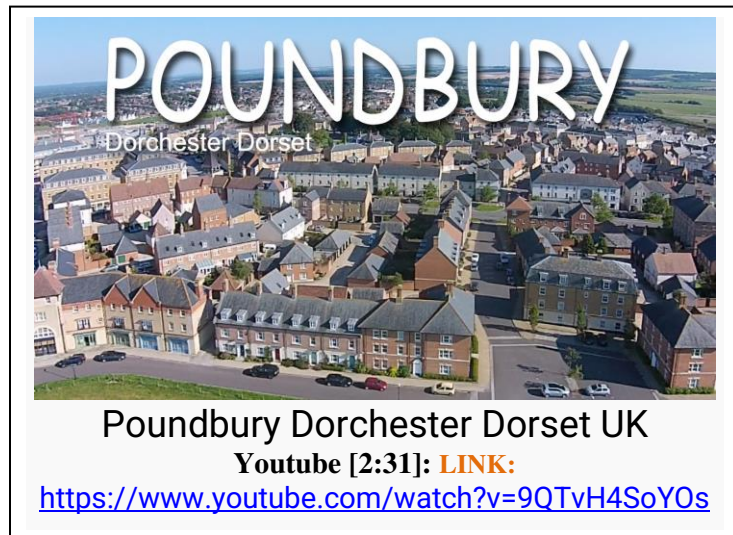


A Quintessential New Town...

## **Poundbury, Poundbury Reconsidered and Prince Charles' *Ten Urban Design Principles.***

### **Poundbury, U.K.**

How things change: just as the Prince's ideas on organic food and the environment have gone mainstream (homeopathy less so), so Poundbury has become wildly successful: the 400-acre site, built on Duchy of Cornwall land on the edge of Dorchester, has 1,700 homes, which command a 29% premium over similar ones nearby, according to research by Saville's estate agency. It has also created more than 2,300 jobs in 185 businesses, many of them start-ups — including Dorset Cereals, which moved to Poole last year.



Poundbury is an urban extension to the Dorset county town of Dorchester, according to principles of architecture and urban planning as advocated by HRH The Prince of Wales in his book 'A Vision of Britain'.

### **News**

Poundbury, built on Duchy of Cornwall land, is currently home to some 4,150 people in a mix of private and affordable housing, as well as providing employment for 2,300 people working in more than 207 shops, cafés, offices and factories. A further 550 people are employed in construction across the site and many more are self-employed and at times work from home.

The construction sites in Poundbury have been closed for the past four weeks following the immediate action taken by the Government to meet the threat of Covid 19.

The Government directive has always been that construction should continue as an activity when carried out with social distancing measures in place. Detailed industry guidance from the

Construction Leadership Council has now been made available and has been carefully considered with regard to Poundbury.

You will therefore see, from 27<sup>th</sup> April, a gradual recommencing of works on the construction sites around Poundbury, in line with Government policy and industry guidance.

The Duchy of Cornwall has been assured by the Developers that they will be operating a robust management and monitoring system of working procedures, and will work with them to address any concerns that are raised.

## History: The Masterplan

In 1987 the local planning authority, West Dorset District Council, selected Duchy of Cornwall land to the west of Dorchester for future expansion of the town. As Duke of Cornwall, The Prince of Wales – who re-examined many of the precepts of urban and rural planning in his book ‘A Vision of Britain’ – took the opportunity to work with the council to create a model urban extension to this ancient market town.

In 1988, The Prince of Wales appointed the well-known architect and urban planner, Leon Krier, to work on an overall concept for 400 acres of land of what would become Poundbury. Krier’s challenge was to create an autonomous new extension to the town within the context of traditional Dorset architecture, using the urban design principles described in ‘A Vision of Britain’.

In 1989, the Poundbury Masterplan was exhibited in Dorchester at a Planning Weekend attended by The Prince of Wales. Local residents and interested parties were invited to share their opinions and the feedback was reflected in the scheme designs before planning consent was sought. The resulting Masterplan divided Poundbury into four distinctive quarters, with the design being implemented by specifically selected architects. The overriding principles have been maintained throughout the scheme, whilst reflecting the evolving requirements of urban planning and design.

Construction work on the first phase commenced in October 1993. Design of the final section, the North West Quadrant, is being prepared with construction anticipated to be completed by c2025. Poundbury will have increased the population of Dorchester by about one quarter, with an eventual community of approximately 5,800 people.



Read More At: <https://poundbury.co.uk/about/>

## Poundbury Reconsidered.



[Hugh Graham](#)

Sunday June 30 2019,  
12.01am BST, The Sunday  
Times

**READ MORE AT:**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/exclusive-prince-charles-the-new-poundbury-and-his-manifesto-to-solve-the-housing-crisis-6v57bz09m>

CHRIS SAVILLE

When the Prince of Wales unveiled Poundbury, his neo-traditional Dorset town, in the early 1990s, the critics were scathing: its period-pastiche aesthetic was called “fake and heartless”, a “feudal Disneyland” and “a Thomas Hardy theme park for slow learners”.

## Prince Charles’ *Ten Urban Design Principles*

with comment (*in italics*) by Nick Willson of Nick Willson Architects

The ten principles are presented along with a critique from a modernist perspective [in gray tone]. Both views and values are interesting.

**1.**

Developments must respect the land. They should not be intrusive; they should be designed to fit within the landscape they occupy.

*This applies to all buildings regardless of style, a poorly thought through scheme will be intrusive even if it is in a more traditional style.*

**2.**

Architecture is a language. We have to abide by the grammatical ground rules, otherwise dissonance and confusion abound. This is why a building code can be so valuable.

*This is correct, but does not mean that everything has to look like the Victorian era.*

*Architectural language can be diverse, different and interesting. The design quality and detailing is what is important, places like Copenhagen and other Nordic cities manage to have beautiful*

*contemporary buildings sitting next to old traditional buildings. I believe that we should build to the year that we are in, the same that cars, medicine, planes, clothes and technology has moved on, so should building processes and materials etc. Sustainability is also key, Prince Charles doesn't mention this with much conviction.*

**3.**

Scale is also key. Not only should buildings relate to human proportions, they should correspond to the scale of the other buildings and elements around them. Too many of our towns have been spoiled by casually placed, oversized buildings of little distinction that carry no civic meaning.

*This is applicable to all buildings and just because a building is modern, it doesn't mean that it can't have scale and proportion. Lots of casually placed oversized buildings are pastiche of older styles.*

**4.**

Harmony – the playing together of all parts. The look of each building should be in tune with its neighbours, which does not mean creating uniformity. Richness comes from diversity, as Nature demonstrates, but there must be coherence, which is often achieved by attention to details like the style of door cases, balconies, cornices and railings.

*Again, a beautiful contemporary building can achieve this, scale, rhythm, proportion and quality materials can provide a beautiful link between old and new. Design quality and detail will bring about the harmony.*

**5.**

The creation of well-designed enclosures. Rather than clusters of separate houses set at jagged angles, spaces that are bounded and enclosed by buildings are not only more visually satisfying, they encourage walking and feel safer.

*Of course, this is a strategy that will offer safer and more welcoming spaces. Perhaps the spaces Prince Charles refers to are more developer led with tight spaces and spaces at a premium? Not all sites are green open fields, inner London has a different issue than Poundbury for example.*

**6.**

Materials also matter. In the UK, as elsewhere, we have become dependent upon bland, standardized building materials. There is much too much concrete, plastic cladding, aluminium, glass and steel employed, which lends a place no distinctive character. For buildings to look as if they belong, we need to draw on local building materials and regional traditional styles.

*This is an interesting one, modern materials can be used in a beautiful way, also concrete and glass etc have been used for a long time, it's the quality of design and attention to detail that sets the building apart. I would much prefer a beautifully detailed glass, metal and concrete building than an ugly poorly designed rendered, brick building that was more traditional but poorly designed.*

*In addition, using local materials is fine, a house using local timber, brick and stone for example can still be ultra-contemporary in design but equally beautiful and contextual. The style is irrelevant.*

**7.**

Signs, lights and utilities. They can be easily overused. We should also bury as many wires as possible and limit signage. A lesson learned from Poundbury is that it is possible to rid the street of nearly all road signs by using 'events' like a bend, square or tree every 60-80 metres, which cause drivers to slow down naturally.

*This is more than just architecture, and often involves local authorities etc, but again is based upon good design and a level of thought.*

**8.**

The pedestrian must be at the centre of the design process. Streets must be reclaimed from the car.

*This is fine in certain parts of the country, but not all sites are so rural, I agree if possible cars should be dealt with in a clever way and streets pedestrianised as much as possible, cycling and public transport can be utilised.*

**9.**

Density. Space is at a premium, but we do not have to resort to high-rise tower blocks which alienate and isolate. I believe there are far more communal benefits from terraces and the mansion block. You only have to consider the charm and beauty of a place like Kensington and Chelsea in London to see what I mean. It is often forgotten that this borough is the most densely populated one in London.

*This is again a tricky one, we are facing a massive housing shortage and sites are limited, especially in cities, so we have to go higher to provide the amount of accommodation that we require. Rural sites can have a more mansion block feel perhaps. But high rise can be designed well and offer a different way of living. The Barbican is a good example of a mix of heights and types of accommodation, with a highly social and community aspect at ground level. A mix of units is probably best.*

**10.**

Flexibility. Rigid, conventional planning and rules of road engineering render all the above instantly null and void, but I have found it is possible to build flexibility into schemes and I am pleased to say that many of the innovations we have tried out in the past 20 years are now reflected in national engineering guidance, such as *The Manual For Streets*.

*This is possible with more contemporary architecture too.*

**LINK:** <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/profession-reacts-to-prince-charles-10-design-principles/8674432.article>