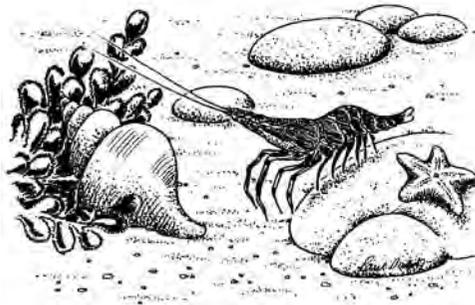


## The South West Coast Path

Going east the path follows an inland route to avoid the West Fleet, an extremely sensitive wildlife area.

## The Fleet Lagoon

The Fleet Lagoon is the largest lagoon in NW Europe. Tidal water enters the Fleet from Portland Harbour. It moves swiftly but loses its velocity as it travels up the lagoon. It also becomes brackish as it mixes with the freshwater of the Fleet's streams. The Fleet is generally only 1-2 metres deep, and as a consequence has above average temperatures in the summer and below average temperatures in the winter.



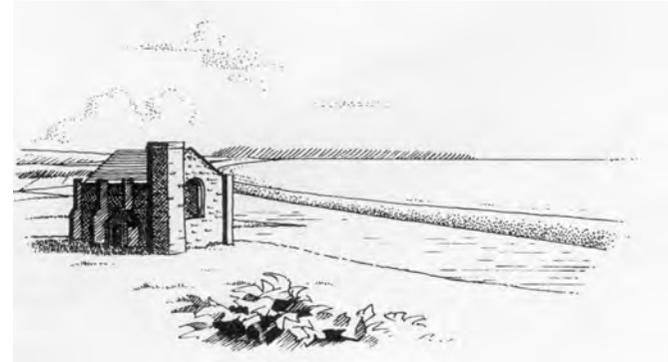
## Management

The area is managed by a warden and a team of volunteer assistants. The warden is employed by the Ilchester Estates, who own the Fleet seabed and the neighbouring area of Chesil including Abbotsbury Beach.

For further information please contact the Reserve Warden's Office – tel 01305 760579. For information on the car park and its operation please contact Abbotsbury Tourism on 01305 871130.  
[www.chesilbeach.org](http://www.chesilbeach.org)



## Welcome to Chesil Bank and the Fleet Nature Reserve at Abbotsbury Beach



We hope you will enjoy your visit to this beautiful part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the East Devon and Dorset World Heritage Site.

Abbotsbury Beach offers unrivalled views of Lyme Bay and is one of the most popular angling venues in the country.

Though the shingle may be hard going underfoot, the beach can be comfortable to sit on, take a picnic and perhaps to lie down and take a doze, mesmerized by the sounds of lapping waves moving millions of pebbles.

Here at Abbotsbury the sea leads directly to the Atlantic Ocean from where the prevailing westerly winds blow, some times gentle breezes, sometimes exhilarating gusts and occasionally gale force blows

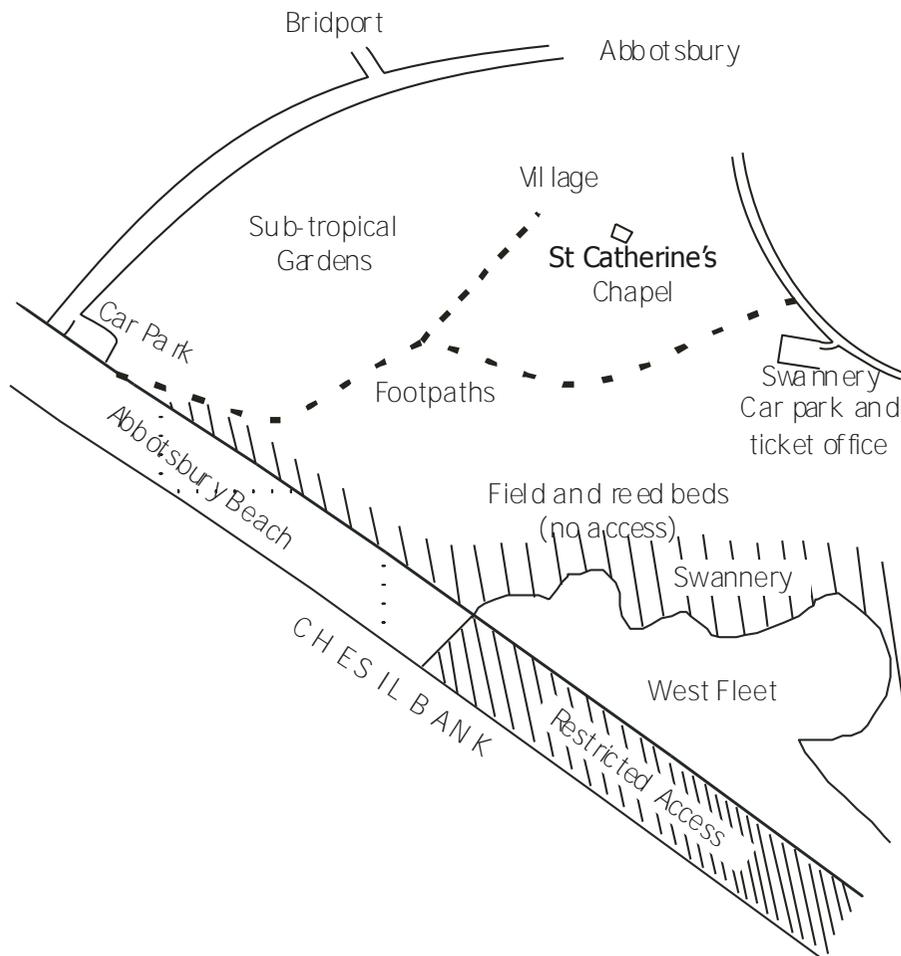
The beach is an important natural sea defence and visitor amenity for quiet recreation. It is also important for wildlife. Please help us maintain this beautiful area according to the code below.

Please note in particular that there is a strong undertow to the waves, and swimming should not take place. There are no rights of way along the beach, and that going east access is limited.

Thank you

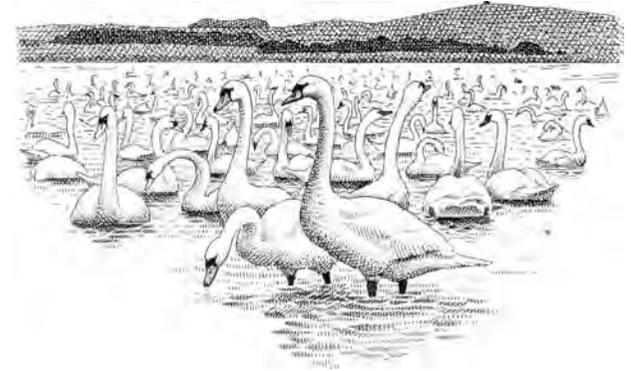
## Abbotsbury Beach Code

- Please leave nothing on the beach. There are waste bins by the toilets in the car park
- Please keep dogs under close control
- Please respect the privacy and peace of other beach users
- Camping is not permitted
- Raised BBQ's are fine but fires lit directly on the shingle are not permitted and hot pebbles 'explode' dangerously
- The beach is part of an important nature reserve – plants should not be destroyed and animals not disturbed



## Abbotsbury Swannery and birds of the Fleet

A world famous colony of mute swans enjoys the tranquillity of the Fleet throughout the spring and summer. The Swannery can be visited. In the autumn and winter the swans are joined by many other water-birds including the Brent Geese from the low Arctic and the fish eating duck, the Red-breasted Merganser.



## Chesil Bank

Chesil Bank is the largest of 3 major shingle structures in Britain. Formed by rising seas at the end of the last Ice Age, this barrier beach is a vital sea defence. The make-up and behaviour of the beach, including the grading of its pebbles - pea size in the west to potato size in the east - is of exceptional scientific interest. The beach is a home to shingle plants, breeding seabirds and rare coastal invertebrate life.



## Chesil Bank and the Fleet Nature Reserve

Chesil Bank and the Fleet form a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), an European Marine Reserve, and a RAMSAR site – an internationally valued wetland. The land banks of the Fleet constitute the area's Jurassic Coast, but all of the Chesil and Fleet are included in the East Devon and Dorset World Heritage Site.