
General Information Sheet for walking along Chesil Bank between Abbotsbury and Portland – for authorised personnel from 1st May – 31st August and for members of the public as a permissive access from 1st September to 30th April

Introduction

This information is aimed at preparing you for your walk, supporting you during it, and ensuring that you get the best possible experience and enjoyment from it.

This guidance together with our document outlining environmental considerations and including a map should be used to produce your own risk assessment and environmental impact assessment.

Summary of 'environmental' advice/requirements

The summer access exclusion and winter access restrictions are key to protecting important populations of mammals, birds, invertebrates and plants. The main requirements for the winter access are keeping dogs on the lead and walking on the seaward flank of the beach.

Safety and Emergency Advice

Your well-being and care of the environment during your walk is your responsibility.

If you are a lone walker please ensure that the final additional control measure in the risk assessment – that someone else knows the timings and locations of your walk – is followed.

In a group there needs to be a leader recognised by all members.

Leaders need to fully brief members of their group. They also need to be aware of the capabilities of everyone in the group and to pace the walk accordingly – it is important that the group stays together throughout.

Please be warned that mobile phone reception may be limited.

Wear sensible footwear and clothing and be ready for possible changes in the weather.

Chesil Bank is very exposed with no shelter.

There are no toilet facilities.

Take plenty of drinking water

Random waves can easily soak a walker, or even sweep them in to the sea.

In the event or forecast of a severe storm, the walk should be cancelled. Detailed weather forecasts can be obtained from the Met Office 0870 900 0100 or www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk.

Walking is to be carried out on the seaward side of the beach just below the crest. If caught out in bad weather producing large waves, walking on the crest is permitted. **Only in exceptional stormy circumstances can shelter be gained by walking on the inward (Fleet Lagoon) side of the beach.** From an environmental view this is not at all desirable.

Please take into account that in the event of an incident, it may not be that easy for emergency or other supporting services to reach you. Boats cannot always operate in the Fleet owing to its shallowness or in the open sea owing to the deeply shelving beach and strong undertow. Normal emergency vehicles cannot travel along the beach because of the loose shingle. The nearest locations for vehicles to access are the Chesil Beach

Car park, Portland Beach Road (GR SY 668 775) to the south east or The Abbotsbury Beach Car Park (GR SY 560 846) to the north west.

Tidmoor Firing Range

Access is available at all times, except when the red flags are flying, when walkers will be stopped and turned back. For further information contact the Wyke Regis Training Area on 01305 831935.

The Chesil Beach Centre usually has a list of dates when the range is firing.

Emergency information

In an emergency dial 999 and ask for coast guard.

Dial 1111 for advice from a doctor

Health and Medical Advice and Facilities

Dorset County Hospital – Williams Avenue, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 2JY. Direct Number 01305 255541.

Weymouth Community Hospital – Queens Road, Weymouth. Open 7 days a week, 0800 – 2200. Tel 01305 760022.

Portland Hospital, minor injuries – Castle Road, Castle Town, Portland, Dorset. DT5 1AX. Tel 01305 820341.

Other concerns you might have

If you require help but not necessarily as an emergency, please contact the Reserve Staff via the Chesil Beach Centre on 01305 760579. The staff at Abbotsbury Swannery may also be able to help (01305 871684). The local coast guard can be contacted on 01305 760439. Out-of-hours please ring the warden on 01308 485504 or 07855344318.

Reporting In

The Reserve Staff are not able to keep the more remote parts of Chesil that you will encounter during your walk under constant surveillance. It would therefore be appreciated if you would note and report any matter which you feel may be of concern. We would like to know of potential or real pollution problems or health hazards that we ought to deal with. Anything can be washed up at anytime – from a troubled cetacean to unexploded ordinance to a drum of oil – **of course don't go near** but if possible get a brief description and rough location.

Again the numbers to contact are the Reserve Staff via the Chesil Beach Centre on 01305 760579, or the staff at Abbotsbury Swannery on 01305 871684 or the local coast guard on 01305 760439. Out-of-hours please ring the warden on 01308485504 or 07855344318.

Finally, we would be pleased to have details of any wildlife sightings or other observations that you may feel would be of interest to us.

Thank you

The Warden

Chesil Bank and the Fleet Nature Reserve, The Reserve office, The Chesil Beach Centre,
Portland Beach Road, Weymouth, Dorset. www.reserve@chesilbeach.org