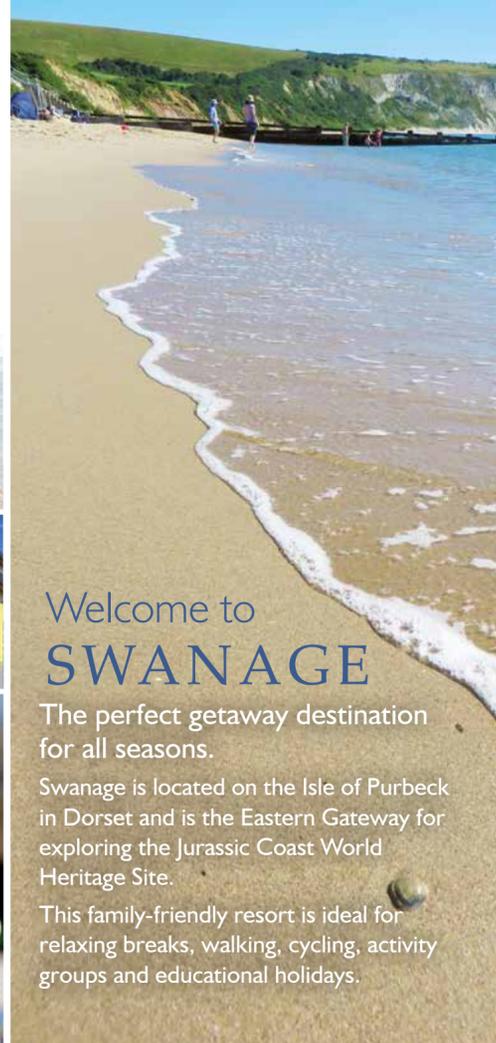


The essential  
visitor guide to

# SWANAGE



## Welcome to SWANAGE

The perfect getaway destination  
for all seasons.

Swanage is located on the Isle of Purbeck  
in Dorset and is the Eastern Gateway for  
exploring the Jurassic Coast World  
Heritage Site.

This family-friendly resort is ideal for  
relaxing breaks, walking, cycling, activity  
groups and educational holidays.

## A DAY TRIP IS NEVER ENOUGH

Popular with all  
generations and evoking  
nostalgia from childhood  
holidays, Swanage is  
perfect for a family holiday.  
Swanage's award winning  
beach is family-friendly  
with large stretches of  
golden sand – great for  
sandcastle building.

Family fun can be enjoyed  
by taking boat trips, visiting  
quality local attractions, learning  
to kayak or playing mini golf or  
tennis together.

Enjoy the simpler things in life  
like having a picnic in Prince  
Albert Gardens, crab fishing  
from Swanage's Stone Quay and visiting the Country Park  
and Castle at Durlston.

Arrive in style on the Swanage Railway by steam train or  
catch the open top bus from Bournemouth, both with  
amazing views of the surrounding landscape.

Extend your stay for a relaxing short break.



*"hiring a beach  
hut makes our  
holiday even  
more relaxing"*

## SWANAGE BEACH & BAY

Gently shelving, golden  
sand and clear unpolluted  
water are just some of the  
great reasons that  
Swanage Beach has been  
awarded a Blue Flag and  
Seaside Award.

Experience some of the  
south coast's best weather  
while strolling along the  
promenade or why not  
hire one of the colourful  
beach huts to make your  
holiday extra relaxing.

Paddling in the water,  
collecting sea shells and  
building sandcastles is  
something that children will  
remember for years to  
come.



*"Punch and Judy  
on the beach  
makes for happy  
memories"*



## SHOPPING IN SWANAGE

With a mix of high street  
brands and small,  
independent shops selling  
everything from sausages  
to souvenirs, you will be a  
satisfied shopper in  
Swanage.

Take your time window  
shopping and browsing the  
interesting and eclectic  
vintage, retro and antique  
shops.

Chat to friendly shop  
keepers who will be  
delighted to help you pick  
out a great new look for  
your wardrobe.

Wander around quality art  
and craft galleries for the  
special purchase to remind you of a wonderful time  
in Swanage.

After you've worked up an appetite, take a coffee  
break or enjoy lunch in one of the street side cafes or  
restaurants over looking the sea.

At Christmas time look out for the festive Artisans on the  
Beach where local crafters sell their wares from the  
beach huts.



*"the shops are so  
close to the sea, my  
two favourite  
things!"*



## ACCOMMODATION

Whether you're looking  
for a quaint cottage, farm  
stay, hostel, traditional  
B&B, posh hotel, lively  
holiday park or a rustic  
campsite, we have it  
covered in Swanage.

Check availability and  
book online on our  
website  
[www.visit-dorset.com](http://www.visit-dorset.com) or  
contact our Visitor Information  
Centre for help finding your  
perfect getaway.

Can't bear to leave your  
canine friend at home? We  
have many places for you to  
stay, eat and visit which  
welcome dogs.

If camping is more your  
style, pitch your tent in one  
of the family friendly  
campsites in and around  
Swanage or hire a camping  
pod or shepherd hut. Most  
sites also cater for caravans  
and motorhomes.



*"our hotel room  
had an amazing  
seaview"*



## VISITING SWANAGE

Drop in or contact the teams at our Visitor Information  
Centres to make the most of your trip.

### Swanage Information Centre

The White House, Shore Road, Swanage,  
Dorset. BH19 1LB. Tel: 01929 766018  
email: [mail@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:mail@swanage.gov.uk)



Visit-Dorset.com

Follow us on:

[@SwanageTIC](https://twitter.com/SwanageTIC)

[facebook.com/SwanageTouristInformation](https://facebook.com/SwanageTouristInformation)

### Discover Purbeck Information Centre

South Street, Wareham, Dorset. BH20 4LR  
Tel: 01929 552740

## HOW TO GET HERE

### Bus

Purbeck Breezer Bus Routes 30\* from Dorchester, 40  
from Poole and 50 from Bournemouth  
[www.purbeckbreezer.co.uk](http://www.purbeckbreezer.co.uk)

Swanage Bus Station to Durlston\* [www.morebus.co.uk](http://www.morebus.co.uk)

### Train

Train services on South West Trains to Wareham  
[www.southwesttrains.co.uk](http://www.southwesttrains.co.uk) with connections by bus or  
Swanage Railway.

[www.swanagerailway.co.uk](http://www.swanagerailway.co.uk)

### Coach

National Express coaches run daily from London Victoria  
to Swanage [www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)  
(\* peak season only)



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manipulated without prior written permission from Purbeck District Council  
and the copyright holders.

Swanage Town Council would like to thank all contributors to this publication.

## ARTS BY THE SEA

Many Artisans live and work in the town selling their  
creations in the studios, galleries and workshops. Art lovers  
will find quality sculpture, photography, paintings, pottery,  
glass jewellery and more. Immerse yourself in a range of  
creative festivals including the open studios of Purbeck and  
Dorset Arts Weeks.

The town has a central Theatre and Cinema offering a  
variety of plays, shows and pantomimes throughout the  
year. Don't miss the autumn Purbeck Film Festival.

Follow the Swanage Seen Art Trail and learn about artists  
who were inspired by their surroundings. There are nine  
locations to visit, each showing a painting from the Isle of  
Purbeck by a different artist.



Map not to scale ©Tony Kerins

## ILLUSTRATED MAP OF SWANAGE

- 1 Swanage Information Centre
- 2 Cinema & Theatre
- 3 Museum
- 4 Prince Albert Gardens
- 5 Pier
- 6 Wellington Clocktower
- 7 Lifeboat Station (open to the public)
- 8 Coast Watch Station at Peveril Point
- 9 Durlston Country Park
- 10 Anvil Point Lighthouse
- 11 Town Hall and Gaol (lock up)
- 12 Swanage Hospital
- 13 Bus and Train (Swanage Railway Interchange)
- 14 Playground
- 15 Corfe Castle
- 16 Sandbanks to Studland Ferry
- 17 Studland Village
- 18 Old Harry Rocks
- 19 Sports Park (Golf, Tennis, Bowls, Refreshments)
- 20 Sandpit Field
- 21 Safe Bathing Area
- 22 Punch and Judy

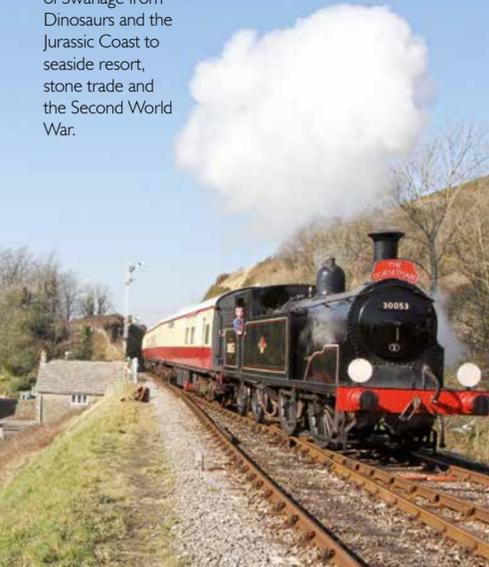
## HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

**Swanage Railway** - catch the picture postcard branch line to the seaside. Steam trains run through the beautiful Purbeck countryside and past Corfe Castle to the sandy beach of Swanage.

**Durlston Castle and Country Park** is a countryside paradise just 30 minutes walk from Swanage Town Centre, with coastal walking, stunning views and amazing wildlife. Don't miss Durlston Castle Visitor Centre for events and exhibitions.

**Swanage Pier** is an integral part of the character of Swanage, reflecting its Victorian splendour and rich heritage. Enjoy a stroll with the finest views of Swanage or catch a boat for a scenic boat trip along the coast.

**Swanage Museum** - uncover the story of Swanage from Dinosaurs and the Jurassic Coast to seaside resort, stone trade and the Second World War.



## THE JURASSIC COAST

No visit to Swanage is complete without walking a stretch of the Jurassic Coast. Recognised by UNESCO for its outstanding geology, our coastline is part of England's only natural World Heritage Site.

See spectacular geological features like nearby Old Harry Rocks.

Durlston Country Park has spectacular cliff top walks and a Castle Visitor Centre to help you discover the geology of 185 million years of Earth's history. It can be enjoyed 365 days of the year and highlights include wild flowers, migrating birds and a breath-taking walk to the lighthouse



*"Follow in the footsteps of dinosaurs"*



## FLAVOUR OF SWANAGE

Sample the local fare in the quality bistros, seaview restaurants, traditional pubs and tearooms. You'll find something for every taste.

A firm favourite for visitors is our scrumptious traditional fish and chips.

If you are self catering or day visiting, Swanage offers a range of take away establishments from around the world.

Make sure you try our freshly caught seafood, our handmade fresh chocolate and a scoop or two of ice cream for dessert.



*"the local ice cream is not to be missed"*



## MARKETS & LOCAL PRODUCE

There's no need to stock up before arriving as Swanage has independent butchers, bakers, fishmongers and farm shops and well known supermarkets.

There is always a local convenience store or campsite shop just round the corner but remember to try some of the locally produced food including: chocolate, ice cream, beer and cider and cheese. Look out for Dorset Food and Drink.

### Swanage Market:

- Town Market - Every Friday (April to October)



*"don't miss the Swanage Fish Festival"*



## SWANAGE HISTORY - FROM STONE PORT TO SEASIDE RESORT

The stone trade was once the main industry of Swanage. Purbeck stone was shipped to London in vast quantities from the 18th century and used mostly for street paving and harbour defences. The two founding fathers of Swanage, John Mowlem and his nephew George Burt, were at the centre of this trade with London.

Burt rescued many old London relics and brought them to Swanage. When exploring Swanage you can still see the facade of the Town Hall, from the Mercers' Hall in Cheapside dating from 1670, and the Wellington Clock Tower, originally erected at the approach to London Bridge in 1854.

Dorset MP William Morton Pitt had seen how King George III's enjoyment of sea bathing popularised the nearby town of Weymouth, and was convinced that Swanage could become a fashionable health resort and "watering place". In the 1820's he created the

first major hotel in Swanage, the Manor House Hotel. Following a visit by Princess Victoria in 1833 they were permitted to rename it the Royal Victoria Hotel.

The opening of the railway in 1885 saw the Victorians arriving in Swanage to enjoy the clean air and the new fashion of 'sea bathing'. Known as one of the sunniest towns on the south coast, Swanage soon changed from a stone port to a flourishing seaside resort.



## ACTIVE SWANAGE

Opportunities to enjoy activities in Swanage are endless. The numerous local walking trails are celebrated during the annual Swanage and Purbeck Walking Festival. But if you can't wait until Festival time, you can join a guided walk or let one of our experts plan a walking holiday for you at any time of year.

Swanage is a real walkers paradise with stunning clifftop walks, the Purbeck Ridge and Old Harry Rocks. We are proudly situated on the South West Coast Path

Whatever the weather, Swanage Beach Gardens Sports Park is great fun and value with putting green, tennis and outdoor bowls. Equipment is available along with hot and cold refreshments.

Swanage Bay is a popular dive site for all standards of diver and has several diving schools and boat charter companies for both diving and sea fishing.

Swanage has become a popular destination for sporting events.

Forgotten your bike? Don't worry you can hire one to follow the cycle trails.

Take a day cruise from Swanage Pier to Poole Quay for a scenic tour of the Jurassic Coast along the way. Or go on a real adventure on a classic cutter sail boat.

Why not join one of our outdoor adventure specialists and have a go at coasteering, abseiling, climbing, paddleboarding or kayaking?



## WEDDINGS & CELEBRATIONS

Swanage is the perfect location for your celebration or wedding.

Whether you are looking for a small and intimate wedding or an extravagant day, Swanage meets all your wishes.

Choose from an extensive range of wedding venues, many with outdoor licenced structures to help you create a day to remember and accommodation on site or nearby to suit all budgets.

You will be spoilt for choice with photo opportunities with beautiful backdrops.

Quirky or traditional, religious or civil, indoors or out - you choose.

Licensed civil wedding venues in Swanage include: Swanage Town Hall Chambers, Durlston Castle, The Grand Hotel, Purbeck House Hotel and California Barn.



*"a perfect venue and a perfect day"*



## A TOWN OF FESTIVALS

Swanage has a year-round calendar of events to keep you entertained in all weathers. Many of the local attractions organise events during school holidays to keep the whole family entertained and there are lots of events within easy reach of Swanage

For music lovers, the town has a fantastic range of festivals which everyone can enjoy, including Blues, Classical and Folk.

The Regatta and Carnival Week offers the lively atmosphere of a Caribbean-style carnival plus spectacular fireworks, music and dancing.

The Fish Festival and Walking Festival are also popular with locals and visitors alike.



## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

**January**  
New Year celebrations (fancy dress)

**February**  
Swanage Blues Festival

**March**  
Swanage Blues Festival  
Purbeck Strings Festival

**April**  
Swanage Railway Spring Steam Gala  
Classic Car Display

**May**  
Swanage Railway Diesel Gala  
Purbeck Arts Week  
Purbeck Pirate Festival

**June**  
Swanage Triathlon Festival  
Swanage Fish Festival  
Purbeck Plod Walking Challenge  
Swanage Rowing Regatta

**July**  
Swanage Regatta and Carnival Week

**August**  
Swanage Classic Triathlon  
Swanage Lifeboat Week

**September**  
Swanage Railway Transport Rally

Swanage Folk Festival  
Purbeck Outdoor Weekend  
Dorset Architectural Heritage Week  
Purbeck Chamber Music Festival  
Swanage and Purbeck Walking Festival

**October**  
Swanage Blues Festival  
Swanage Railway Autumn Steam Gala  
Purbeck Film Festival

**December**  
Artisans on the Beach  
Christmas Lights and street market  
Swanage Railway Santa Specials

**Plus many more...**

Please see Visit Dorset for a full list of events throughout the year or contact the Swanage Information Centre.



## BEACH HUTS

Hire a Swanage Beach Hut, ideal for family get-togethers or a cosy out-of-season base to relax by the sea.

Beach huts are let on a daily or weekly basis and are provided with a table, four chairs and an electricity power point. Different sizes and styles are available to suit your family or group size and location preference.

Pre-booking is normally required for school holidays, however the huts can be booked throughout the year.

Beach hut hire makes the perfect gift, book one as an unusual present and create lasting, happy memories.

Book online at [www.swanage.gov.uk/BeachHuts.aspx](http://www.swanage.gov.uk/BeachHuts.aspx) ring us on 01929 766018 or pop into the Swanage Information Centre.



*"A book and a flask of coffee is all I needed"*

