

Historic high street and modern marina

Walk information

Distance: approx 3.5 miles

Difficulty: easy – a paved, level walk suitable for buggies and wheelchairs

Duration: approx 1.5 hrs

Public toilets: in the car park behind Somerset Hall

How to get there

Start at map ref: ST 467764 (OS 154)

Car: A free car park is available behind Somerset Hall, next to the Co-op, off Wyndham Way (the A369).

Bus: 66 Hopper 125
357, 358, 359 – from Bristol

Portishead – meaning port at the head of the river – has a long history as a fishing port. It expanded rapidly during the early 19th century, followed by power stations and chemical works in the 20th century.

This heavy industry has now disappeared from the dock and in its place is a smart marina housing yachts and cabin cruisers.

Follow this walk to see how the town developed.



Begin at the top of the High Street, in front of Somerset Hall, and walk south along the road.

High Street was formerly known as Mill Street and Duck Street and was once lined with apple and pear orchards. The street gradually filled with shops from the 1860s onwards after the first, Wedmore's, opened on a site facing the parish church.

The early population made their homes on the rectangle of land between Church Road North and Church Road South.

If you cross to that side of the road you will see the remains of Court House Farm, in front of St Peter's parish church.

The striking Tudor manor house and adjoining farm buildings had been owned by Bristol City Council (as a former

corporation) since 1616. However, in 2010 the council put the site up for sale and it was sold at auction despite a public campaign to save it and turn it into a community farm. The land is now fenced off and it is still waiting to be renovated into a single family home.

If you walk up Church Road South you can take a closer look at the manor house, with its sturdy look-out tower. There is also a footpath into the church grounds.

Return to the High Street and continue south to see a couple more of Portishead's 37 listed buildings.

The pretty Grade II-listed, 17th century Bird Tree Cottage will be on your right, at number 156.



Discover the old and new during this flat, urban walk which delves into Portishead's past and sees how it is shaping up for the 21st century.

Port Marine





The deep-water dock was built in the 1830s for large ships to bring cargo from around the world. During the 20th century two coal power stations operated here, A and B. The Albright and Wilson phosphorus plant also operated until 1969. Due to declining industry, the power stations were demolished and the dock closed in 1992.

The site has since undergone a dramatic transformation and is now a mixed-use waterside development known as Port Marine.

Walk up the left hand side of the marina to see the boats on the water and the interesting architecture.

This is the more established side, built in the mid-2000s. Architects, artists and urban designers worked together and public art has been integrated into

Continue on, and near the end of High Street, at the corner with St Peter's Road, you will see The Grange. This imposing Grade II*-listed home is believed to have early medieval origins and be the manor house for North Weston.

Grange Farm was also owned by Bristol City Council and believed to have been tenanted by the same family for 300 years. However, the council also sold it off and retirement apartments are now taking shape on the land.

Around the corner is St Mary's Road, an old by-way. Go up here a little way and on the left-hand side is the thatched Quakers' Meeting House, which dates from the mid-1600s.

From here, return to the High Street and retrace your steps to the top of the road, near the Cabstand junction.

The White Lion pub is on the right-hand side. It stands at what was the head of an old creek and a mill stood on the site until 1810. In front of the pub is a commemorative millstone marking the end of the old sea wall of Portishead wharf.

Cross the Cabstand with care and head behind the Waitrose petrol station into the paved plaza. Walk past the library and follow the big silver balls towards Parish Wharf leisure centre. This leads out into the marina, which is rich in industrial heritage.

the environment. The development was built in the style of a fishing village, with narrow streets and multi-coloured houses.

If the footpath bridge is open, near the marina office HQ, you will be able to cross the water and do a circular route.

On this eastern side, construction is still continuing with luxury apartments taking shape on the water's

edge. New waterside bars and restaurants have also opened.

Follow Newfoundland Way to the end. This leads to Harbour Road, which leads to the southern tip of the marina. From here, you can walk back through the plaza to the Cabstand and your starting point.



Portishead art trail was featured in the September 2009 issue of *Life*. View this, and all other walks from the magazine, at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lifewalks

www.gordanosociety.org.uk
www.portishead.gov.uk
www.publicartportishead.co.uk

