

WALK 6
Weymouth

Walk Dorset's History

🕒 90 minutes to walk, sit and enjoy
reading the information



Stepping
into
nature

Welcome! As part of the Stepping into Nature project led by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty team, we have produced a series of self-guided walks.

These easy access routes highlight the local history, as well as other fun snippets of information that you will find along the route.

Further Information: www.stepin2nature.org



Distance

1 mile/ 1.6 km



Suggested time

90 minutes to walk, sit and enjoy reading the information.



Difficulty

Level route on tarmacked paths with seats at regular intervals.



Facilities

Along the route you will find public toilets and many places for refreshments.



Transport

Suggested parking at Swannery Car Park, charges apply. Bus stop and train station within 2 minute walk of start.



Route map



Suggested starting point

Swannery Car Park, Radipole Park Drive,
Weymouth, DT4 7TY



Points of interest



Toilets



Seating



Suggested parking

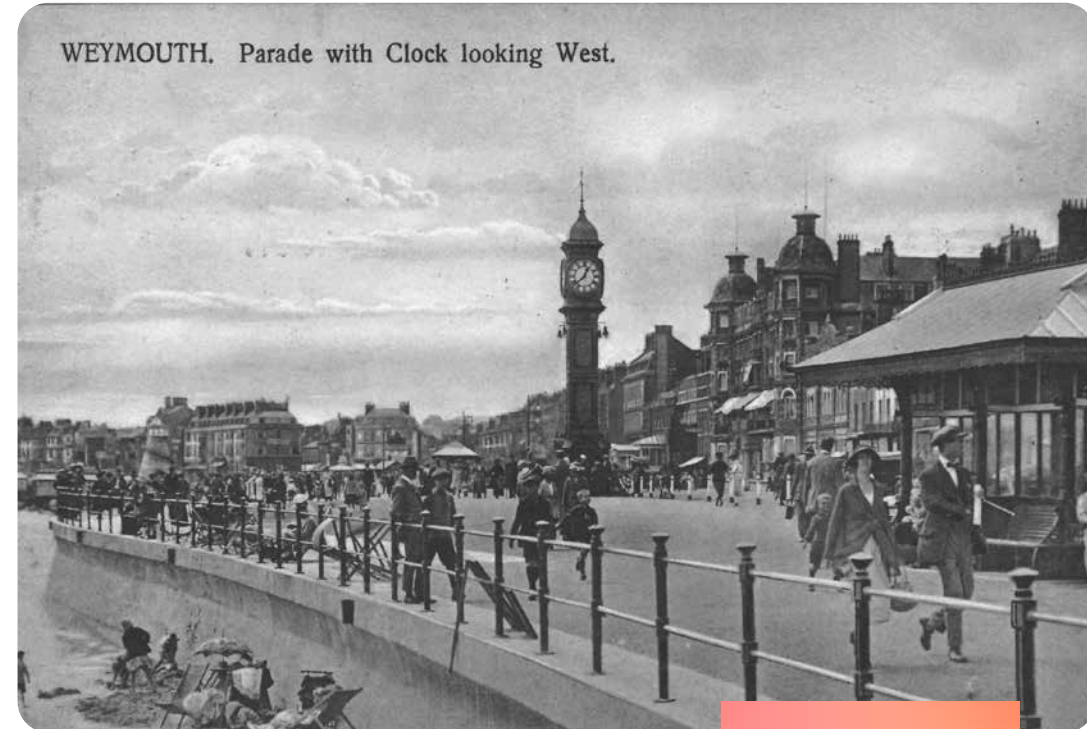


Start on the seafront next to the Jubilee Clock, pictured

The Jubilee Clock was built in 1887 to celebrate the 50th year of Queen Victoria's reign, known as a Golden Jubilee.



What's changed since this photo was taken around 100 years ago?



Go right (if facing the sea) along the seafront until you are opposite the Royal Hotel.



Weymouth's popularity as a holiday resort grew as King George III visited regularly from 1789 in the hope of improving his health. The royal family dined in the Royal Hotel, which has since been rebuilt, and many of their companions stayed here.

The king stayed at the nearby holiday home of his brother, the Duke of Gloucester. This is now called Gloucester Lodge and is pictured.



Turn around to face the sea (we hope you are visiting on a clear day!).



The Osmington White Horse

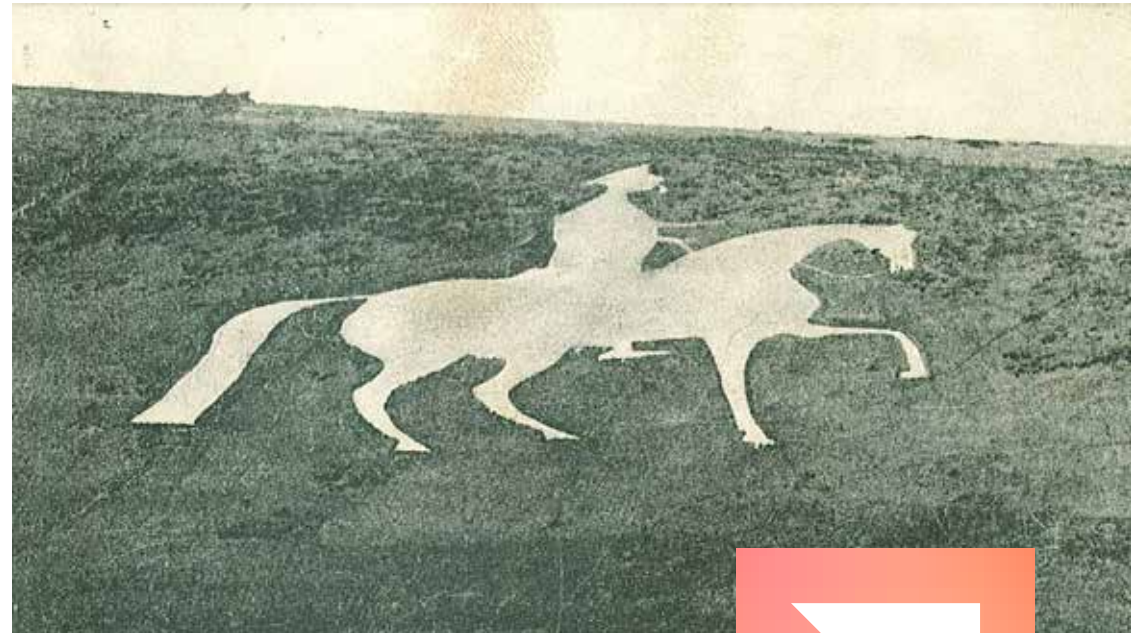


Look to the hills on the left of the bay. Can you spot King George III on his favourite horse as a chalk hill figure?

The Osmington White Horse was made by Weymouth locals in 1808 to show their gratitude to the King for making the town popular which vastly improved many locals' bank balances! Sadly, the King never saw it, as his last visit took place 3 years earlier.

This photograph was taken over 100 years ago. People regularly restored the White Horse, sometimes adding their own little touches. Can you see that the king is smoking a pipe here?

The figure was designed by local architect James Hamilton. He also designed a massive stone plinth for a statue of the king which we'll see next.



Continue along the seafront until you see the Kings Statue on a large island in the middle of the road. Cross the road to the island.

The item pictured is a bathing machine. People would use these to change into their swimming costumes before a horse pulled the machine into the sea. They could then gracefully step directly into the water!

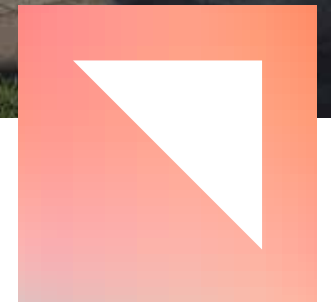
What would they have thought to us wearing costumes on the beach and drying off in the open air?



Read the information board for an amusing story about King George's dip.



Cross back over the road and continue right along the seafront and enjoy the views. Keep the large Pavilion on your left. Stop when you reach the harbourside.



The Harbourside

Ferries ran between Weymouth and the Channel Islands from 1794 until a few years ago. In 1889, a railway branch line was built to bring trains direct to the ferries, as you see in the picture.

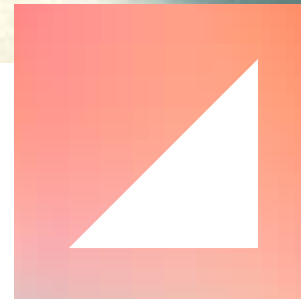


Do you remember the trains running along the harbourside?

On the other side of the harbour, slightly on to the left, you will see Nothe Fort. This was built in the 1860s to defend against a French invasion, which never happened. The Fort is now open to visitors.



Turn right and follow the harbour around towards the bridge. Stop at the fish market, pictured.



The Old Fish Market

The Old Fish Market was built around 1855. The railway had recently reached Weymouth, so fish landed at Weymouth could now be transported across much of the country.

Weymouth used to be two separate towns. The far side of the harbour was the former fishing port of Weymouth, whilst the area you are in was more focused on trade and was known as Melcombe Regis.

The two were not united until 1571, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. This was apparently done to stop arguments between the towns! It took another 26 years before the first bridge linking the two was built.



Turn right along Maiden Street (immediately after The Old Fish Market) and continue to the junction of St Edmond Street.



See if you can spot a cannonball lodged in a building on route!



You'll find the cannonball high in the wall of the former Royal Naval Patrol Headquarters. The cannonball is thought to date from the English Civil War in 1645.

There is debate around whether the cannonball is original or a modern replacement (maybe people were concerned it would fall out onto passers-by). Though we are sure that the damage to the wall you see around the ball is genuine.



Go left on St Edmund Street and look right down St Mary Street.





Compare the view with this photo taken around 1900.

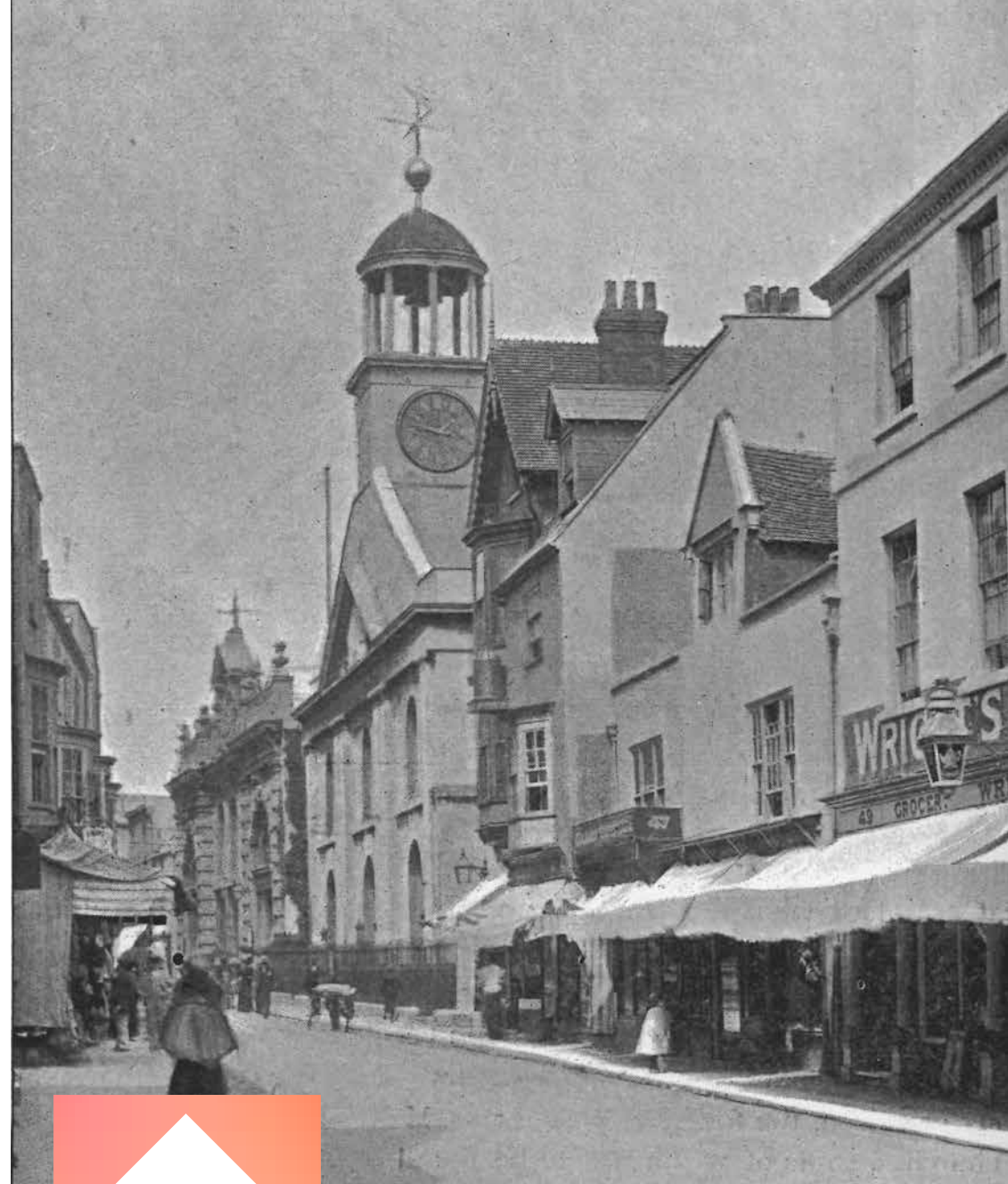
You can see more of the architect James Hamilton's work in St Mary's Church, which was built in 1815.

On the street corner on your left, you'll see an historic inn, The Golden Lion, which dates from the 17th century.

Behind you is the Guildhall, built in the mid-1830s using Portland stone. Often grand frontages such as this were used when they could be viewed from a distance, for example when approaching up a drive in a carriage. Among these narrow streets, its frontage seems out-of-place to us.



To return to the start simply retrace your steps or continue straight on St Mary Street and you'll reach the King's Statue and the seafront. You may wish to explore the harbour some more and find refreshments.



Looking for some more things to do?

Picnic in the Parks

Discover new experiences and enjoy fun health and nature-related activities at Picnic in the Parks.

You can access all of the other History walks from this series as well as lots of other activities, films and resources to help you live well and love nature.

picnicintheparks.org



Explore the unique, varied, and outstanding natural beauty of this AONB which underpins its designation as a nationally important protected landscape.

dorsetaonb.org

Find new places to go, learn new skills and meet like-minded people through nature-themed activities held indoors and out.

stepin2nature.org



Stepping into nature



Stepping into Nature

Stepping into Nature opens opportunities for people to connect with Dorset's fascinating landscape, wildlife, history and culture, helping people live happier and healthier lives for longer.

Using Dorset's natural and cultural landscape, the project creates activities and sensory rich places for older people, people living with long term health conditions, such as dementia, and their care partners.

The Stepping into Nature project is led by the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty team, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.



A series of easy access routes
highlighting local history and
the stories around them.

Other routes include

BLANDFORD FORUM

CERNE ABBAS

**EASTERN DORCHESTER
& FORDINGTON**

SHERBORNE

SWANAGE

WEYMOUTH

Further Information

www.stepin2nature.org