



Navigating Portland's Underhill

Following the successful launch of the Nothe Gardens and Lodmoor Country Park orienteering courses, Portland is celebrating the launch of three new routes for Underhill this October.

Orienteering is an exciting way to exercise outdoors and perfect for anyone who enjoys exploring – the aim being to navigate between a number of markers set out on a specifically created map and to do so in the quickest time possible.

Portland's new routes (a collaboration between Active Dorset, Dorset Council, Island Community Action, Portland Town Council, Public Health Dorset and Wimborne Orienteers) is funded by Sport England and fully reflects the fun, fitness and challenge elements that orienteering has to offer.

Pete Roper, Portland Town Councillor explains, "There are three courses to choose from and each starts in Victoria Gardens, where you'll find a notice board displaying the course maps. The routes are open to all ages and abilities, with the shorter route being accessible to wheelchair users (some help may be required for a couple of inclines). So, no matter how young, old or fit you are, whether you want to complete the course in the fastest time possible or prefer to take it easy as a family, you can simply pick a route and discover the area at your own pace – walk, jog or run."

Fiona Johnson, Health Programme Advisor, Public Health Dorset, says: "Creating opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of residents is vital. Orienteering is a great activity for mind and body and because the courses are permanent people can complete them as many times as they like using an App called Oriento."

Douglas Pigg, Vice-Chair of Island Community Action, adds, "We're particularly excited about this project, not just because of the benefits orienteering can have on physical and mental wellbeing but also because ICA has overlaid the main orienteering map with something a little different – a heritage route showcasing 30 of Underhill's significant historical landmarks. It's a real eye-opener to see how many points of genuine historical interest you will discover in this small area. We are hoping to expand this offer with a range of additional walks in the coming months. This way, you can learn about your local history as you exercise, introduce Portland Underhill to your friends and above all, enjoy your journey to improved fitness."

To take part, pick-up a map from the ICA office, Easton or The Little Ship (located in Victoria Square, near to Victoria Gardens) or download it from: <https://oriento.uk>, <https://islandcommunityaction.org/walks>, <https://portlandtowncouncil.gov.uk/news-events> or the Oriento App (available for iOS and Android). If you're interested in Portland's history, find out more on the Encyclopedia of Portland History website: www.portlandhistory.co.uk.

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Notes to editors – For more information, please contact Douglas Pigg on: 07968 170455