

MAP SHOWING WEY VALLEY WALKS

The view from Windsbatch and the Ridgeway

The River Wey passes from Upwey down through the lowlands of Weymouth to reach the sea via Radipole Lake. The lowlands between Weymouth and the chalk escarpment of the Ridgeway are divided into a series of limestone hog-back ridges separated by broad clay vales formed by the Weymouth anticline. These ridges run from east to west. They are long and fairly straight with flattish tops and consistently sloping sides. Geologically, the ridges of the Weymouth anticline are made up of Cornbrash, Forest Marble and beds of Portland and Purbeck limestone.



Round Barrows

The views from the Ridgeway are spectacular and you imagine why prehistoric people considered this hill to be of particular significance in their spiritual lives. The round barrows that you see dotted on the hill were constructed in the Bronze Age (2200 - 650 BC). They were used to bury extremely important people. We know this because if ordinary people had been buried in this way there would clearly be more burial mounds in larger concentrations.

Sutton Poyntz was one of the largest agricultural settlements in the Weymouth area but it has slowly become more developed, though still retains its village character. Sutton Poyntz was a favourite destination for day trippers from Weymouth in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Archaeological excavations at Sutton Poyntz have revealed artefacts dating from Iron Age, Roman and Medieval times.

In 1858 the daily water consumption was 60-70,000 gallons. Today, Wessex Water has a licence to extract 28 million gallons per day. From the pumping station the water is pumped to holding reservoirs at Chalbury and Wyke Regis. The museum and pump house are scheduled ancient monuments and are open to the public at specified times and dates.

Funnel of the 'Great Eastern' steamship

In 1859, the 'Great Eastern', I.K. Brunel's new iron ship, was on trial in the English Channel near Portland. There was an explosion in her boilers and one of the long funnels was blown off, but was later salvaged. The then Weymouth Waterworks company purchased the upper part of the funnel some two metres wide by one and a half metres high. Holes were drilled on all sides and it was then inserted into a specially dug water basin. The funnel was filled with sand and gravel, connected to a pipe and until 2003 filtered all spring water before it arrived via a pipe line to the pumping station.



Points of Interest

- 1 Friar Waddon Pumping Station
- 2 The Spring and EA Gauge Station
- 3 Site of Trout Farm
- 4 Upwey Mill & Hydro
- 5 Site of Island Garden Wheel
- 6 EA Broadway Gauging Station
- 7 North & South Mills
- 8 Spa House Fish Pass
- 9 Nottingham Mill Race
- 10 Nottingham Mill
- 11 Nottingham Malthouse
- 12 Radipole Upper Mill & Hydro
- 13 Site of Radipole Lower Mill
- 14 Westham Bridge Sluices & Fish Pass

In the distance the Isle of Portland can clearly be seen, extending four miles into the English Channel. The instantly recognisable wedge shape of Portland is due to the steep limestone cliffs at the northern end of the island which rise to over 500 feet, before sloping down to 20 feet above sea level at the southern tip of the island at Portland Bill.

Portland is linked to mainland Weymouth by the shingle bank known as Chesil Beach. Chesil beach extends from Chiswell on Portland to West Bay, some 15 miles. This ridge of shingle acts as a buffer between the sea and the inner coastline, bordering the Fleet lagoon.

Friar Waddon

Friar Waddon was first recognised as a settlement in the Domesday Book as Wadone in 1086. In 1384 it was called Ferenwaddon meaning 'hill or down where woad (a plant) grows' from the Old English wad (woad) and dun (down, hill). The addition of Friar (earlier Feren 'of the Friars') refers to the possession of lands here by the Knights Hospitallers. Friar Waddon was more usually called Brodewaddon in Medieval times, from the Old English brad 'broad' to distinguish it from Little Waddon. The present day settlement consists of buildings dating back to the 16th and 18th century.

The Wessex Water Friar Waddon Pumping Station extracts water from the chalk aquifer which is then pumped to reservoirs at the top of the Ridgeway hill from where it supplies, by gravity, water to the Isle of Portland.

The Ridgeway

As you walk along the Ridgeway, around Bincombe and Came Wood you will see evidence of prehistoric people. In Dorset there is a key relationship between landscape character and the underlying geological structure. Agriculture was introduced about 6,000 years ago and has had a continuing influence on the landscape since then, leaving a legacy of distinctive features. Neolithic people gradually cleared small Oak-Hazel woodland on the light chalkland soils, because they were easier to cultivate than the heavy clay vales which remained forested until Medieval times. The forests were then cleared on a piecemeal basis to form an irregular patchwork of fields and copses. Neolithic and Bronze Age evidence suggests that chalk uplands have been well settled, but since the Medieval times villages have been confined to the sheltered valleys.

The round barrows are in a variety of different shapes and the Bronze Age barrows on Ridge Hill form one of the highest concentrations in the British Isles. There are 230 on the main ridge and a further 200 plus on spurs projecting from it, including Chalbury Hill and the Bincombe Bumps. Originally on the Ridgeway, taking into account destruction over the ages, both natural and man-induced, it is thought that there may have been as many as 1000 barrows altogether.

Sutton Poyntz

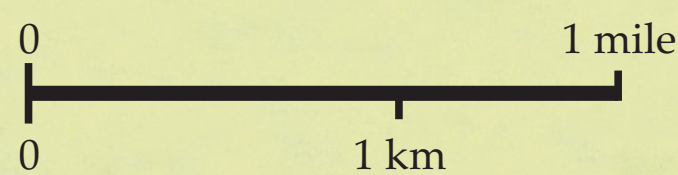
The village was first recorded in 891 as Sutone and was also mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. Poyntz was a later addition first recorded in 1314 and comes from the name of the family that held the manor from the 13th century. An earlier member of the Poyntz family was in charge of supplies for the invading Norman forces in 1066.

Wey Valley Walks Key

- Red route - 5 miles/8km, approx 2½ hrs
- Alternative for red route avoiding one style
- Blue route - 4½ miles/7km, approx 2½ hrs
- Green route - 4½ miles/7km, approx 2½ hrs
- Purple route - 6½ miles/10km, approx 3 hrs
- Link in Public Rights of Way

- Parking
- Bus stops
- Toilets
- Route on road, please take care
- Railway Station

Scale



During 2004 the now Wessex Water donated the funnel section to the SS Great Britain Trust which unveiled it in the December taking centre stage in an exhibition about the conservation of the SS Great Britain, Extreme Iron in Bristol. This is an important artefact as it is the only remaining iron part still in existence of Brunel's third and final ship.

Chalbury Hillfort

Chalbury hillfort dates back to the Iron Age but there was a settlement here in the Neolithic period around 5,000 years ago, and two barrows were erected on the hill in the Bronze Age (around 3,000 yrs ago). The hillfort was constructed in the early Iron Age, around 500 BC and began as a simple enclosure with one main bank and ditch, later additional banks and ditches were created as defences. The main enclosure, about 8½ acres, shows signs of extensive occupation. Flattish platforms in the interior were probably the location of roundhouses.

Artefacts that have been found at Chalbury Hillfort include pottery, small tanged iron knife, bone 'gouges', very small angular blue-glass beads, fragments of a bronze ring, a bronze bracelet or earring, charred wheat, a spindle-whorl and sling stones, worked flints, a scatter of human bones and a few animal bones including ox and sheep. The inhabitants probably belonged to the local tribe of the Durotriges, and the defences were probably abandoned after the Roman Conquest in AD 43.

The terraces visible to the north of the hillfort are lynchets. These were constructed in the Middle Ages to allow ploughing of what had previously been a steep slope.

