



YHA (England and Wales)
Youth Hostel Profile

compiled by the Association's volunteer archivist, John Martin, rev2020-01-01

Bournemouth and Organford Youth Hostels

Bournemouth Youth Hostel 1936 only

1 Lansdowne Crescent, Lansdowne, Bournemouth

Historic County: Hampshire

YHA Region: South Coast

GR: SZ 094914

Bournemouth youth hostel was opened about April 1936, according to a reference in the contemporary *Rucksack Magazine*. There were 946 bednights in total before the early closure on 17th September of the same year; the annual report for South Coast Region explained that it was immediately replaced by Organford Hostel, as it was so popular, though whether the closure was forced by other matters is not clear.

The hostel was probably then part of the Lansdowne Hotel, though it is now a separate property.



No image of the short-lived Bournemouth Youth Hostel has yet been found. The property is seen here in September 2014, on the rising Lansdowne Crescent, between O'Neill's Bar (the original Lansdowne Hotel) and Centro Pizza. It is approached by a flight of stone steps (author's photograph)

Overnights – inclusive periods each year as follows

1936-1938: previous Oct to Sept

♣: Bournemouth Hostel; Δ: Organford Hostel; ●: may include a few overnights for Organford

| ... | 1931 | 1932 | 1933 | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 | 1939 |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 946♣● | 1786Δ | 2123Δ | ... |

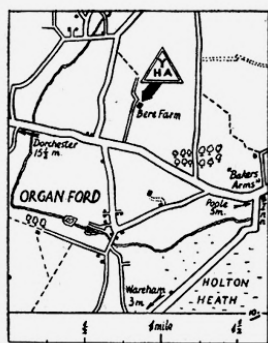
Organford Youth Hostel 1936 to 1938

Bere Farm House, Dorchester Road, Organford, Poole, Dorset

Historic County: Dorset

YHA Region: South Coast

GR: SY 942934



ORGANFORD. *Bere Farm House, Dorchester Road, Organford, nr. Poole, Dorset. Mr. and Mrs. Buck Mason.* The farm house is about 1 mile west of the Baker Arms Hotel, just off the main Poole—Dorchester road, up a small lane on the north side of the road, just east of Organford Cross. It is well situated, being within easy reach of a great variety of good country. On the coastal side is Bournemouth, Poole Harbour, Swanage and the Purbeck Hills, in a gap in which the ruins of Corfe Castle stand sentinel. To the west are the chalk downs and in the Salisbury direction is Cranborne Chase. Organford is on the edge of Thomas Hardy's "Great Heath," and a course of his novels is recommended to members before or after they visit Dorset. Hardy had the power of setting

down descriptions of Wessex people and customs and Wessex scenery in a simple yet very vivid way that entitles him to greater attention than he seems to receive nowadays.

*M16, W12: PROVISIONS Store and Hostel *** (bring K.F.S.): MEALS B. 1/2, L. 9d., S. 1/2: E.C.D. Wednesday: STATION Wareham or Poole 5m: BUS Poole—Bere Regis frequent, Bournemouth—Wareham 1m, BATHING Sea 3½m: DISTANCES Burley 22m, Litton Cheney 28m, Iwerne Minster 18m.*

Extract from a YHA Regional Guide of 1938

The replacement for Bournemouth hostel was at a farm at Organford, between Poole and Wareham. It opened on 17th September 1936. The wardens were Mr and Mrs Buck Mason and accommodation was provided for 16 men and 12 women.

Organford Hostel was fairly busy, but barely two years later, on 30th September 1938, it was forced to close because of Mrs Mason's illness. The wardens were moving in consequence. Beyond 1939 the hostel was still in the region's thoughts, however: it had evacuees until YHA's tenancy expired. This was not renewed, however, as it was deemed too costly.



A photograph of Bere Farm by Ray Milner taken almost 50 years after the youth hostel at Organford closed

John Martin, 2020. YHA Profiles are intended to be adaptable in the light of new materials gained by YHA Archive