

FUTURE PORTLAND CBS: FAQs

What is Future Portland?

The Future Portland Community Benefit Society (CBS) is a collaboration between three island-based organisations - b-side, Island Community Action (ICA) and The Portland Association.

We joined forces after our separate research and consultations showed residents' desire for Portland's community to have a stronger voice and more influence over what happens to our island. We share the same vision and want to work with local people to help ensure this happens.

Key ambitions include:

- Working collaboratively to drive and support a dynamic and innovative vision and future for Portland
- Improving the lives, opportunities, and experiences available to Portland residents
- Showcasing and protecting Portland's unique heritage, culture, and history, including its natural and built environments.

What is a Community Benefit Society (CBS)?

A not-for-profit organisation that delivers projects for the benefit of the community. A CBS can operate using a mix of grants, community shares, donations, loans, sponsorships and income; however, its profits go back into the community. It operates with a Board of Directors and voting members.

Do you work with other organisations?

Absolutely! We want to collaborate, not duplicate.

Interestingly, the need for more partnership working was reflected in our original consultations, which echoed our belief that no single person or organisation can resolve Portland's key challenges alone. We are stronger when we work together.

What are the benefits of becoming a member, and how do I join?

You get to invest in projects that benefit Portland and its community. You also get a say and a vote on the CBS's most important decisions. Depending on the project, you may also receive special perks, like discounts and member-only events.

To join, simply fill in a membership form and pay the fee. Forms are available via our Facebook page (search Future Portland UK - Community Benefit Society) or email: secretary.futureportland@gmail.com.

You pay a one-off joining fee (secures your share) + an annual subscription fee. Fees vary depending on whether you're an individual or an organisation, and where you reside:

- Portland resident: Joining fee = £5 + free Y1 subscription, then £5 each subsequent year
- Non-Portland resident: £5 to join + £10 annually
- Portland organisation representative: £5 + £15
- Non-Portland organisation representative: £5 + £20.

What type of projects can Future Portland support?

We're quite flexible, but our decisions will always be guided by the community's priorities. The important thing is that any project we do support improves the lives, opportunities, and experiences of local residents.

Additionally, we aim to preserve what makes Portland unique and special, including its historical sites, community buildings, and natural environment.

What type of projects are you working on now?

The team are currently looking at a few different possibilities on the island, including Brandy Row, France Quarry, and St. Peter's Church.

We also looked at The Pulpit Inn; however, unfortunately, our offer to purchase wasn't accepted by the seller, so we're currently unable to progress with this particular project.

If I have a project idea, what should I do?

Contact the Future Portland team via our Facebook page (search Future Portland UK - Community Benefit Society) or email: secretary.futureportland@gmail.com.

If the project is suitable, the Future Portland team will work with you to put a proposal together. Members will then vote on whether to take it forward.

Next steps will depend on the project. For example, it might involve putting in an Asset of Community Value (ACV) nomination to Dorset Council, doing a feasibility study or raising funds for a purchase.

What is an Asset of Community Value (ACV)?

An ACV is a building or a piece of land whose current use (or recent use) benefits the wellbeing or interests of the local community and could continue to do so in the future. Examples include pubs, shops, libraries, and other community facilities.

In Dorset, if a group feels a building or piece of land meets this criteria, they can nominate it to become an ACV with Dorset Council. The process requires them to fill in a nomination form and provide evidence of its value. Dorset Council then have eight weeks to decide whether to agree the nomination.

If they say yes, the owner of the property/land (if owned) is informed, and the Land Registry is updated.

If an ACV is in place, an owner must notify Dorset Council if they decide to sell. The nominating group can then make a request to delay the sale for up to six months to give them time to make a bid themselves.

So, listing as an ACV gives the community a chance to potentially acquire the asset ahead of it being sold to someone else.

Listed ACVs are removed from the list after five years, unless a new nomination is made.

How does a CBS raise funds to carry out its activities?

Funds can be raised in lots of different ways, including offering community shares to members, securing grants, seeking donations, and engaging in fundraising activities like events and crowdfunding.

What happens to any profits made by Future Portland or one of its projects?

As a not-for-profit organisation, any profits made by Future Portland (once all of its financial commitments are met) will go back into the community to cover activities that benefit local people.

What happens if a project is really successful and makes substantial profits? For example, can shareholders be paid dividends?

Potentially, if there were sufficient cash reserves and the project had met all of its financial and community-based commitments. The decision to pay dividends or not would be decided by a member vote.

If I want to find out more about Future Portland, who do I get in touch with?

You can reach us through the following channels:

- **The Future Portland Secretary** – email: secretary.futureportlandcbs@gmail.com
- **Facebook** – search for: Future Portland UK - Community Benefit Society or use www.facebook.com/futureportlanduk

Feel free to contact us with any questions. We're excited to hear from you!