

# Planning cycling events in Purbeck



## Introduction

The Purbeck peninsula, covering an area in excess of 200 square miles is a place of outstanding natural beauty. It is a popular holiday destination due to the many attractions including the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. It is also a draw for those cyclists who may wish to test themselves on the steep hills or for those wanting to enjoy a more leisurely ride along the network of quiet country lanes. However, Purbeck is also a busy rural area with forestry, farming, military and equestrian activity on its narrow roads and tracks.

Due to the popularity of cycling, this guidance aims to help cycle event organisers minimise negative impacts and maximise the benefits so that their events are welcomed by all involved and affected. It is supported by Dorset County Council (DCC), Purbeck District Council (PDC), the National Farmers' Union, the Dorset Association of Town and Parish Councils and Dorset Police.

Event organisers are encouraged to adopt this approach wherever possible, consistent with the size and nature of their event. However this guidance does not replace or detract from the need to comply with the Highway Code or highway legislation, nor does it alter statutory regulations affecting cycle races.

Consider registering your event with British Cycling – they have a pool of resources created specifically to help with non-competitive cycling events which are given to registered organisers [www.britishcycling.org.uk/eventorganiser](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/eventorganiser).

Dorset Highways also has useful documentation “Dorset Events Traffic Management Plan Guidance” that can be accessed by following this link [www.dorsetforyou.com/article/401542/Apply-for-a-road-closure-for-a-special-event](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/article/401542/Apply-for-a-road-closure-for-a-special-event).

Dorset Police also have some guidance which can be accessed [here](#).

These documents will help you plan a successful event.

## Safety Considerations

Consider carefully how you will ensure your event is safe and enjoyable for both participants and residents.

No matter what size your event is, you are strongly recommended to take advantage of the Purbeck Events Advisory Panel.

The Panel provides an opportunity for event organisers to benefit from signposting and advice from organisations such as Dorset County Council (Highways, Trading Standards and Civil Contingencies), Purbeck District Council (Environmental Health, Emergency Planning and Licensing), South Western Ambulance Service, Wiltshire & Dorset Fire and Rescue Service, Dorset Police, Wessex Water and the Coastguard. It also provides the organisations with early sight of proposed road closures for example, so they can prepare contingency plans and public information.

Any well organised event will have a detailed event and traffic management plan that addresses all safety issues, along with a detailed risk assessment. The event organisers can contact or be contacted by the Panel where there is a wealth of help that can be tapped in to by engaging with them.

To attend an Event Advisory Panel, please contact Purbeck District Council's Licensing Officer on 01929 556561 or email [licensing@purbeck-dc.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@purbeck-dc.gov.uk).

## Choosing a date and venue

Prior to organising or advertising an event please check on the Dorset For You website [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/408203/Walking-and-cycling-events](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/408203/Walking-and-cycling-events) or Visit Dorset website [www.visit-dorset.com/whats-on](http://www.visit-dorset.com/whats-on) for any scheduled events to make sure that your chosen event date is not the same as another event taking place in the same location.

The event organiser should also check to see if there are any scheduled road works that may affect their route by viewing [www.roadworks.org](http://www.roadworks.org).

Other events listings to check include [www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/home](http://www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/home). British Cycling also has a calendar co-ordination tool for event organisers registered with British Cycling. This is part of the online registration process.

It is also advised to contact the local town/parish council to check for any events planned to take place on your chosen date and they may be able to help with providing contacts for the landowner/s where you wish to hold your event [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/395704/Parish-and-town-councils-in-Purbeck](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/395704/Parish-and-town-councils-in-Purbeck).

Please consider access to the Lulworth ranges, an important training establishment of the British Army. For operational and safety reasons access is restricted to specific times. Please check [here](#) for opening times and further information.

## Planning an off road event?

Please contact the Rights of Way Team at Dorset County Council [Rights of Way Team](#) who can give you guidance and advice and look at the [Purbeck Cycling Code](#).

Please seek landowners' permission if accessing private land. If you are using bridleways let all landowners know your plans. For National Trust land (and for some private landowners and farmers), invaluable advice for a successful event can be offered regarding seasonal ground conditions, livestock and conservation designations.

If you are thinking of using National Trust land other than public bridleways, such as a permissive path, you will need to obtain a licence and provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments. If your ride follows a route not shown as an official right of way on an OS map, you will also need a licence. Please contact the National Trust Purbeck Office for any advice regarding your routes on 01929 450002. Please also consider this for private landowners and farmers too.

## Things to consider

The following considerations need to be included in any risk assessments and in doing so will help to avoid potential issues:

1. Contact the appropriate organisation managing/owning any car parks that your participants, staff and supporters might be thinking of using which may help decisions regarding capacity. National Trust car parks are free to National Trust members and chargeable to non-members.
2. Carefully plan road traffic access to and from the venue, before and after the event.
3. Start the event early in the day before local road traffic builds up or public right of way become busy.
4. Consider staggering the arrival of participants at the event venue to reduce road traffic congestion.
5. Consider staggering the start times of participants to avoid congestion on the road or public right of way.
6. Minimise the need for cyclists to turn right across road traffic, e.g. into feed stations.

7. Make sure that cyclists participating in your event or in another event will not be travelling in opposite directions on the road at the same time.
8. Use feed stations which will easily accommodate the number of cyclists expected. If these are to be located off-road, you may need permission from the landowner.
9. Identify pinch-points and liaise with Dorset Highways to try and minimise road traffic congestion.
10. Use relevant signage at specific locations. Signs should include the name of your event and if possible a generic contact number. If these are to be located off-road, seek permission from the landowner as they may be removed unless they know about the event. Signage may be installed no more than two days in advance of the event, unless otherwise agreed by Dorset Highways. If the signs are information boards for warning and informing purposes, the landowner may allow these to be put up a week in advance.
11. Provide route information and start/finish times so others can plan their day.
12. For all non-competitive events, a risk assessment will govern and provide competent, proactive static and mobile marshalls, especially at junctions and feed stations and ensure they are in communication with the event HQ and are fully aware of their role requirements. Marshalls are in place primarily for warning and informing. Some accredited marshalls may also be used for road closures at some sportive/charity events as well, if a traffic event management company have been used and a recognised certificate of training is produced. If road closures are in place, marshalls will be permitted to stand behind the signage.
13. If the event is a British Cycling registered road race, then British Cycling accredited marshalls may be used to manage the flow of traffic during the race. Marshalls will be positioned around the route as outlined on the risk assessment. For further information about accredited marshalls, please contact Grant Bayton  
[GrantBayton@britishcycling.org.uk](mailto:GrantBayton@britishcycling.org.uk)
14. Cycling Time Trials (CTT) governs and authorise their events and adherence to legislation is paramount.
15. Please be aware that the more factors you need to consider e.g. high participant numbers, holding your event on a weekend, significant road closures or using narrow country lanes, the more of an impact it will have on the local community. As Purbeck is largely rural, there will be an above average number of tractors and trailers on the road during the months of late May till early September due to specific farming events such as hay making. Local consultation is therefore very important if you are planning on using single track lanes for your event.

## Insurance

Please ensure you have public liability insurance to cover you and the event team/volunteers. It is worth recommending your riders have their own public liability insurance as well.

## Warning and informing

Consultation and engagement with the local residents and businesses is key to ensuring as many people are “on board” with your event as possible. The County Council can help with this, but please ensure at least 13 weeks’ notice is given to Dorset County Council Highways by contacting [trafficteam@dorsetcc.gov.uk](mailto:trafficteam@dorsetcc.gov.uk).

They will require a plan of the route, an estimated time of the event and participant numbers. DCC Highways will only however formally notify the parishes if a road closure is applied for, as consultation is very much the event organiser’s responsibility. The parishes may well then contact the organiser direct and possibly invite them to a parish meeting.

If there are particular businesses or National Trust cafés that your participants would benefit from using in terms of food, drink and facilities then let the businesses know. Businesses can then plan

to support and manage any cyclists. Your participants will benefit from this relationship and be keen to participate again.

## **Other things to consider:**

Consider encouraging visiting participants to stay overnight and promote [www.visit-dorset.com/explore/areas-to-visit/swanage-and-purbeck](http://www.visit-dorset.com/explore/areas-to-visit/swanage-and-purbeck).

Ensure that pre-event and registration briefings include reference to the [Purbeck Cycling Code](#) (riders should be reminded that they should be riding in single file on designated bridleways to avoid damaging the fragile landscapes that the path may be on) and the [Highway Code](#).

In the case of a sportive, give specific instructions not to race. This is particularly important if you intend to categorise participants based on their performance. Rider times are to be published in alphabetical order, not according to the time riders achieved.

In any pre-event notification please provide a clear method e.g. email address, for local residents and participants to feedback during or after the event. This could be for compliments as well as suggestions for improvements.

## **Identification of riders**

Participants should be clearly identifiable to marshalls through the use of numbers issued by the organisers. These need to be no smaller than A5 in size. Rider numbers should be worn on riders' fronts or on the handlebars. For races, then the numbers are worn on riders' backs.

## **Anti-social cycling**

Event organisers should be encouraged to take action against those cyclists who contravene event rules. This could include banning some participants from future events for unsafe or anti-social cycling. Dorset Police will deal robustly with offenders and will ensure that participants who consistently breach road traffic law, the Highway Code or event management are dealt with and excluded from further events in the area.

## **Fixing and removal of signs**

Think about how you are fixing signs around the countryside contact the National Trust/the landowner if you are planning on using their land. Cable ties or string should be used where there is an existing structure and at no point should nails or screws be used to fix into trees or benches. Please avoid using any form of hazard tape due to risk to livestock. Please remove all signs and their fixings within 24 hours after the event and ensure litter is collected.

## **Debrief after the event**

For larger events, you may wish to consider holding a debrief meeting with the Purbeck Events Advisory Panel to discuss how the event was run and how it could be improved in the future.