

On reaching the road, turn left along the pavement and then cross over the road, following the footpath sign, down a track to the east coast. At the bottom turn right to go back to the start along the Coast Path past the beach huts.

Alternatively you can walk to the north just past the last hut and you'll find Portland's blow hole. (you've walked too far if you've gone over the Culverwell Stream bridge)

Culverwell is Portland's only running stream and in times of wet weather or during the winter there is a small waterfall over the cliff.

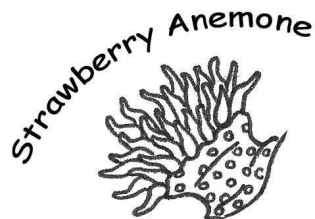
Take time to explore the rock pools at low tide. Look closely for the aptly named Strawberry anemones and clinger fish hiding under the rocks. Be careful to turn the rocks carefully back over again.

Fissures in cliffs are enlarged by the sea into broad caves. Along the east coast, the roof of a sea cave has collapsed leaving a blow hole inland from the cliffs. In summer, golden samphire and Portland's own sea lavender colour the cliff edges.

Visit the Portland Bird Observatory web site for up to date information on wildlife on the island.

www.portlandbirdobs.org.uk

For more information about the wildlife and geology of the island pick up a pack of Portland wildlife leaflets. Also downloadable from the web site on the back.



If you have enjoyed this walk why not try one of the other circular walks at different places along the Legacy Trail. There are nine in total.



The Legacy Trail and circular walks from key 'waypoints' are part of the Wild About Weymouth and Portland Project funded by the Big Lottery Fund through Natural England's Access to Nature programme.

It aims to improve access in and between wildlife sites and encourage local people and visitors to discover and explore the wonderful natural environment of Weymouth and Portland.

For more information about the Legacy Trail and sites along the way visit:

www.visit-dorset.com/about-the-area/countryside/weymouth-and-portland-legacy-trail



Discover the Wild side

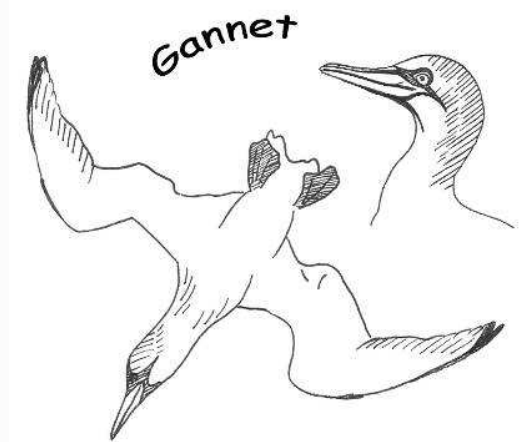
LEGACY TRAIL

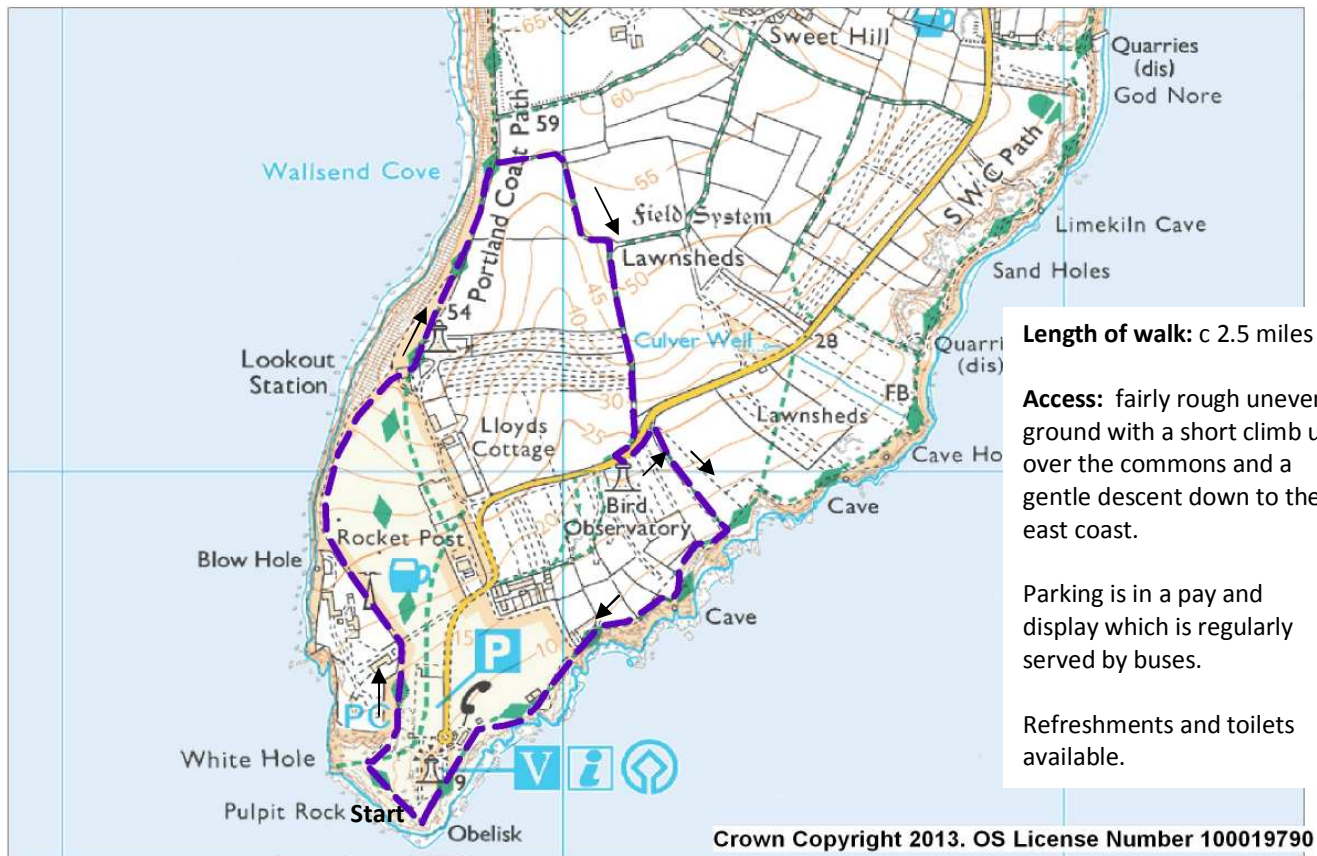
Circular walk

9

Portland Bill

2.5 miles





Length of walk: c 2.5 miles

Access: fairly rough uneven, ground with a short climb up over the commons and a gentle descent down to the east coast.

Parking is in a pay and display which is regularly served by buses.

Refreshments and toilets available.

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Before turning right along the Coast Path you may like to linger on the rocks. In spring and early summer, you can often see sea guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes flying into the hidden cliff edges to breed.

Follow the Coast Path right past the disused quarry and up onto the Bill Commons.

The Commons are managed by the traditional Portland Court Leet. They have an abundance of wildflowers, butterflies and birds. Look out for stone chats perched on the fence or tall stems, sounding like two stones being hit together. The fence line takes you up to the cliff edge. There are great views across Lyme Bay out as far as South Devon's Start Point on a clear day. You may prefer to take a wander along the other paths on the common and enjoy what other flowers are around at the time.

Head for the National Coast Watch lookout Station and follow the Coast Path along a wide grassy stretch.

There are spectacular views of the dramatic West Cliffs and their geological strata. They have been created by toppling landslides of Portland stone onto the Portland sand and Kimmeridge clay foot slopes below. The fissures which criss-cross the island can be seen in the cliff faces. In spring and summer, the sound of skylarks will fill the air.

Turn right off the Coast Path to and follow the track down to meet the Portland Bill road.

You will get views of the medieval strip field cultivation system, commonly known as 'lawns heds'. It's part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The Portland Bird Observatory, occupying the Lower Lighthouse, manages much of the land with a mixed cultivation, encouraging overwintering seed crops for birds and arable margins for rare plants.

Start at Portland Bill obelisk, south of the Lighthouse looking out to sea.

This walk explores both the east and west coasts in a lovely varied walk. The area is great for wildlife both out at sea and inland and has a fascinating history.

Bottlenose dolphins can sometimes be spotted riding along the edge of the Portland Bill tidal race as well as seabirds such as gannets and shearwaters.

In spring and autumn you'll find lots of people watching birds, as this is one of the key areas in the country to see and enjoy bird migrations both out at sea and those using Portland as stop-over!

The cliffs have been altered by early quarrying, evidence has been left behind; old cranes, tramway sleepers and piers. Look right and you will see Pulpit Rock, all that remains of a great natural rock arch.

The coastal grassland has been eroded by thousands of feet. Temporary enclosures are being used to allow the special grassland to regenerate and plants like thrift and sea spurrey are now flowering here again.

The path to Pulpit Rock follows the bed of a tramway passing two Quarrymen's shelters. Under your feet, the pebbly surface is the remains of an ancient raised beach laid down some 120,000 years ago during an ice age.