is independent, and is managed by the Walford Mill Education Trust, which promotes hand-made crafts through events, classes and exhibitions, and by providing working spaces for makers. For more on the Mill's history, click [here](#). The grounds of the Mill provide access to the banks of the River Allen, where you might see some of the special plants and animals associated with this chalk stream. You might even spot an otter! The Little Pickle café is situated on the river bank, providing an excellent site for river-watching.

8. Path alongside River Allen. [T](#) One of Wimborne's most delightful footpaths, running alongside the River Allen. This chalk stream is a very special ecosystem, providing home to a rich community of water plants, invertebrates and fish, including wild brown trout and grayling. This stretch of the riverbank is also a great place to see a kingfisher.

9. Front of Allendale Community Centre. The [Allendale Centre](#) is one of Wimborne's leading music venues, and is used regularly by a variety of community groups. In front of the building is an area of lawn, with some special trees planted around it. See if you can spot *Koelreuteria paniculata*, the Pride of India, with its distinctive yellow flowers. For more about the trees of Wimborne, check out the [Tree Trail](#).

10. Twinning garden. The Wimborne Twinning Garden celebrates the town's link with Valognes, France, and is located on Prior's Walk. It features attractive seasonal floral displays such as daffodils and tulips. There is an additional Twinning Garden on Park Lane, celebrating links with the twin town of Ochsenfurt in Germany.

11. Jubilee Garden. Opened in 2003, The Wimborne Jubilee Garden is located behind the Town Hall on West Borough in Wimborne. Designed to reflect a traditional 17th-century herb and medicinal (or 'physick') garden, it features a restored gazebo dating from 1750, raised beds, and a rosemary bush planted by musician Sir Bob Geldof. It is open to the public daily.

12. Wimborne Community Garden. This garden is situated at the top of School Lane, next to Redcotts Recreation Ground. Established in 2022 in association with Beaucroft Foundation School, the garden is located within the tranquil grounds of the school and provides a sheltered space for all gardening abilities. The garden was created to provide the local community with a therapeutic garden area. Food grown here is provided to Wimborne Foodbank and to Beaucroft College for use in their café. If you'd like to get involved, [click here for more information](#).

13. Redcotts Recreation Ground. This area is used by local football teams which hire pitches in the ground, [Wimborne Tennis Club](#), and [Wimborne Bowls Club](#). It also has a children's play area, a petanque pitch, a basketball area and a half pipe skateboard ramp as well as a football kick-about area and table tennis table. The area is managed by [Wimborne Minster Town Council](#).

14. Wimborne Cemetery. **T** This covers approximately 12.56 acres of land between Stone Lane and St Margaret's Hill. The cemetery is owned and managed by Wimborne Minster Town Council. The area provides valuable habitat for a wide diversity of species, including nationally rare waxcap fungi. This brightly coloured group of fungi are associated with the unimproved grassland on the site, and can be seen fruiting after autumn rains.

15. Wimborne Cemetery allotments. There are 23 allotments within the grounds of Wimborne Cemetery, providing valuable outdoor space for growing and cultivating fruit, flowers and vegetables.

16. Rivers Edge SANG. **T** The SANG lies next to the Rivers Edge housing development by Wyatt Homes, which was built on former allotments. Footpaths running along the riverbank lead to Eye Bridge, a popular swimming spot on the River Stour, owned by the National Trust. Footpaths continue to Pamphill, the [Kingston Lacy Estate](#) and Badbury Rings, providing a range of circular walking routes. There is also an area of greenspace within the Rivers Edge development itself. This is a triangular recreational area with grassland, some trees and a children's play park situated at the junction of Farris Avenue and Fallowfield Place.

17. The Leaze allotments. These are situated just off Julians Road. This is an extensive area of allotments, managed by the Deans Court Estate. A great place to see large numbers of cabbage white butterflies, despite the best efforts of the gardeners! Further information about local allotments is provided by the [Wimborne Allotments Association](#). The Association encourages its members to play a part in protecting our environment, and maintaining the soil by using sustainable and regenerative methods of growing. They also provide information and new ideas to help growers adapt to our changing climate.

18. Minster Green. Wimborne Minster has been a centre for worship for over 1300 years, dating back to the founding of a Benedictine Nunnery by St Cuthburga in 705 AD. In front of the Minster Church lies an area of lawn and a war memorial; the area has been used for centuries as church grounds. Today, the Minster Green functions as an important community focal point, frequently hosting local markets, open-air ceremonies, and gatherings such as the [Wimborne Green Festival](#). In common with several other locations on this trail, it has also been the site of performances by [Wimborne Community Theatre](#).

19. Willow walk. This is a popular community space located directly behind the Waitrose & Partners store. It serves as a central outdoor venue for major town events, including the [Wimborne Minster Folk Festival](#) and the [Wimborne Food Festival](#). It also provides a

delightful walk along the bank of the River Allen. Look out for the colony of Daubenton's bat (also known as the 'water bat'), which roosts nearby, and can be seen foraging for insects along the river at dusk.

20. St Catherine's allotments. Another area of allotments, managed by the Deans Court Estate.

21. Woodland along old railway line. Not strictly an area of public access, as there are no formal footpaths, but nevertheless visited by some intrepid explorers. This is an area of secondary woodland, which has developed along part of the old railway line that used to run between Wimborne and Bournemouth. This section was part of the viaduct over the river, another part of which can be visited on the other side of the river, near to Canford School (where it is referred to as 'the Lady Wimborne Bridge'). Built in 1853, the last train passed over the bridge in 1977. The woodland has developed naturally on the former bridge, and contains a surprising diversity of tree species and an associated bird fauna.

22. Wimborne Riverside. **T** A beautiful walk along the side of the River Stour, with a children's play area. This is another great location to spot kingfishers, and the occasional otter. Also keep an eye out for beavers, which have recently been recorded further downstream. Here there is also a boat house for [Poole Harbour Canoe Club](#), which provides opportunities to canoe or kayak on the river.

23. Stourview SANG (sometimes referred to as the Brook Road SANG). **T** This SANG is designed to provide a series of dog-friendly circular walking routes along the River Stour, and includes extensive areas of grassland, woodland and riverside vegetation. This is another area where [Trees for Wimborne](#) have been very active planting trees, including the nationally rare Black Poplar. It is also a marvellous area for wildlife, with extensive flower-rich meadows and their associated insects. Large populations of river flies provide foraging for dragonflies and at least seven species of bats. If you cross the bridge over the River Stour, next to Canford School, you will be able to access further footpaths including the [Stour Valley Way](#) and the [Castleman Trailway](#).

24. Parmiter allotments. An area of 42 allotments managed by Wimborne Minster Town Council. It is located next to an area of informal open space.

25. Riverside Skate Park is a large, all-concrete street park located on Brook Rd. It features a diverse range of obstacles including quarterpipes, funboxes, a manual pad, flat rail, ledge, and stairs, making it highly suitable for street-style skating. It is free to use and is a regular spot for local lessons and after-school clubs.

26. Quarter Jack Park is a new housing development built by Barratt Homes, with the neighbouring Saxonbury estate built by Wyatt homes. At time of writing, the area is still under development, but a number of greenspaces have already been created, with more planned for the future, including a number of sports pitches. This point on the trail is an area of grassland with footpaths, situated near to the new stadium of [Wimborne Town Football Club](#), which was built as part of this new development. This recreation area connects with point 27 on this trail. It also lies on the site of a Roman road, which ran from the Roman fort at Lake Gates, Wimborne, towards Southampton. Archaeological surveys have also indicated that people were living on this site in the late Neolithic / early Bronze Age, more than 4,000 years ago.

27. Green Corridor parallel to Ainsley Road. This footpath winds its way through a corridor of grassland and mature trees, marking the edge of the Quarter Jack development. The path provides a very pleasant connecting route between Leigh Common (point 31 on this trail), via Parmiter Drive, to Riverside and Stourview SANG (points 22 and 23). [Trees for Wimborne](#) have been very active in improving this area. At its northern end they underplanted existing oak with hazel and in the gaps planted rowans and wild cherry, for blossom and fruit. In the central section, they have established a hedge line with beech and birch among fallen elm, which is a great dead wood habitat. At the southern end there was an open space where they have planted wild fruit trees, which have begun to blossom.

28. Larch Wood Ave. A new area of greenspace created as part of the Quarter Jack Park development, designed as a linear green and situated next to Larch Wood Avenue. This is an area of grassland with a few trees.

29. Strickland Way. A new area of greenspace created as part of the Quarter Jack Park development, next to Strickland Way. This is a small area of grassland with a few trees, and some footpaths. This site also lies on the Roman road, which passes through the estate.

30. Lonsdale Road. A new area of greenspace created as part of the Quarter Jack Park development, next to Lonsdale Road. This is an area of lawn and garden plants, with a mature oak tree under which some seating has been provided. This is a great place to contemplate the value of oak trees as habitat for other species. Did you know that a mature oak tree can support around 280 insect species on its leaves, bark and wood at any given time? See if you can observe any while enjoying the shade cast by its canopy.

31. Leigh Common [7](#) is a 9-hectare nature reserve and area of common land, located on the border between Wimborne and Colehill. Historically used for cattle droving, it offers walking trails among woodland, grassland and ponds. Notable species include locally rare plants like the Southern marsh orchid and marsh St. John's wort, and insects such as long-winged conehead and the common blue damselfly. It adjoins the [Bytheway Field SANG](#), which was East Dorset's first dedicated SANG. This features flat, easily accessible trails that loop through hay meadows and alongside scrub woodland, with a children's play area and recently created pond. The latter is home to huge numbers of tadpoles in the spring.

32. Leigh Park. Home to [Wimborne Rugby Club](#), which has been using the site since 1964, and [Wimborne Family Hub](#). The latter is a community centre offering space for local groups and activities.

33. Wesley Wood. [7](#) This interesting site was saved from the clutches of development as the 'Last Wood of Wimborne'. It's a woodland remnant that once formed part of an ornamental garden or arboretum. It is home to some very impressive large trees, including Giant Redwoods and Monterey Pines. The woodland flora is particularly impressive, with many snowdrops and carpets of bluebells visible in the spring, together with communities of woodland birds including three woodpecker species. It's also a home to many mammal species, including roe deer, badgers, foxes and serotine bats.

Credits

The Wimborne Greenspace Trail has been developed by [Wimborne Contemporary Arts](#) and [Planet Wimborne](#), as part of the *Greenspace is the Place* project. This project was supported through a Culture Catalyst Micro-Commission as part of Wimborne Town of Culture 2026. Dorset Town of Culture is an initiative by the Arts Development Company, with funding from Dorset Council and 2026 is supported by matched funding from Wimborne Minster Town Council, with headline sponsors Wimborne Minster BID and Canford School.



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