

Portland Supports the National Park and wants to be included

The Isle of Portland – A Royal Manor

The Isle of Portland is a limestone tied island, 4 miles (6 km) long by 1.7 miles (2.7 km) wide, in the English Channel. A barrier beach called Chesil Beach 'ties' it to the mainland. Population 12,844.



Portland is a central part of the World Heritage Jurassic Coast Site, important for its geology and landforms. Portland stone is famous for its use in British and world architecture, including St Paul's Cathedral and the United Nations Headquarters, it continues to be quarried. Portland's 'Heart of Stone' is also used for the vast majority of War Grave Headstones and The Cenotaph.

Portland Harbour is one of the largest man-made harbours in the world. From its inception, it was a Royal Navy base and played prominent roles during the First and Second World Wars and carries with it a great heritage. The name Portland is used for one of the British Sea Areas. The harbour is now a civilian port and popular recreation area and was used for the 2012 Olympic Games.

The Isle of Portland has been designated by Natural England as National Character Area 137. Natural England National Character Area Profile advocates "continuing to support The Portland Quarries Nature Park, which showcases Portland's geology, the history of extraction and inspiring sculpture created by carving Portland Stone." Natural England's Report – 'Inshore Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Studland to Portland (2012)' reminds us how special Portland is. The Assessment emphasises the need to conserve and manage the internationally important coastline, the islands geological and mineral assets and its distinctive landscape character, the strong sense of history and the magnificent views.

Portland has been inhabited since at least the Mesolithic period (the Middle Stone Age)—there is archaeological evidence of Mesolithic inhabitants at the Culverwell Mesolithic Site, near Portland Bill and of habitation since then.

Although the beginning of the Viking Age in England is dated to their raid in 793, when they destroyed the abbey on Lindisfarne, their first documented landing occurred in Portland four years earlier, in 789, as recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

Due to its isolated coastal location, the Isle of Portland has an extensive range of flora and fauna; the coastline and disused quarries are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Sea and migratory birds include rare species which draw ornithologists from around the country. Rare visitors to the surrounding seas include dolphins, seals and basking sharks.

The comparatively warm and sunny climate allows species of plants to thrive which do not on the mainland. The limestone soil has low nutrient levels; hence smaller species of wild flowers and grasses can grow in the absence of larger species. Portland sea lavender can be found on the higher sea cliffs; unique to Portland, it is one of the United Kingdom's rarest plants. The wild flowers and plants make an excellent habitat for butterflies; over half of the British Isles' 57 butterfly species can be seen on Portland, including varieties that migrate from mainland Europe. Species live on Portland that are rare in the UK, including the limestone race of the silver-studded blue.

Portland is in the final stages of developing its Neighbourhood Plan. Through the Neighbourhood Plan The Portland Town Council and the community have expressed their

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support for developments that do not lead to significant loss or damage to any of the islands natural assets including landscape character, amenity, historic environment, views, ecology and wildlife corridors, archaeological or geological values of the course, shoreline, beaches, adjacent coastal waters and countryside.

Politics, Community and Culture

In April 2019 Portland becomes a part of the Dorset Council. It regains its independence from Weymouth, and the Portland Community has recently supported Portland Town Council's ambition to take full responsibility for its local services. ***Portland Town Council has resolved that it is fully supportive for the inclusion of Portland within a Dorset National Park.***

Portland has a unique coast, character and location that has determined its culture, its economic agenda and shaped its geography. There is a widespread feeling that the tourism potential has not been fully tapped. The community at large supports is making efforts to attract and accommodate more visitors. Green and sustainable tourism is the objective that will build on the natural environment and uniqueness of Portland supported by a matching quality of service. The island offers significant activity adventure opportunities and recognising this Portland Town Council supports an approach to tourism that makes Portland and outdoors activity hub – Dorset is 'The Countryside', Weymouth 'The Seaside' and Portland 'The Outside'.

The challenges Portland faces include identifying tourism growth that respects the quality of landscape, identifying appropriate areas sensitive to tourism development. The PTC policy is designed to encourage small-scale sustainable tourism development proposals aimed at providing land-based and offshore based activity and adventure experiences – all accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment. ***Reference the Portland Recreational Activities Spreadsheet.***

The island will be helped significantly by the development of a major tourist attraction. In the last few days an 'Eden Project for Portland' has been announced that will use the underground Albion Stone's Jordans Mine and have the associated buildings largely set into the ground. The £20+ million project has strong political, financial and community support and fits in well with the above policy.

Eden's mission is to explore our dependence on the natural world, to use that understanding to excite people into delivering transformation where they live and to ask really serious questions about what a great future might look like for all of us. Portland's incredible landscapes heritage and location at the heart of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage site mark the Isle out as a place where global stories can be told with strong local roots. It will tell the biggest story of all: the evolving story of life. It's a story four billion years in the making and a really important chapter is unfolding right now with modern biodiversity loss. This is the "Sixth Extinction" - the fifth wiped out the dinosaurs.

For most of the last century, Portland was defined by its role as a Royal Navy base. Building on this legacy, the 2012 Olympic Games put Portland firmly on the marine tourist map. The Weymouth and Portland national sailing Academy has world-class facilities for sailing in Portland Harbour plus providing a venue with a full range of water sports including diving, paddle boarding and kayaking. There are developments that reflect the maritime and naval history of the area – from air-sea rescue to the bouncing bomb, torpedoes, sonar and D-Day.

The RSA England Heritage League Table for 2016 is based upon local authority administrative boundaries rather than specific areas that may have outstanding heritage credentials. In 2016 Dorset had three areas in the top 30, out of 325 local authority areas in

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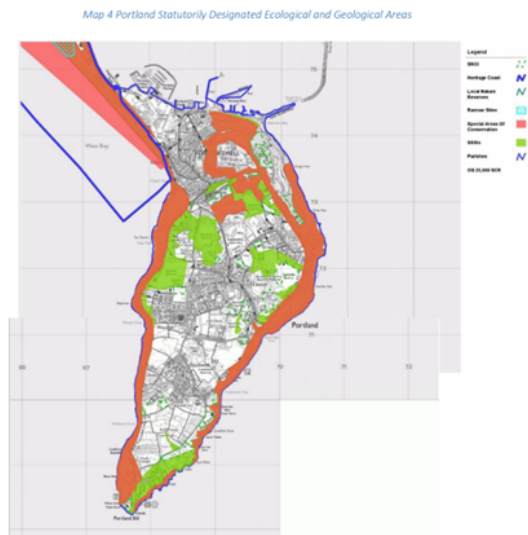
England, with 2 in the top 4%. Weymouth and Portland came 10th but only 234th in using that potential.

Restoring Portland's quarries to productive use is a challenge. It is this balance of maintaining and improving the natural environment and at the same time providing opportunities for economic-related development, which is at the core of the Island's future. ***Portland Town Council and the Community believe that being within a Dorset National Park will significantly help them to meet this challenge.***

The Environment

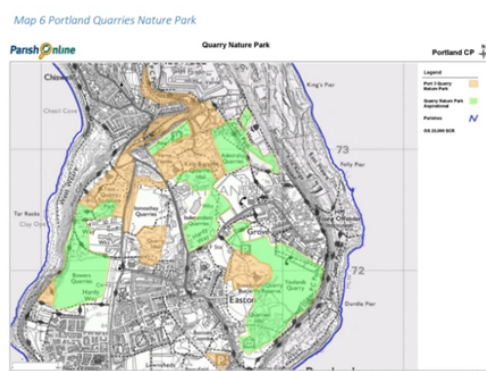
Portland is a historic and special environment in so many ways. It has a unique coast, character and location that has determined its culture, its economic agenda and shaped its geography. A Heritage and Character Study was commissioned as part of Portland's Neighbourhood Plan

<https://www.portlandplan.org.uk/> The Character Assessment Report identified six distinct 'character areas' on Portland and made recommendations about how development needs to be controlled in the interests of protecting or enhancing their unique character.



34% of Portland is designated Priority Habitats

Natural England defines key characteristics as "these combinations of elements which help to give an area its distinctive sense of place" that would result in significant consequences for the current character if they were changed or lost. There are two areas of Portland forming the Island's spine, which are nationally important but with little potential for development, they should remain as they are – "Portland Bill and the Jurassic Coast area" together with "The rugged open landscape area of Quarries and Open Space" that contribute much to the character of the whole Island.



The development of the Portland Quarries Nature Park is consistent with the

recommendations of the Portland Heritage and Character Assessment of 2017. It is focussed on the rugged open landscape area of Quarries and Open Space. The Assessment recommended that the principles for managing change should focus on sustaining, reinforcing or enhancing those aspects which enhance the industrial character and contribute to the coastal setting.

"Development within the disused quarries should be encouraged to celebrate both the industrial heritage on the island and the diverse and high-quality landscape and biodiversity." Part of the Quarries Nature Park also lies within the Grove and Verne which is significant because of its heritage value.

The built environment is arguably as significant and important as the natural environment. The community wants to ensure that their heritage is recognised and respected. 95% of respondents to the Community Survey in 2014 responded that we must

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protect our old buildings and heritage. On a relatively small island, we have five conservation areas. There are 178 Grade II (nationally important and of special interest) buildings and structures on Portland. The Island also has three Grade I (of exceptional interest) and 10 Grade II* (of more than special interest) buildings and structure. Beyond these, there are many other buildings, structures and locations that we regard as being an essential and important part of our history and heritage. Eight locations on the Island are scheduled as ancient monuments. An example of the Harmony regarded as important are the landscape areas of the Vernon nature reserve, largely man-made as a result of modelling at the time of construction of the Verne Citadel. This area has recently been fenced off to allow the introduction of goats to control the vegetation.

Almost the whole of Portland is designated as a Mineral Safeguarding Area. Portland stone is seen as a strategic resource. Portland Stone is derived principally from a 9m thick bed known as the Freestone which occurs within the Portland Limestone Group. It is overlain in most places by several metres of thinly wedded limestones and clays ("the Caps"). Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) protect known locations of specific mineral resources from sterilisation.

There are limited employment areas on Portland, and the Isle is well used to development being constrained by national environmental, housing and mineral policies.

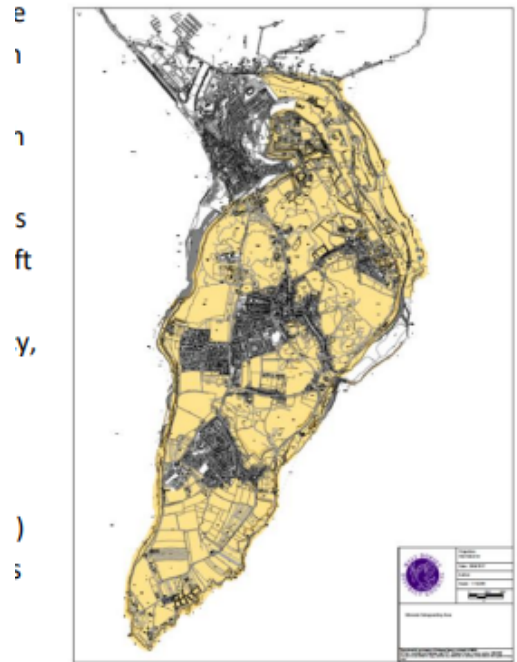
Neighbourhood planning is intended to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of the local area. The Portland Neighbourhood Plan is in close harmony with the aims and objectives of a Dorset National Park, an ambition that is reflected in a strong desire to:

- revive and diversify the island's economy
- create more and better local jobs
- improve existing centres
- facilitate the delivery of local services
- meet the housing needs of the 21st century in the interests of local people
- attract visitors and serve them well

and while doing so:

- strengthen the sense of community and its sustainability
- protect our unique natural environment
- respect our heritage
- safeguard the island's minerals

Portland deserves to be in a Dorset National Park – it has given its 'heart of stone' to the nation in many ways, asking nothing in return. A Dorset National Park, which includes Portland, will enrich the lives of Portlanders, sustain their beloved environment and bring a sharp environmental contrast to the rolling hills of Dorset's mainland.



Map 3 Portland Mineral Consultation Area