

Proposed Dorset and East Devon National Park

Evidence and Sources used to support the Proposal

Theme: Cultural Heritage and Activities

This Evidence Note has three sections as follows:

- A. Artistic Heritage and Activity
- B. Writers and Literary Heritage
- C. Film and TV Locations

A. Artistic Heritage and Activity

- a. **Dorset's earliest settlers** produced beautifully crafted tools and adornments and, from an early time, engaged in international trade. Recent excavations in Worth Matravers found glass of the C 7th BC, the raw materials for which came from what is now Poland. A wealth of artefacts found in Dorset, from the Neolithic period onwards, is held and selectively displayed in the British Museum, Dorchester's County museum and local museums across the county.
- b. On the margins of **Poole harbour**, Dorset people have since prehistoric times exploited and worked clays suitable for the production of pottery. In the Iron Age, **pottery manufacture** on a large scale supplied international trade and widespread distribution. In the C20th, the Poole area again became famous for its craftsmanship of pottery of fine quality and design. Different deposits, of ball clay, found in the Creech and Furzebrook area of Purbeck, became highly prized in the C18th for the manufacture of **fine china**, for example by the Wedgwood company.
- c. The Romans prized ornaments and jewellery made from **Kimmeridge shale** [a material which resembles jet in appearance.] The output of workshops in Purbeck was exported across the Roman empire and is found today by archaeologists excavating workshop and settlement sites.
- d. The British Museum's collection includes many important Dorset artefacts, including **Britain's earliest Christian mosaic**, the exquisite C4th round mosaic from **Hinton St Mary** in Dorset.
- e. Dorset's **Purbeck "marble"** was widely used in medieval times to decorate churches and cathedrals throughout England. Hundreds of examples of Purbeck marble, finely fashioned by Purbeck stone masons into fonts, memorials, pillars and other decorative features, have been identified and studied. Locations include the cathedrals of Salisbury [which has over 300 pillars of Purbeck marble,] Durham, Lincoln, Chichester, Winchester, Exeter, the Temple Church in London, and parish churches in every county. Purbeck marble was also exported, for example for the pillars of the cloister of the Abbey of Mont St Michel, Normandy.
- f. During the Napoleonic Wars, when the European Grand Tour was no longer available to Britain's young and wealthy cultural travellers, **JMW Turner** and others journeyed to Dorset to paint and sketch the county's very scenic landscapes and monuments. A series of paintings, also turned into widely-sold lithographs, reflects Turner's tour along the Jurassic coast from Poole harbour to Lyme Bay taking in Corfe Castle, Durdle Door, Maiden Castle and many other sights. The sinking of the "The Halsewell," the Titanic of its day, in a severe storm off the Purbeck coast in 1786, was portrayed in Turner's popular painting "The wreck of an East Indiaman."

- g. In the 1820s, **John Constable** RA visited Dorset to stay with his friend the vicar of Gillingham. Paintings from these visits are now in the collections of Tate Britain and the V&A.
- h. East Devon's landscapes inspired the **Camden group of painters**, including Robert Polhill Bevan, who lived in or visited the area between 1910 and 1925. Their works are displayed in Exeter's Royal Albert Memorial Museum.
- i. **Francis H Newbery** spent his early years in Bridport, W Dorset, and spent a long and productive retirement in Corfe Castle, Purbeck, E Dorset. He is best known, however, for the 32 years he spent as teacher and Director of the Glasgow School of Art [1885 – 1918.] During these years he made the school internationally famous, nurturing there a highly innovative group of artists including **Charles Rennie Mackintosh** [who visited and painted in Dorset.] In retirement in Purbeck, Newbery worked tirelessly to promote artistic activity in the community, and his work is still accessible at the churches of Corfe Castle and Swanage and in other public spaces.
- j. Nineteenth and twentieth century British artists who drew inspiration from Purbeck and Dorset included the following: **Paul Nash, Walter Field, Denis Lawson, Augustus John, Charles Conder, Mark Gertler, Alfred Palmer, Graham Sutherland, and Henry Tanworth Wells**. Arts trails and associated publications display works inspired directly by Dorset landscapes, places and people.
- k. The **Bloomsbury set** of artists and writers took up residence at Studland in Purbeck, Dorset each summer during the 1930s. Some of these are mentioned above. Others included sisters **Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf**, their families and friends.
- l. The family of British sculptress **Mary Spencer-Watson** bought the remote Elizabethan Purbeck manor house of Downshay in the late 1920s. The Purbeck marble required to produce over 300 pillars for use in the building of Salisbury cathedral had been extracted from the Downshay estate in the C12th. Mary Spencer-Watson spent the rest of her long life at Downshay, using Purbeck and Portland stone, and inspired by Dorset people and in particular the highly skilled stone masons of medieval times, to produce sculptures which are internationally collected. Her work is displayed in Purbeck, in Dorset County Museum, Dorchester, and in national and international collections. Her former home, like the scenic folly, Clavell's Tower, in nearby Kimmeridge, now belongs to the Landmark Trust.
- m. **Lawrence Whistler's** exquisite engraved windows for the church of Moreton in Dorset brought both new life and fame to the small village church after wartime bomb damage destroyed its ancient windows. In the village churchyard is the simply marked burial site of T E Lawrence, Lawrence of Arabia, whose tiny heathland cottage of Cloud's Hill is nearby.
- n. **Sir Anthony Caro**, one of the UK's greatest living sculptors, lives in Purbeck, Dorset. The work of Sir Anthony and his artist wife **Sheila Girling** is exhibited in the area, across Britain and world-wide.
- o. **John Makepeace**, world-renowned furniture designer and maker, lives at Parnham House, which he bought in 1976. He founded the Parnham Trust and the School for Craftsmen in Wood (now Parnham College) to provide courses for aspiring furniture-makers. He taught Viscount Linley, nephew to the Queen.
- p. Both Dorset and East Devon offer many **excellent museums** in towns and villages throughout the area, from Dorchester's historic and important County Museum, to the unique Purbeck Stone Museum in Langton Matravers. The museums of the Jurassic Coast Museums Partnership showcase the geology and fossils of this famous coast, and the history of the towns, including

Lyme Regis, Bridport, Portland and Swanage. East Devon's Allhallows Museum has a fine collection of Honiton lace in a building dating from the C13th, and Axminster Museum's exhibits range from agricultural tools to Axminster carpets.

- q. The **"Creative Coast"** project, led by the Jurassic Coast Partnership and World Heritage Site Team, has explored how the arts can support the management of a natural WHS, widen participation in and enrich understanding of the area. The Partnership has an ambitious Arts Strategy under which a multi-faceted arts programme has been developed.
- r. The **"Drawing Inspiration"** project in 2013-14 looks at Dorset's landscapes and their inspirational quality and impact over time. Over the centuries, Dorset's landscapes have inspired artists, authors, poets and scientists, their work interpreting the physical landscape, cultural and social character of the county. The project includes exhibitions, walks, talks and other events across the county.
- s. The landscapes and wildlife of Dorset and East Devon have inspired and continue to inspire **amateur and professional photographers**. Andy Farrer [landscapes] and Julian Sawyer [wildlife] are two of the many photographers who live in the area and exhibit their work.
- t. Dorset's vibrant arts and musical scene finds expression in festivals, concerts and displays throughout the county and throughout the year, including **Dorset Art Week and the Purbeck Art Weeks festival, the Plush** annual concert series, and festivals in all musical traditions.
- u. The **Dorset Chamber Orchestra** and the **Dorset County Orchestra** are both professional orchestras which put on a series of classical concerts each year. There are many **amateur choral societies** across the suggested NP area.
- v. **Stephen Warbeck**, Oscar-winning composer of many film scores, including "Captain Corelli's Mandolin" and "Shakespeare in Love," lives in Purbeck, Dorset.

Sources include the following:

- a. Poole Bay and Purbeck 300BC – 1660AD. C Cochrane, 1970.
- b. The making of the English landscape: Dorset. Christopher Taylor
- c. Purbeck parish churches. F. P. Pitfield
- d. A Purbeck parish through the ages. R. J. Tennent, 1963
- e. The village of Corfe castle. R. J. Saville, 1994
- f. The stone quarries of Langton Matravers. R. J. Saville, 2010
- g. The village of Worth Matravers. R. J. Saville, 2011
- h. An investigation into the use of Purbeck marble in medieval England. Rosemary Leach, 1978
- i. The book of Studland. R Legg.
- j. Turner's Dorset. Dorset County library. 1978.
- k. Fra H Newbery, a Dorset artist. George Rawson. 1988
- l. Lawrence Whistler's windows for the church of Moreton in Dorset.
- m. Seaside surrealism: Paul Nash. Pennie Denton. 2002
- n. Mary Spencer-Watson, sculptor. Susan Compton. 1991
- o. Mary Spencer-Watson. Catalogue Raisonne. 2004
- p. Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter. www.rammuseum.org.uk
- q. Dorset County Museum, Dorchester: www.dorsetcountymuseum.org

- r. Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre: www.swanagemuseum.co.uk
- s. Lyme Regis Philpot Museum: www.lymeregismuseum.co.uk
- t. Bridport Museum and archives: www.bridportmuseum.co.uk
- u. Wareham Museum: www.warehammuseum.fsnet.co.uk
- v. Poole Museum and Scaplen's Court: www.boroughofpoole.com/museums
- w. Corfe Castle Museum: www.dorsetmuseums.co.uk/corfe_castle_museum
- x. Portland Museum: www.portlandmuseum.co.uk
- y. Langton Matravers Purbeck Stone Museum: www.langtonia.org.uk
- z. "Swanage Seen" Art Trail and publication [paintings of Swanage by famous visiting artists] Carlotta Barrow and others, [2009]
- aa. Creative Coast: a case study in how the arts can support management of a natural World Heritage Site, Jurassic Coast Partnership, 2013
- bb. Robert Field, for Swanage Museum and Heritage Centre:
 - Purbeck as seen by artists, vol 1, 11
 - Swanage as seen by artists, vol 1, 11
 - Corfe Castle as seen by artists
 - Worbarrow Bay and Lulworth as seen by artists
- cc. Purbeck Art Weeks Festival: www.Purbeckartweeks.co.uk
- dd. Plush music festival: www.musicatplush.com

B. Writers and Literary Heritage

- a. Many writers - of fiction and non-fiction, poetry and drama – have lived in or visited Dorset and East Devon and been inspired by the area's landscapes and people.
- b. **Thomas Hardy** lived most of his long life in Dorset, in and around Dorchester, except for a period in an architect's office in London. Born in a modest, woodland cottage at Higher Bockhampton, he later designed and built a house for himself at Max Gate. Towns, villages, rivers, heaths and farm landscapes around Dorset feature, thinly disguised and easily identified, in his many novels and poems. Both Hardy's birthplace cottage and Max Gate are owned by the National Trust and open to the public.
- c. **Poet William Barnes** (1801 – 1886) lived all his life in Dorset. A writer, minister and poet, he wrote over 800 poems, was curate at Whitcombe and minister at Winterbourne Came, near Dorchester, and ran a school in the county town. His poems are seen as a valuable record of the old Dorset dialect and of working people's lives in the 19th Century.
- d. **Jane Austen wrote in Lyme Regis, West Dorset and in Sidmouth, East Devon.** "Persuasion" is partly set in Lyme Regis, West Dorset, while "Sense and sensibility" is set in Devon.
- e. **Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning**, the poets, lived and wrote in Sidmouth, E Devon from 1832 to 1835.
- f. Though poet **William Wordsworth** (1770 – 1850) spent most of his life in the English Lake District, for six years (1793-98) he and his sister Dorothy lived at Racedown Farm, near Pilsdon in Dorset. It was here that he first started to write seriously. A frequent visitor was the English poet Samuel Coleridge Taylor who lived in Somerset.
- g. Writers **John Cowper Powys, T.F Powys and Llewelyn Powys** feature Dorset in some of their work. John Cowper Powys wrote several Wessex-based novels including Weymouth Sands (1934) and Maiden Castle (1936).

- h. **William Thackeray and John Betjeman** wrote in Sidmouth, East Devon.
- i. **T. E. Lawrence [Lawrence of Arabia]**, archaeologist, historian, soldier and writer, chose the intimate cottage of Cloud's Hill near Bovington army camp as his retreat in the years after the First World War. His funeral in the nearby village of Moreton was attended by Winston Churchill. Cloud's Hill is now owned and opened to the public by the National Trust.
- j. **Rupert Brooke** wrote one of his most famous poems while stationed at Bovington army camp. It begins: "If I should die, think only this of me: that there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England."
- k. **Beatrix Potter** spent a holiday in Lyme Regis, Dorset, in 1904, and used some views of the town to illustrate the story, *Little Pig Robinson*. She also stayed and wrote in Sidmouth, East Devon.
- l. **Enid Blyton** first came to the area in 1931 and some Dorset landmarks feature in her books: *Whispering Island* is based on Brownsea Island, and Corfe Castle became Kirrin Castle in the stories. For twenty years she visited Swanage on holiday. With her husband she bought the Isle of Purbeck Golf Club.
- m. **Mary (Wollstoncraft) Shelley**, the author of "Frankenstein" and also "A vindication of the rights of woman" is buried in Bournemouth with the heart of her husband Percy Shelley who drowned in Italy.
- n. **Robert Louis Stevenson** lived for three years in Bournemouth where he wrote "The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde."
- o. The ashes of the pioneering **Dr Marie Stopes** were cast into the sea at Portland. The ashes of **H.G. Wells** were cast into the sea at Studland, Dorset.
- p. **John Le Carre**, real name David Cornwell, lived in Bournemouth and attended school in Sherborne. Cecil Day Lewis and James Hilton attended the same school. Sherborne Castle belonged to Sir Walter Raleigh.
- q. **Ian Fleming**, author of the James Bond novels, attended school in Langton Matravers, Dorset. It is thought that his inspiration for James Bond was the Bond family of Tyneham in Dorset, whose family motto is "The world is not enough." The Bond family lived in the manor house of Tyneham, Purbeck, from the 1500s until 1943 when the village was requisitioned by the MOD for army training purposes and people living there were evacuated.
- r. The setting for **John Fowles's** "The French Lieutenant's Woman" is Lyme Regis in Dorset. With a screenplay by Harold Pinter, and set in Lyme Regis, the film became a BAFTA and Golden Globe award-winning adaptation. John Fowles lived for 40 years at Belmont House in Lyme Regis.
- s. Crime writer **P. D. James** has long had a home in Purbeck, Dorset and several of her books are set in the area. The cliff-edge folly Clavell's Tower near Kimmeridge inspired her book "The Black Tower."
- t. **Ian McEwan's** award-winning "On Chesil Beach" is set, as its title implies, on and around this interesting and atmospheric coastal feature, the long shingle bank of Chesil Beach in Dorset.
- u. **Chris Chibnall** lives in Bridport, W Dorset. His TV drama "Broadchurch," starring David Tennant,

features West Bay near Bridport as the fictional town of Broadchurch. He also wrote "Life on Mars," "Torchwood," "Law & Order UK," "Born & Bred" and episodes of "Dr Who."

- v. Economist and author **James Meade** (1907-1995) was born in Swanage, Dorset. In 1977 he was joint winner (with Swedish economist Bertil Ohlin) of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for their "Path-breaking contribution to the theory of international trade and international capital movements."

C. Film & TV Locations

- a. The unspoilt countryside and dramatic coastline, towns, villages, manor houses and gardens of Dorset have featured in many films and TV dramas.
- b. Dorset is **Thomas Hardy's** Wessex and, with much of the landscape remaining unchanged, it has been the location for many adaptations of his novels, including "Far From the Madding Crowd," "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," and "The Mayor of Casterbridge."
- c. Adaptations of **Jane Austen's** novels filmed in Dorset included "Mansfield Park" set in Purbeck, "Emma" filmed in Evershot and Dorchester, and "Persuasion" filmed in Lyme Regis.
- d. **Lyme Regis**, the home of author **John Fowles**, was the setting for his novel "The French Lieutenant's Woman" and the 1980 film adaptation featuring a cloaked Meryl Streep standing on Lyme's historic harbour, The Cobb.
- e. The film "From Time to Time," written by Dorset's **Julian Fellowes**, was filmed at **Athelhampton House** in Dorset, with Dame Maggie Smith.
- f. **Weymouth and Portland** locations have featured in many films and TV programmes. Portland Harbour was the location for the film "The Boat that Rocked" with Rhys Ifans and Bill Nighy.
- g. West Dorset's coastline featured in TV drama "Broadchurch," by Chris Chibnall. Locations used included **West Bay near Bridport, Eype and Burton Bradstock**.
- h. Dorset's towns and villages featured alongside Bond girl Gemma Arterton in "Tamara Drewe," (2011,) an adaptation of the novel by Posy Simmonds.
- i. **Purbeck, Dorset** was the location for filming 'Nanny McPhee' with Emma Thompson and Colin Firth.

Sources include the following:

[www. Visit-dorset.com](http://www.visit-dorset.com)

BBC history

Reader's Guide to Writers' Britain

Word Quest Devon

Lyme Regis Literary Links

“The vaices that be gone”: selected poems from William Barnes’s Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect [1844] Introduction by Tom Burton, 2009

William Barnes: Poems selected by Andrew Motion, 2007

Thomas Hardy’s Wessex, James W. Worth, 1978

The country of “Far from the madding crowd,” J. P. Skilling, 1977

Dorset and East Devon National Park Group

July 2013