

# Poundbury

Dorchester's urban extension



## Media Guide

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# Overview



Poundbury is an urban extension to the Dorset county town of Dorchester, built on Duchy of Cornwall land, according to timeless principles of architecture and urban planning as advocated by HRH The Prince of Wales. It is currently home to 1,500 people in different types of housing, including social housing, as well as providing employment for some 1,000 people.

Begun in 1994, Poundbury is based on some of the timeless principles that have enabled many places around Britain to endure and thrive over the centuries. It is a high-density urban quarter of Dorchester which gives priority to people, rather than cars, and where commercial buildings are mixed with residential areas, shops and leisure facilities to create a walkable community. The result is an attractive and pleasing place, in keeping with the character of Dorchester, in which people live, work, shop and play.

Poundbury was planned to challenge some of the planning assumptions of the latter part of the 20th Century with its ghettoised and run down social housing estates and out of town shopping centres, forcing ever greater reliance on the car. Over the past decade, as Poundbury has developed, it has demonstrated that there is a genuine alternative to the way in which we build new communities in this country. According to a survey in September 2003, 86 per cent of Poundbury residents were pleased to have moved there and a similar number believe that Poundbury has broken the mould of characterless modern development.

Poundbury has proved increasingly influential, attracting international interest and generating hundreds of organised tours every year from architects, town planners and others. The success of Poundbury has now been recognised far beyond Dorset and many of the principles have been incorporated into the Government's Planning Guidance Note (PPG3). Poundbury was also highlighted as an exemplar in "Living Working Countryside. The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing" a report by Matthew Taylor MP, published in July 2008 and commissioned by Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

# History

In 1987 the local planning authority, West Dorset District Council, selected Duchy of Cornwall land to the west of Dorchester for future expansion of the town. As Duke of Cornwall, The Prince of Wales – who re-examined many of the precepts of urban and rural planning in his book 'A Vision of Britain' – took the opportunity to work with the council to create a model urban extension to this ancient market town.

In 1988, The Prince of Wales appointed the well-known architect and urban planner, Leon Krier, to work on an overall concept for 400 acres of land of what would become Poundbury. Krier's challenge was to create an autonomous new extension to the town within the context of traditional Dorset architecture, using the urban design principles described in *A Vision of Britain*.

In 1989, the Poundbury Masterplan was exhibited in Dorchester at a Planning Weekend attended by The Prince of Wales. Local residents and interested parties were invited to share their opinions and the feedback was reflected in the scheme before planning consent was sought.

The resulting Masterplan divided Poundbury into four distinctive quarters – the first phase of which started construction in October 1993. Poundbury is being developed over the next 15-20 years and it is expected that when completed, Dorchester's population will increase by about one-quarter, with approximately 5,000 people in Poundbury.

By January 2009, Poundbury had become home to over 1,500 people with 1,000 people working there. Poundbury is approximately one-third built and is planned to grow to 2,200 homes by 2025.



The Poundbury Masterplan

# The Poundbury Principles

## Architecture



“The homes, the workspace and the wider layout of streets, squares and lanes have been designed and built with the surrounding landscape and architectural typologies very much in mind.”

### **The Prince of Wales**

The Prince of Wales believes that one of our country’s greatest strengths is the regional variation of its towns and villages, built with locally distinctive materials. The architecture at Poundbury fits this pattern, respecting local styles, drawing on the rich heritage of Dorset, and in particular, the streets of Dorchester. The architects, many of whom are based in Dorset, have consciously used a variety of local Dorset materials such as stone, slate and render. All architects work to a Building Code which regulates features such as roof angles and chimneys.

Quality of design and workmanship is controlled by the Duchy through legally-binding Building Agreements with each developer before the freehold is released. This helps to ensure that private and social housing is built to the same high quality.

## A walkable community



“At Poundbury the entire Masterplan was based upon placing the pedestrian, and not the car, at the centre of the design.”

### **The Prince of Wales**

At Poundbury, priority is given to people, rather than cars to help create a sense of community and a feeling of safety. Commercial buildings have been built among residential areas – homes, shops and community and leisure facilities – to encourage people to walk rather than take their car. Poundbury is intentionally unfriendly to cars with roads generally irregular and winding, controlling the speed of vehicles in a natural way.

## Mixed Housing



“The important point is that social tenants are not in a ghetto, but integrated with private homes, offices and factories. This helps make it a living, breathing community in which all the residents can share a sense of

pride and where people are happy to live.”

### **The Prince of Wales**

One of the more innovative ideas suggested by The Prince in *A Vision of Britain* was to build private and social housing alongside one another rather than continuing to build huge ghettoised housing estates. In Poundbury, market-rate and affordable housing are interspersed, and from the outside are indistinguishable from each other. As a result, the community is more cohesive and there is no stigma attached to living in certain parts of the Development. Current guidelines require 35% of housing in Poundbury to be affordable. According to the Guinness Housing Trust – which provides the affordable housing - Poundbury is its most successful and trouble-free site with residents reporting a higher level of satisfaction than elsewhere.

## Green Buildings



“I am trying to demonstrate the long-term value of building in an ecologically sustainable way at Poundbury. Not only can ‘green’ buildings earn higher rents and prices, but also cost less to operate and maintain. I hope this will go some way to convincing even the most hard-headed commercial operators that sustainability is something worth thinking about!”

### **The Prince of Wales**

Many of the new homes in Poundbury are being built with their impact on the environment very much in mind. These houses are exceptionally well insulated and, where possible, incorporate market leading sustainable technologies such as solar tubes, photovoltaic panels and rainwater harvesting. The current focus is in achieving Code Level 4 under the Code for Sustainable Homes.

# Poundbury Phase 1

- Phase 1 is 18.5 acres (7.5 hectares)
- Planning consent for the first homes was obtained in May 1993 following extensive public consultation.
- There are 196 houses and 56 flats in Phase 1 including 55 social housing units rented through the Guinness Trust.

## The Hub of Phase 1: Pummery Square



Pummery Square forms the 'hub' of Phase 1, linking through to the significant Victoria Park development in Dorchester. The roads from the hub of Pummery Square fan out throughout the rest of Phase 1 so that residents can easily access the Square's services from wherever they live.

The dominant building is the Brownsword Hall, designed by John Simpson, in the idiom of a traditional West Country market hall. The undercroft hosts farmers' markets on two Saturdays every month. The upper chamber is effectively Poundbury's community hall, managed by the Poundbury Village Hall Trust and hired out for community, private and commercial events.

The surface of the Square belongs to the Hall and is used for occasional public and theatrical events as well as a car park.

The other buildings fronting the Square are commercial on the ground floor and residential above. Significant buildings are the Poet Laureate public house, Poundbury Village Stores, the Octagon Café, the Poundbury Clinic, and a number of small shops and services.

## Eco-Homes



Eleven Eco-Homes have been built in a joint venture by the Duchy of Cornwall and Zero Carbon Ltd. (formerly Cornhill Estates) in Poundbury. The five houses and six apartment homes are all occupied and have been built with energy-saving features.

The houses are rated as BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method) EcoHomes Excellent and NHER (National Home Energy Rating) rating of 10.

The main energy-saving and environmental features include:

- Solar Hot Water Heating - will supply approximately 70 per cent of the annual hot water demand for the houses
- Photovoltaic Roof Tiles - (panel of 16 integrated photovoltaic tiles fitted to houses) will provide at least one third of the annual electricity demand; this saves 412kg of carbon dioxide per year
- Rainwater Harvesting and dual flush toilets - will reduce water bills by about 50%. Water butts at the apartments will collect rainwater from the roof to supply the communal garden
- Heat Recovery Ventilation - will take heat from air extracted from the kitchen and bathroom and will be transferred to supply the main living rooms and bedrooms.
- Sheep wool loft insulation - has the potential to last the lifetime of the building.
- The average U value (heat retained inside) for the buildings is more than 30 per cent better than standard building regulations.

## Poundbury Phase 2

The second phase of the development was granted outline planning permission in October 1999. Current estimates are that this will provide approx. 900 homes and 7ha of employment space over a 10 year development period.

As from 2005 the Duchy is providing 35 per cent affordable housing in Phase 2. The focus of Phase 2 will be Queen Mother Square providing further retail and commercial facilities. The Poundbury Barns Garden Centre opened in March 2006.

### The Hub of Phase 2: Queen Mother Square



Queen Mother Square will form the district centre of Poundbury and will commemorate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, and will incorporate a statue of her. The sculptor is Philip Jackson.

The square itself will be an open area in the European model flanked by buildings on all sides, and include a significant tower structure.

The buildings have been designed by Quinlan and Francis Terry, with the interiors designed by HGP Architects. The south side of the Square is already under construction. Planning Approval was obtained for a mixed residential and commercial scheme on the west side of the square in 2008, whilst proposals for the north side of the square are currently evolving.

## Further Phases of Poundbury



A view of Maiden Castle, an Iron Age hill fort, from Poundbury

### South West Quadrant

The 10 acre site forming the remainder of Phase 2 is situated between the Bridport Road and Middle Farm Way with views towards historic Maiden Castle.

Planning Approval was granted by West Dorset District Council in 2008 for 190 homes (of which 59 will be affordable, including a mixture of shared ownership and rented accommodation), shops, offices and restaurants. The focal point of the development will be the Buttermarket with small retail units and workshops lining the square.

The development will be built by CG Fry & Morrish Builders and will incorporate a private wire network to enable dwellings to reach Code 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Work is scheduled for completion in 2012.

# Poundbury Residents Association

The Poundbury Residents Association was formed to represent the interests of Poundbury residents, whether owners or tenants, and the community generally. It is run by a committee elected at the AGM in March.

Open meetings are held quarterly in the Brownsword Hall, Pummery Square. Agendas cover a wide spectrum of topical interest central to the development of the community.

The Residents Association issue a newsletter to residents on a monthly basis, highlighting events at Poundbury, for example gardening competitions or Market Hall functions. It is also used to notify people of intended works around the development and to address common issues and concerns.

## What other people have said about Poundbury

"I think Poundbury is fascinating. What's interesting is that it's not just about housing, there is a sense of community ownership. The strongest lesson is that if you listen to local people and you allow them to have a strong voice in creating the kind of communities they want to live in, that's how you'll get lasting success.

What's most impressive was that it's pedestrian-friendly..."

**The Rt. Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

"Poundbury is arguably the most famous example of successful master-planning in the country."  
**Matthew Taylor MP July 2008, from 'Living Working Countryside. The Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing.'**

"Charles was right: we like where we live to feel familiar"

**The Times Newspaper -**

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/leading\\_article/article4368812.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/leading_article/article4368812.ece)

"Prince of Wales's vision cited as model for rural expansion"

**The Times Newspaper -** <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article4369070.ece>

"For a long time the butt of criticism from the fashionable architectural commissars, it is now a point of pilgrimage for planners."

**Anne Spackman, Financial Times**

"We hate to say it, but Charles was right."

**Martin Spring, Building Magazine**

"Why shouldn't this be the average housing estate? What is being done here is very important work for this country's urban future."

**John Prescott, Former Deputy Prime Minister**

# Facts about Poundbury

- Construction of Poundbury commenced in October 1993.
- Poundbury is being built on 400 acres of land. 250 acres of mixed-use buildings and 150 acres of landscaping.
- Poundbury is being built in four distinct phases.
- At the beginning of 2009 around 1,500 people were living in Poundbury and 1,000 people working in businesses.
- Poundbury is expected to increase the population of Dorchester by about one-quarter (approximately 5,000 people) over the development period.
- The architecture of Poundbury is unashamedly traditional but it is not a village. Poundbury is an urban extension to Dorchester.
- There are currently 66 individual businesses operating in Poundbury.
- 35% of the housing under construction in Poundbury is affordable housing for rental or shared ownership by people on the local housing list.
- Pummery Square is the hub of Phase one and Queen Mother Square will be the hub of Phases two, three and four.
- There are currently 11 specially built Eco Homes in Poundbury but more are planned for the future.
- Poundbury will probably be completed around 2025.
- Poundbury is one third built.

# Useful Websites and Contacts

The Duchy of Cornwall - [www.duchyofcornwall.org](http://www.duchyofcornwall.org)

The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment - [www.princes-foundation.org](http://www.princes-foundation.org)

The Prince of Wales's official website – [www.princeofwales.gov.uk](http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk)

## **Builders**

CG Fry & Son Ltd.

T. 01308 482545

F. 01308 482249

E: [sales@cgfry.co.uk](mailto:sales@cgfry.co.uk)

Website: [www.cgfry.co.uk](http://www.cgfry.co.uk)

Morrish Builders

T. 01202 623 420

F. 01202 632 448

Commercial Enquiries: T: 01202 661 177

Website: [www.morrish-builders.co.uk](http://www.morrish-builders.co.uk)

Zero Carbon Ltd.

T: 01305 250 427

E: [k.slowe@zeroholdings.co.uk](mailto:k.slowe@zeroholdings.co.uk)

Website: [www.zeroholdings.com](http://www.zeroholdings.com)

Woodpecker Properties

T: 01258 841 155

F: 01258 841 166

E: [woodpeckerproperties@btconnect.com](mailto:woodpeckerproperties@btconnect.com)

## **Social Housing Contacts**

The Guinness Trust

T: 01392 822 912

F: 01392 822 901

Website: [www.guinnesspartnership.com](http://www.guinnesspartnership.com)

## **Local Council**

West Dorset District Council

T: 01305 251010

F: 01305 251481

E: [custservices@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:custservices@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)

## **Estate Agents**

Elder & Froy - [www.elderfroy.co.uk](http://www.elderfroy.co.uk) T: 01305 269 200

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