

Poundsbury Media Information

October 2006

Poundbury

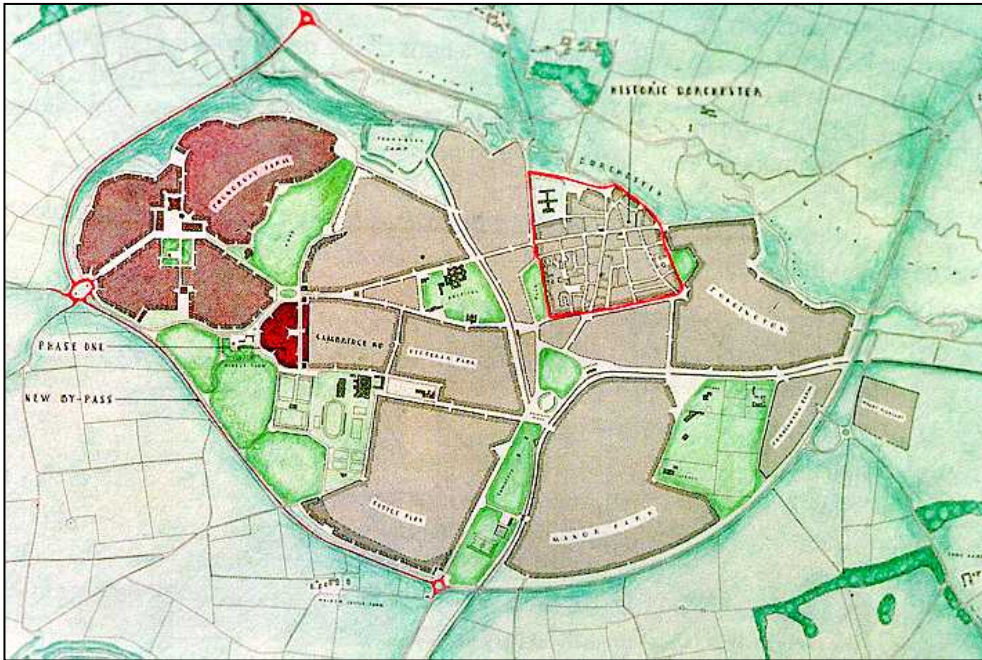
Poundbury was planned to challenge some of the planning assumptions of the latter part of the Twentieth Century with its ghettoised and run down social housing estates and out of town shopping centres, forcing ever greater reliance on the car. Poundbury is instead based on some of the timeless principles 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 can live, work, shop and play.

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 percent 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: A 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.

Today, Poundbury is home to over 1,200 people and 750 people work there.

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.

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.

The Poundbury Principles

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.

Today, 20 percent of housing in Poundbury is social housing. According to the Guinness Housing Trust – which provides the affordable housing - Poundbury is its most successful and trouble-free site with residents reporting a far higher level of satisfaction there than elsewhere.

Green buildings

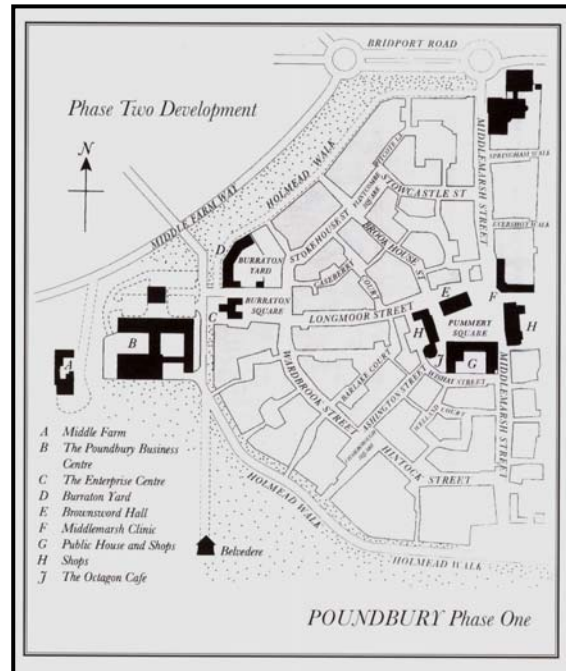
“I am trying to demonstrate the long-term value of building in an ecologically sustainable way at Poundbury. Not only can ‘green’ buildings earn higher rents and prices, but also cost less to operate and maintain. I hope this will go some way to convincing even the most hard-headed commercial operators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

The houses are being built to an EcoHomes excellent standard (the highest Building Research Establishment rating) and are very cheap to run.

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.



Pummary Square

- Pummary Square forms the 'hub' of Phase 1, linking through to the significant Victoria Park development in Dorchester. The roads from the hub of Pummary 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.



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 dwellings and 7ha of employment space over a 10 year development period. Bridport Parkway, relieving the recently constructed Bridport Road.



As from 2005 the Duchy is providing 35% 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



Future Phases

The emerging Local Plan for West Dorset allocates the balance of Poundbury (approx. 40ha) for development over the next 15-20 years. This will be to the north of Phase 2 and principally residential, although sites for employment and retail uses, a leisure centre and new First School have been reserved. To the east of these phases will be a park, the first element of which will be landscaped in 2006.



**Queen Mother Square – Schematic Ideas
by Quinlan Terry**

Poundbury Residents Association



- 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 i.e. gardening competitions, Market Hall functions etc. It is also used to notify people of intended works around the development & to address common issues/ concerns.

What other people have said about Poundbury

“Poundbury is in many respects a model of what the Government is trying to achieve. Poundbury looks to me like a community and that's the message we want to give out to the country as a whole. That this is the way forward... [Developments in other areas] won't necessarily look like this. That was the point the Prince was making to me - that we have to build according to the needs of the locality.”

Keith Hill, previously Housing Minister

“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, Deputy Prime Minister

**For further information about on Poundbury contact
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