

## Title: NDSAC Ferry Bridge Project notes:



### Management and stakeholders:

A search was undertaken using Google Chrome to establish ownership and management of the site. This covered the Ferry Bridge Outlet site but included the adjoining Fleet Lagoon and Portland Harbour

### The Fleet Lagoon:

As our project abuts the Fleet SSSI we will need to be mindful of the following: the site 'Chesil Beach and the Fleet Lagoon' is recognised as an area of high conservation value through the many national and international designations it is afforded – SSSI, SPA, SAC, Ramsar and being the centre of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

The [Fleet and Chesil Reserve](#) is managed by a warden, employed by the Ilchester Estates. The EU Habitats Directive and EU Birds Directive set out how the site as a whole should be protected and managed.

The Fleet Lagoon: is a SSSI and therefore the lead management is with Natural England while any commercial interests, such as the Oyster farm belong to the Ilchester Estate.

Detailed information can be found on: <https://www.gov.uk/topic/planning-development/protected-sites-species>. [Natural England](#) leads the management of the site due to its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and provides information on the condition of protected habitats and species.

It may be interesting to contact the Fleet Study Group found at <http://www.fsg.org.uk/> which is a small voluntary organisation, that brings together scientists, ecologists and others with an interest in the Fleet Lagoon, Chesil Beach and Hamm Beach (the study area). This area includes the Chesil and Fleet Special area of Conservation (SAC).

The Dorset Marine Protected Areas site provides a great deal of information on the Fleet Lagoon: <http://www.dorsetmpas.uk/chesil-and-the-fleet/>

*An extensive oasis of relative calm compared with the open sea across Chesil Beach, the Fleet Lagoon is a vital shelter and feeding area for wildlife. This long, shallow stretch of water is England's largest lagoon at around 480 hectares. Home to the famous Abbotsbury Swannery and large numbers of over-wintering Brent geese, the Lagoon draws wildlife watchers to its shores. Visitors can also see other resident and migrant birds like little terns, wigeon, pochard, coots, even an occasional passing osprey.*

*In addition to its birds, the Fleet Lagoon Marine Protected Area also protects numerous plants and animals. Several marine plants like seagrasses, stoneworts and salt marsh, and animals like lagoon sandworms, lagoon sand shrimps and the rare DeFolin's lagoon snail all benefit from the Fleet's status as an MPA.*

*The Fleet Lagoon is also an important nursery area for several types of fish like bass, black bream, sand smelt, mullets and gobies. Commercial fishing does occur in the*

*Fleet although it is tightly controlled and limited in its extent. Toward the seaward end, oysters are also farmed commercially.*

### **The Ferry Bridge Channel/Outlet.**

Ferry Bridge provides a fairly recent channel, dug out in 1980s to form a new outlet from the lagoon into Portland Harbour when access to Portland was upgraded and a new road bridge installed. Previously water drained out of the Fleet through a channel at Smallmouth close to the Ferry Bridge Inn where a Victorian bridge and a rail causeway crossed the gap.

While the Fleet Lagoon MPA has specific protected habitats and species that are monitored to ensure they remain in good, healthy condition and are not adversely affected by human activities, the outlet is outside this area. A boom has been installed at Ferry Bridge to minimise the impact of any oil pollution from the harbour before it reaches the lagoon.

The area of the present outlet appears to be outside the SSSI area but within the area owned by Portland Port Ltd and the Portland Harbour Authority. The Ferry Bridge outlet is not marked with any restrictions or as a controlled area (see map) [https://www.portland-port.co.uk/public/files/LEISURE/2019%20Forms/25\\_%20DIVING%20HANDOUT%20\(Ver%204%20May%202018\).pdf](https://www.portland-port.co.uk/public/files/LEISURE/2019%20Forms/25_%20DIVING%20HANDOUT%20(Ver%204%20May%202018).pdf)

NDSac has, to date, an annual boat diving licence for the harbour but although leisure dive boats are required to buy a permit, shore diving is not mentioned on their information site and permits not requested.

For further information on diving in Portland Harbour contact the Harbour Office on 01305 824044. <https://www.portland-port.co.uk/diving>

The maintenance of the bridge itself will be the responsibility of Dorset Council's Highways Department.

### **Parking**

Parking on the verge is very limited but not restricted. However the cycle and footpaths should not be obstructed either by vehicles or equipment. A DCC paying car park is available across the road at the Portland Beach Car Park. Rates vary between summer and winter. This has a JustPark payment option.