



The Portland Circumnavigation

**An easier cliff-top walk from the Bill, going around the Isle of Portland.
An optional short-cut bisects the island**

Essential Facts

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Route distance: | 14.5 km (9.1 miles) |
| ▪ Approximate time: | 4 hours 30 mins |
| ▪ Optional shorter route | 9.6 km (6.0 miles) |
| ▪ Approx. total ascent: | 175 metres |
| ▪ Start point Grid Ref: | SY 677 684 |
| ▪ GPS Ref: | SY 67712 68496 |
| ▪ Recommended O.S. Map: | Explorer OL15 |
| ▪ Toughness Rating | Dorset 1 |

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

**Up For A
CHALLENGE ?**

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A Team Effort**

Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

From the car park at Portland Bill, **S**, walk with the lighthouse on your left to the cliff edge then turn right to follow the cliff past Pulpit Rock. This curious stone pillar shows the original ground level before quarrying. At a stone marker turn right, keep the car park on your right and at the end head across the grass to a finger post. Cross a track and continue in the same direction towards the Coastguards Station. Beyond this, walk along a wide grassy track with a field on your right. Pass an industrial site and houses at Weston. When the fields end you join a narrow stony path at **A**.

From **A** it is possible to take a shorter route by turning right, along a footpath. Continue through housing until you reach the main road, where you turn right. Now follow the roadside paths over to the eastern side of the island, re-joining our main route at **C**, above Church Ope Cove, which is near the little Portland Museum.

Continuing along the cliff-top on our main route, views open up to Chesil Beach and Portland Harbour beyond. Continue along this path which soon widens until you reach a road, beside a restored hand crane. Cross the road with care and climb the track opposite. At a road turn right and right again to reach the war memorial and viewpoint near the Portland Heights Hotel, **B**. On a fine day you can see all the way to Lyme Regis in the west, and along to Poole in the east.

Continue along the left hand edge of the parking area beyond. When this ends turn left along the road, pass the prison entrance and soon reach a barrier. Go straight ahead along a cinder track, turn left at a T-junction and at the next junction fork left to reach buildings. Turn right and follow a path that soon becomes tarmac. Pass Grove Farm and ignore a road to the right. The path becomes a narrow cinder track and then opens out onto a wide cliff-top path. Just past a footpath to Easton turn left by a stone marker to Church Ope Cove. At a T-junction turn right, then fork left at a stone marker.

Follow the coast path down steps to reach some seats above Church Ope Cove at **C**.

Go down the steps beyond the seats, at a stone seat you can turn right to visit the ruins of St Andrews Church, otherwise continue down the steps until you reach wooden beach huts. Go straight ahead on a narrow path leading to some rough stone steps. At the top continue along the cliff top path to a clearing. Turn right at a stone marker to Portland Bill and climb a track to the road. **D**

Turn left and walk along the verge. Just after the verge ends, beside the driveway to Cheyne House, turn left and go through a gate. There is now a clear path along the cliff top all the way back to the lighthouse, **S**, passing several disused quarries and Cave Hole, which is a natural sea cave with a blow-hole in its roof.



Portland Harbour View



**The Cliff Top Path
Near Church Ope Cove**

Refreshment

Pulpit Inn	Lobster Pot
Public House	Cafe
Portland Bill	Portland Bill
Tel: 01305 821237	Tel: 01305 820242
Meals and bar snacks	Hot meals Cold Snacks
	Ice Creams

LOCAL INFO

The Isle of Portland is a limestone outcrop off the Dorset Coast, attached to the mainland only by a narrow stretch of Chesil Beach. It is the home of Portland Stone which has been quarried here for several hundred years and used in many historic London buildings such as St Paul's Cathedral and the Houses of Parliament. The remains of quarrying are in evidence throughout the island.

The foundation stone for Portland Harbour, one of the largest harbours in the world, was laid by Prince Albert in 1849 and the breakwaters were constructed by prisoners from the Verne.

Portland Castle was built as a coastal fortress by Henry VIII following attacks by the French. It is the best preserved of Henry's castles.

The Old Higher Lighthouse was built in 1716 and used until the current lighthouse was built in 1906. It is now fully automated and the light warns mariners of the hazardous Shambles Rock three miles offshore.

Nearly all the coastline is an SSSI. It is an ideal place for bird watching and the Portland Bill Bird Observatory has a full time warden monitoring bird activity. A combination of the warmer climate, isolated location and network of disused quarries which have naturally re-colonised has created a unique wildlife habitat in which a wide variety of plants and animals flourish.

In the spring there is a stunning display of wild flowers. The plants and habitats of the old quarries have produced a rocky landscape which is ideal for butterflies. There are two Butterfly Conservation Reserves on the island.



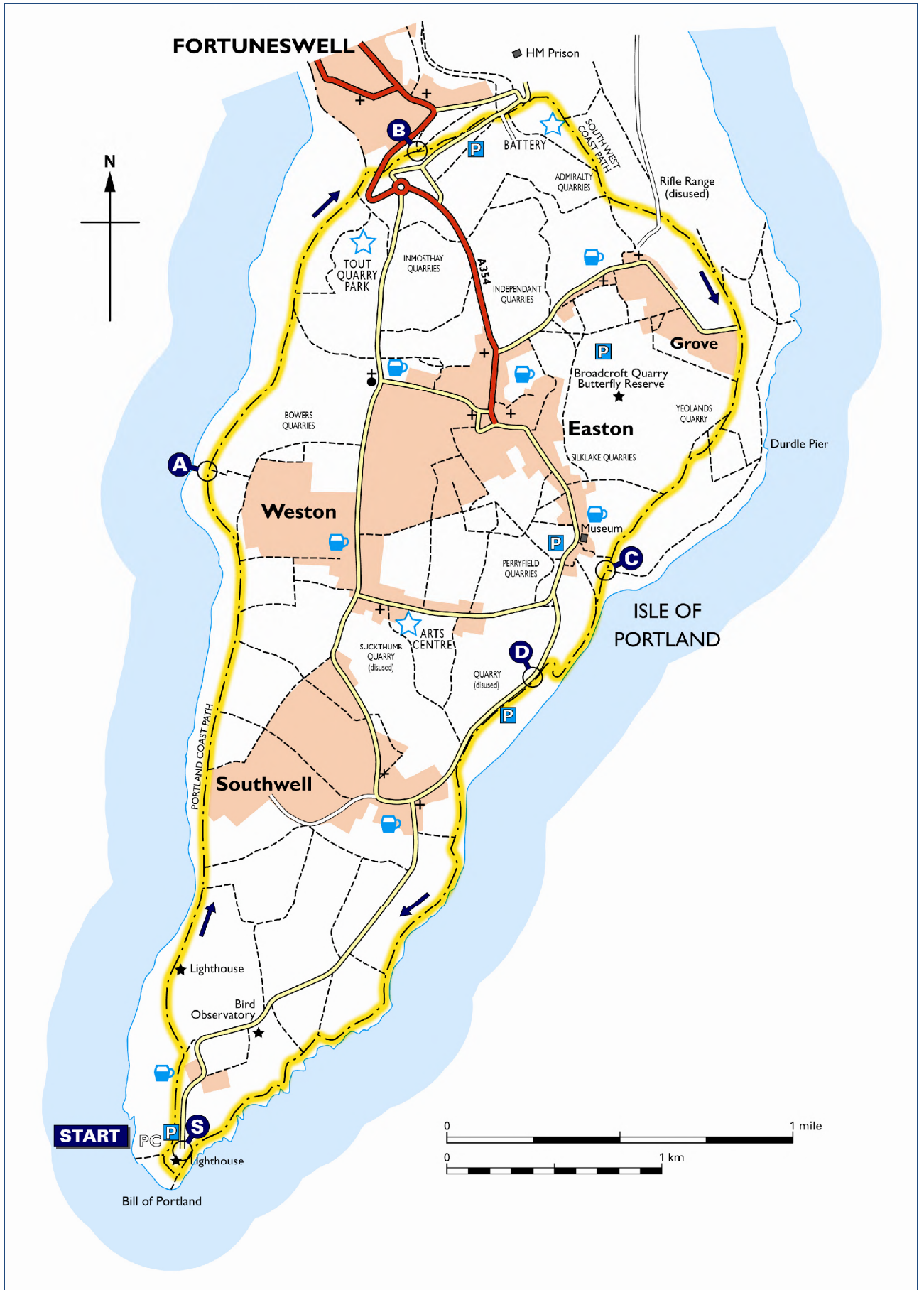
**The Pulpit Inn
Portland Bill**



**The View to Chesil Beach
From Portland Heights**

THE PORTLAND CIRCUMNAVIGATION G.P.S. WAYPOINTS

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF	CO-ORDINATES	ELEVATION: metres
POR S	S	SY 67712 68496	14
POR A	A	SY 67889 71643	82
POR B	B	SY 68805 73016	116
POR C	C	SY 69777 71203	64
POR D	D	SY 69438 70692	37



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road or track		Built up area		Picnic site
	Footpath		Woodland		Camp site
	Bridleway		Sand		Major tourist feature
	National trail		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Dorset** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Cambridgeshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons.