

= Portishead , Somerset =

Portishead / p??rt?s?h?d / is a coastal town on the Severn Estuary , close to Bristol , but within the unitary authority of North Somerset , which falls within the ceremonial county of Somerset , England . It has a population of around 22 @,@ 000 , an increase of over 3 @,@ 000 since the 2001 census , with a growth rate considerably in excess of surrounding towns . By the time of the 2011 Census the population had increased to approximately 24 @,@ 000 .

Portishead has a long history as a fishing port . It expanded rapidly during the early 19th century around the docks , with supporting transport infrastructure . A power station and chemical works were added in the 20th century , but the dock and industrial facilities have since closed and been redeveloped into a marina and residential areas . Portishead was also the telephone control centre used by British Telecom (BT) for non @-@ direct dialled calls to maritime vessels , a service known as Portishead Radio .

The town 's population is expanding , and Portishead is now primarily a dormitory town for Bristol and its environs , although a range of service industries has grown up . The headquarters of Avon and Somerset Constabulary are in Portishead .

= = History = =

The name Portishead derives from the " port at the head of the river " . It has been called Portshead and Portschute at times in its history and Portesheve in the Domesday Book , and was locally known as Posset .

The town 's recorded history dates back to Roman times , although there is also evidence of prehistoric settlement , including polished flint axe heads . There were also Iron Age settlements in the area , of which Cadbury Camp was the largest . Other sites that have been identified include a 1 @,@ 200 by 600 feet (370 by 180 m) site that was successively occupied by the Romans , Britons and Danes . There is some evidence that it may have been the western end of the Wansdyke , an early medieval or possibly Roman boundary with a series of defensive linear earthworks extending to the Savernake Forest near Marlborough in Wiltshire .

After the Norman conquest the manor was held by the Bishop of Coutances and later reverted to the crown , after which William II gave it to a merchant from Bristol known as Harding and then to his son Robert Fitzharding who became Lord of Berkeley . The Berkeley family held it for generations until it passed by marriage to the Cokes of Holkham in Norfolk . In the 14th century it belonged to Everard le Frenshe . In 1621 the Bristol Corporation purchased large portions of land in Portishead and revived the Manor Court . The rights of the corporation over the manor was disputed but they held it until 1836 when they sold it for £ 8 @,@ 050 . The parish of Portishead was part of the Portbury Hundred .

The town was built on the mouth of a small tributary of the Severn Estuary near the mouth of the River Avon . The old pill or jetty provided protection for craft against the Bristol Channel 's large tidal range , and iron rings can be seen in the high street at which fishing boats used to moor . Its position meant Portishead was used to guard the " King Road " , as the waters around the headland are called . In 1497 it was the departure point for John Cabot on the Matthew . A fort was built on Battery Point , and was used during the English Civil War when the town supported the Royalists , but surrendered to Fairfax in 1645 . Guns were also placed at Battery Point during World War II . The King Road was the site of a naval action in 1758 when HMS Antelope captured HMS Belliqueux , one of a French squadron returning from Quebec .

A mill was built on Welhay stream but this was replaced by tidal mills . In the 17th century the City of Bristol bought the manors of North Weston and Portishead for access to the channel and as a place to stay outside of the city and , in the 19th century , as a seaside resort . An outer sea wall was built allowing the local marshes to be drained and increased the land available for farming . The dominant architecture is early Victorian , with some buildings maintaining their original features . The expansion in residential property coincided with the construction of the dock , pier and the rail link to Bristol . The Royal Hotel by the pier was built in a Tudor Gothic style in 1830 , to provide

accommodation and catering for travellers on the steamers from Bristol , Wales and Ireland .

== Portishead dock ==

The Act of Parliament governing the enclosure of Portishead was passed in 1814 , and stipulated the right to a public wharf , although there is historical evidence of nautical connections dating back to the Patent Rolls of 1331 . Around the 1860s , at the height of the iron and steel era , a pier and a deep @-@ water dock were built by the Bristol & Portishead Pier and Railway to accommodate the large ships that had difficulty in reaching Bristol Harbour . They brought valuable cargoes from across the globe and exported local products overseas . Ships carrying coal were commonplace in Portishead Docks .

In the 1880s Portishead Dock was acquired by Bristol Corporation , and was subsequently managed as part of the Port of Bristol until its closure .

== Portishead power stations ==

The Portishead power stations were coal @-@ fed power stations built next to the dock . Construction work started on Portishead " A " power station in 1926 . It began generating electricity in 1929 for the Bristol Corporation 's Electricity Department . In 1937 its original six short chimney stacks were replaced by a 350 ft (110 m) high stack . A second 350 ft (110 m) stack was added when the power station was expanded in 1948 .

Construction of Portishead " B " power station began in 1949 ; it became operational in 1955 . The power stations became part of the nationalised electricity industry after 1949 , and were operated in turn by the British Electricity Authority , the Central Electricity Authority and the CEGB . They used some local coal produced in the Somerset coalfield , which was delivered by train along the Portishead branch of the Great Western Railway (GWR) . The line had opened on 12 April 1867 as the Bristol and Portishead Pier and Railway Company ; it opened to the dock on 5 July 1879 . The main supply of coal was imported by boat from Newport and Ely in South Wales ; it was carried by Osborn & Wallis of Bristol .

== Railways ==

Portishead had two passenger stations on the GWR 's Portishead branch line . The main station was near the centre of the village of Portishead , as it was then ; the other was at the pier . The construction of Portishead " B " power station caused the original railway station to be demolished and a replacement station was opened in the High Street on 2 January 1954 . The new station closed on 7 September 1964 .

The majority of the line was reopened in 2002 , to transport goods from the Royal Portbury Dock . A new junction was created , 3 miles (4 @-@ 8 km) from Portishead station , and a new goods line built from there to the Royal Portbury Dock . There is a campaign group aimed at reopening the station and the short stretch of unopened line . In 2009 a report by the Association of Train Operating Companies stated that the Portishead branch was a special case for future consideration of reopening due to the large projected increase in population and congestion in the area .

Portishead also had a second , short @-@ lived , railway line : the Weston , Clevedon and Portishead Railway . It ran between Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare and Clevedon as a standard railway line , and between Clevedon and Portishead as a light railway . The Clevedon to Portishead extension opened on 7 August 1907 . The line closed on 19 May 1940 and was then dismantled by the GWR .

== Albright and Wilson ==

In 1951 , Albright and Wilson built a chemical works on the opposite side of the dock from the power stations . The chemical works produced white phosphorus from phosphate rock imported ,

through the docks , into the UK . Phosphate rock was stored in concrete silos on the dockside until it was required . Electricity provided by the local power stations was used to run six 7 @. @ 5 megawatt electric arc furnaces (45 MW total) that reduced the phosphate rock . The phosphorus was then moved in sealed railway tanks to Oldbury and to Kirkby . After the closure of the factory the decontamination included the removal of yellow (spontaneously combustible) and red allotropes of phosphorus . The site is now home to Portishead volunteer coastguard .

= = = Closure of the dock and associated facilities = = =

The onset of new generating capacity at Pembroke (oil @-@ fired) and Didcot (coal @-@ fired) in the mid @-@ 1970s brought about the closure of the older , less efficient " A " Station . One generator (500 MW) of four at each of the new power stations had almost the same output of both Portishead Stations combined (" A " Station 200 MW , " B " Station 360 MW) .

The newer of the two power stations (" B " Station) was converted to burn oil when the Somerset coalfields closed . The two Radstock pits ceased production in September 1973 and the last train load of coal departed on 16 November 1973 . The price of oil rose steeply in the 1970s (see 1973 oil crisis and 1979 oil crisis) and the two power stations were little used after these events .

Portishead " A " power station was closed in 1976 ; and the first of its two chimney stacks , a landmark , was demolished in September 1981 , followed by the second in August 1982 . Portishead " B " power station closed in 1982 and both of its 383 feet (117 m) stacks were demolished in October 1992 .

Industrial activities ceased at the dock with the closure of the power stations . The Port of Bristol Authority finally closed the dock in 1992 .

= = = Modern Marina Development = = =

Much of the growth of Portishead 's population can be attributed to the development of the former docks into a vibrant community . The former deep @-@ water dock , used to supply coal and goods to the power stations , has been fully redeveloped into a modern marina with 250 pontoon berths .

The areas on each side of the marina , formerly occupied by the two power stations and chemical plant , have been redeveloped to provide a wide range of housing , from town houses to social housing to exclusive flats . Development has also completed on the Portbury Ashlands to the east of the harbour (so @-@ called because they were the dumping ground for power station waste) extending the area of the town further towards Portbury . Next to the Ashlands development lies Portbury Ashlands Nature Reserve .

This waterfront development is now known as Port Marine . The area has varied styles of housing , including an area built in the style of a fishing village , which is modelled on the Cornish seaside town of Polperro with narrow streets and multi @-@ coloured houses . New waterside bars and restaurants , including Hall & Woodhouse , Aqua and Bottelinos have opened around the marina , with further outlets are set to open in the future , including Costa Coffee and a nearby Wetherspoons .

= = = Portishead Radio = = =

Portishead was previously the telephone control centre used by British Telecom (BT) for non @-@ direct dialled calls to maritime vessels , a service known as " Portishead Radio " . This has now been largely replaced by INMARSAT , which permits directly dialled calls made from any BT landline in the UK . The radio station had separate transmitting and receiving stations . They were constructed by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company and operated by the General Post Office (GPO) . By 1936 , the station had a staff of 60 radio officers who handled over 3 million words of radio traffic per year . Following the privatisation of the GPO 's telephone network in 1981 , the station was operated by British Telecommunications PLC (now known as BT Group PLC) . The main transmitting station , which was remotely operated , originally consisted of a large array of

radio masts at nearby Portishead Downs but was replaced by a single radio mast at Clevedon . It was used until the 1970s . The receiving station 's control centre and radio masts were located at Highbridge , near Burnham @-@ on @-@ Sea .

The radio station played a vital role during the Second World War in maintaining communications with the British merchant navy and with patrol aircraft in the North Atlantic . During the war , all communications with ships were one @-@ way in order to avoid revealing the ships ' locations to the enemy . The station was short @-@ staffed because many were on secondments to various government services , such as operating other radio stations and training new radio officers to work in naval convoys . In 1943 , the workload was so great that a Royal Navy officer and 18 telegraphists were brought in from HMS Flowerdown , a Naval Shore Wireless Service station near Winchester .

By the end of the 1980s , satellite communications had started to take an increasing share of the station 's business , and a programme of severe rationalisation began , leading to the closure of two transmitting sites at Leafield and Ongar . In the radio station 's penultimate year to March 1999 , there were on average , per month , 571 radio telegrams , 533 radio telephone calls and 4 @,@ 001 radio telex calls . In 1998 , British Telecom Maritime Radio Services announced its planned closure of Portishead Radio . The long @-@ range services (HF bands 3 ? 30 MHz) ceased at midnight on 31 August 1999 . The short @-@ range VHF maritime band services (156 ? 174 MHz) closed at 12 : 00 on Sunday 30 April 2000 , and the medium @-@ range services (MF maritime band 1 @.@ 6 ? 3 @.@ 0 MHz) at 12 : 00 on Friday 30 June . The station closed in April 2000 . The Highbridge station has been demolished . Sedgemoor District Council adopted a local development plan in September 2004 that included the site of the receiving station for future housing development . Planning permission was granted in October 2007 for a development of 190 houses and flats on the site and shortly afterwards the old radio station buildings were demolished .

= = Governance = =

The town is the larger area served by the town council of Portishead and North Weston . The council is made up of 18 councillors representing six wards : Portishead Central , Portishead Coast , Portishead East , Portishead South & North Weston , Portishead Redcliffe Bay , and Portishead West . It has responsibility for local issues , including setting an annual precept (local rate) to cover the council ? s operating costs and producing annual accounts for public scrutiny . The town council evaluates local planning applications and works with the local police , district council officers , and neighbourhood watch groups on matters of crime , security , and traffic . The town council 's role also includes initiating projects for the maintenance and repair of parish facilities , such as the village hall or community centre , playing fields and playgrounds , as well as consulting with the district council on the maintenance , repair , and improvement of highways , drainage , footpaths , public transport , and street cleaning . Conservation matters (including trees and listed buildings) and environmental issues are also of interest to the council .

The town falls within the unitary authority of North Somerset , although the area below high @-@ water mark , including the pier , is within Bristol . Before 1974 , the parish was part of the Long Ashton Rural District . The police service is provided by Avon and Somerset Constabulary . Avon Fire and Rescue Service has a fire station in Portishead manned by retained firefighters , equipped with two water tenders each holding 1 @,@ 800 litres . The Great Western Ambulance Service has responsibility for the area .

The parish is part of the North Somerset county constituency of the House of Commons . It has been represented since 1992 by Liam Fox , a member of the Conservative Party , who was Secretary of State for Defence .

Six electoral wards exist in Portishead . Their area and total population are the same as quoted above .

It is also part of the South West England constituency of the European Parliament .

= = Geography = =

== Physical geography ==

Portishead is a coastal town on the Severn Estuary . It lies north west of Clevedon and immediately south west of Avonmouth just across the River Avon , which forms the boundary between Somerset and Bristol . The city of Bristol is 6 miles (9 @. @ 7 km) to the east and Portishead is approximately 110 miles (180 km) west of London . On clear days , Wales can be seen across the Severn Estuary from the town . The Eastwood area has been designated as a local nature reserve . It consists broadleaf woodland on a coastal limestone ridge which leads to Battery Point which had a defensive gun position and Portishead Point lighthouse is on the promontory . There is also geological interest in the fossils , folds and faults found in the area .

The area immediately inland includes the Gordano Valley , which has been designated as a national nature reserve . The valley runs roughly north @-@ east to south @-@ west , between Carboniferous limestone ridges extending along the coastline between Clevedon and Portishead , and another ridge extending between Clevedon and Easton in Gordano . The area includes the villages of Clapton in Gordano , Weston in Gordano , Easton in Gordano , Walton in Gordano , Portbury and Sheepway . The M5 motorway runs along the south side of the valley , splitting briefly into two levels ? the south @-@ west @-@ bound level running above the north @-@ east @-@ bound carriageway . The Gordano motorway service station is at the eastern end of the valley , near the Royal Portbury Dock and the Avonmouth Bridge . There is no river Gordano ? much of the valley is reclaimed land barely above sea level , drained by ditches (known locally as " rhynes ") . The rhynes previously managed by the now amalgamated Gordano Valley Internal Drainage Board are now the responsibility of the North Somerset Internal Drainage Board . An area comprising a total of 400 acres (160 ha) has been designated as a biological and geological Site of Special Scientific Interest , for ornithological , entomological and stratigraphic interest , notification originally having taken place in 1971 . Several sites in the valley are managed by the Avon Wildlife Trust as nature reserves . These include Weston Big Wood , Clapton Moor , Weston Moor and Walton Common . The name Gordano comes from Old English and is descriptive of the triangular shape of the whole valley from Clevedon to Portishead , being the ablative singular of the Latinised form of Gorden meaning muddy valley .

Denny Island is a small rocky island of 0 @. @ 6 acres (0 @. @ 2 ha) , with scrub vegetation , approximately three miles north of Portishead . Its rocky southern foreshore marks the boundary between England and Wales , but the island itself is reckoned administratively to Monmouthshire , Wales . The tidal rise and fall in the Severn Estuary and Bristol Channel can be as great as 49 ft (15 m) , second only to Bay of Fundy in Eastern Canada . There has been concern about pollution levels from industrial areas in Wales and at the eastern end of the Bristol Channel ; however , this tends to be diluted by the Atlantic waters . There are measurable levels of chemical pollutants , but little is known about their effects . Of particular concern are the levels of cadmium and to a lesser degree residual pesticides and hydrocarbons .

Portishead Pier to Black Nore SSSI is a 177 @-@ acre (72 ha) geological Site of Special Scientific Interest notified in 1952 . The Portishead Pier Section is made up of alluvial sandstones , the best exposure of Upper Carboniferous rocks in the Avonmouth Coalfield . The cliff and foreshore exposures around Portishead Point provide important exposures of geological structures formed during the Variscan mountain building episode in the Carboniferous Period of geological history . Also included are important exposures of the Devonian sequence that yield several species of fossil fish . *Holoptychius* scales are the most abundant fossils , but teeth scales of other species are also relatively common . Notably amongst the collection from this bed are plates of arthrodires , including *Groenlandaspis* . Eastwood and Battery Point Local Nature Reserve is a 9 hectares (22 acres) woodland containing Yew , Maple , Dogs mercury and beech .

The Lake Grounds area , built in the early 20th century around an artificial lake , is the town 's main park . Adjacent to the beach and esplanade is a 100 @-@ year @-@ old artificial lake , and a cricket pitch surrounded by sloping lawns interspersed with specimen trees . One of the UK 's few

surviving outdoor swimming pools is situated on the shore next to the lake grounds and is open during the summer months . In 2009 , the outdoor pool was renovated by a team filming for the American TV programme Ty 's Great British Adventure . Above the lake grounds is Battery Point , where a gun battery was sited to protect the Severn Estuary from invasion .

== Climate ==

Along with the rest of South West England , Portishead has a temperate climate generally wetter and milder than the rest of England . The annual mean temperature is about 10 ° C (50 ° F) with seasonal and diurnal variations , but the modifying effect of the sea restricts the range to less than that in most other parts of the United Kingdom . January is the coldest month , with mean minimum temperatures between 1 ° C (34 ° F) and 2 ° C (36 ° F) . July and August are the warmest , with mean daily maxima around 21 ° C (70 ° F) . In general , December is the dullest month and June the sunniest . The south @-@ west of England enjoys a favoured location , particularly in summer , when the Azores High extends its influence north @-@ eastwards towards the UK .

Cloud often forms inland , especially near hills , and reduces exposure to sunshine . The average annual sunshine is about 1 @, @ 600 hours . Rainfall tends to be associated with Atlantic depressions or with convection . In summer , convection caused by solar surface heating sometimes forms shower clouds and a large proportion of the annual precipitation falls from showers and thunderstorms at this time of year . Average rainfall is around 800 ? 900 mm (31 ? 35 in) . About 8 ? 15 days of snowfall is typical . November to March have the highest mean wind speeds , with June to August having the lightest ; the prevailing wind direction is from the south @-@ west .

== Demography ==

Portishead has a population of 22 @, @ 000 , an increase of over 3 @, @ 000 since the figure of 17 @, @ 130 recorded in the 2001 census , with a growth rate of 40 per cent , which is considerably in excess of surrounding towns . As the result of a house @-@ building programme , a further 8 @, @ 000 people are expected to settle in the area over the next few years , making Portishead one of the largest towns in North Somerset .

== Economy ==

Local employers include the Avon and Somerset Constabulary , which has its headquarters on the western edge of the town , Gordano School , and numerous care homes for the elderly , as well as a retail complex . The Victorian High Street has retained a number of local shops , such as Morgan @-@ Westley , The Outlet , Careys DIY and Zebra , despite some larger DIY chains and supermarkets being built ? Homebase , Argos , Waitrose , New Look , Peacocks and Pets at Home . In January 2010 , Sainsbury 's applied for planning permission to build a new store , soon followed by Lidl , Travelodge and Subway . All of these new stores have now been built . More retailers are moving into the area in 2015 , such as Wetherspoons , Costa Coffee . Aldi (which will occupy the former Co @-@ op premises) , Majestic Wine and Home Bargains .

== Landmarks ==

Court House Farmhouse dates from the medieval period but was remodelled in the 17th and 19th centuries . The Grade II * listed building is owned by Bristol City Council and in 2010 protests from local residents attempted to stop its sale .

The red brick National Nautical School was built by Edward Gabriel in 1905 , at a cost of £ 30 @, @ 000 . Previously it had been based on the training ship HMS Formidable and operated until 1983 . It is now part of a private gated community known as Fedden Village .

The remains of a former windmill , built in 1832 but disused since 1846 , were rebuilt into a two @-@ storey house and then , in 1908 , incorporated into a golf club house . The building has since

been converted into a pub . A small , disused , black village pump remains in Portishead with a strapped down handle .

The 9 @-@ metre (30 ft) high Portishead Point lighthouse was built at Battery Point in March 1931 by the Chance Brothers of Smethwick . The lighthouse is currently maintained by the Bristol Port Company . Black Nore lighthouse was built in 1894 . It was electrified in World War II . In October 2011 , after it was no longer needed for navigational purposes , it was sold to a trust for preservation at a cost of £ 1 .

The Royal Hotel in the area of Woodhill was designed and built to serve Brunel 's railway line which finished a few steps away from the Hotel . The original building survives as The Royal Inn pub . It was built in 1830 by the Corporation of Bristol (now known as Bristol City Council) in order to provide a hotel supporting the development of the seaside resort . It is thought to be the only seaside hotel to be built by a public authority during the nineteenth century . It is a Grade II listed building .

= = Transport = =

Transport links to Bristol and beyond have been a concern for some residents of the town and a group has been set up to campaign for the reopening of the Portishead to Bristol railway line . The cost has been estimated at £ 28 million , and feasibility plans are being considered .

The main A369 road , known after the historical name for the area as " The Portbury Hundred " , which links the town to the nearby M5 motorway , is prone to congestion , especially during rush hours . Major traffic @-@ flow modifications have caused much controversy because they are widely seen as having caused queuing where none existed before . More than 4 @,@ 000 residents signed a petition to North Somerset Council expressing concern at the development .

In September 2009 a trial was undertaken to turn off traffic lights in Portishead . It was conducted in association with North Somerset Council , Martin Cassini and Colin Buchanan . The change was made permanent after some journey times reportedly fell by over 50 % with no measured reduction in pedestrian safety , despite greater numbers now using the route (over 2000 vehicles and 300 pedestrians an hour) .

Portishead is served by several bus routes , including the half @-@ hourly X2 and X3 , all to Bristol , as well as local buses such as the Route 88 to Congesbury (actually split into 88A and 88C) and the X5 to Weston @-@ super @-@ Mare or the University Of The West Of England (UWE) .

A lifeboat service has been operated by the Portishead Lifeboat Trust since 1996 but in 2015 this transferred to a new RNLI lifeboat station adjacent to the pier .

= = Education = =

The Unitary Authority of North Somerset provides support for 78 schools , delivering education to approximately 28 @,@ 000 pupils . Infant and primary schools in Portishead include : High Down Infant and Junior , Portishead Primary , St. Joseph 's Catholic Primary , St. Peter 's C of E Primary and Trinity Anglican Methodist Primary School . Secondary education is provided by Gordano School . In 1999 , the school was awarded Specialist Schools Technology College status (see awards) . Gordano School enrolls approximately 1 @,@ 800 students annually , ages 11 ? 19 . The official opening took place on 12 July 1957 . The school had cost £ 146 @,@ 000 and still needed work to the playing fields . By September of that year , pupil numbers had increased to 500 and councillors were demanding more classrooms . The increase was attributed to the " post @-@ war bulge " . In September 1975 , £ 209 @,@ 000 was allocated for new buildings . Gordano was named the " Big Experiment " as it became Somerset 's first comprehensive school , with 900 students and 30 teachers . The education department forecast the school numbers would treble by 1975 . In 1994 , an astroturf sports playing surface was laid at a cost of £ 260 @,@ 000 . Numbers had grown to 1 @,@ 589 students and 88 teachers . In 2009 the school was awarded academy status . Much redevelopment of the site has since occurred , these include a new specialised sixth @-@ form center , an English block , a new maths building as well as extensions to the Science ,

Creative Arts and Design and Technology Buildings . Most recently there has been a new sports hall opened this includes a new gym and indoor sports facilities .

High Down Infant and Junior Schools have also announced they are to become part of a group academies in the area , along with Gordano , Portishead Primary and St. Peter 's in the town , and St. Mary 's in nearby Portbury .

= = Religious sites = =

The Norman Church of St Peter (shown right) was built in 1320 and rebuilt in the 14th and 15th centuries in the Perpendicular Gothic style . In 1952 it was made a Grade I listed building . The four @-@ stage tower is a prominent landmark , with set back buttresses and a pierced parapet . The church was altered in 1978 ? 1979 and has a new garden developed for the Millennium .

The Chapel of Portishead National Nautical School (now The Fedden Village) in Nore Road , dates from 1911 . It is dedicated to St. Nicholas and is also a listed building .

There is also a thriving URC church which dates from 6 March 1840 . One of the early benefactors was Henry Overton Wills of the Wills tobacco family , who were staunch Congregationalists .

= = Sport = =

Portishead has a sports and leisure complex , which was partly funded by the National Lottery as well as by funds from the Town Council and North Somerset Council . It houses a large swimming pool , leisure and play pools , indoor bowls , six badminton courts , a gymnasium , a fun room for toddlers , a cafeteria and a licensed bar . Other sporting facilities in the town include open @-@ air tennis courts , a large outdoor swimming @-@ pool opened in 1962 (and renovated in 2009) , a boating lake , cricket ground , football and hockey pitches as well as many cycle lanes . The cricket club dates back to the 19th century .

Portishead Town F.C. played in small regional leagues for years until joining the Somerset County League in 1975 . They won the Premier Division title four times in five years between 1993 ? 94 and 1997 ? 98 . After their fourth successive runner @-@ up campaign in the 2004 ? 05 season , Portishead successfully applied for promotion to the Western League . In Portishead 's first season of Western League football they finished in the top half of the table only to better their performance the following season . In 2006 ? 07 Portishead achieved their highest ever finish in the history of the club , finishing runners @-@ up to Truro City .

= = Culture = =

The Bristol @-@ based trip hop group Portishead took their name from the town , despite describing it as their " dreary home @-@ town " . Chaos UK is a punk band that was formed in Portishead in 1979 . The town was also the birthplace of leading Scrumpy and Western singer Adge Cutler .

There are various groups and societies in the town , including the Gordano society that is involved in history , conservation , environment , planning and wildlife issues , a horticultural society , and the Portishead Railway Group that is campaigning for the Portishead to Bristol railway line to be re @-@ opened . There are also church and youth organisations such as the Portishead Youth Club , a choral society , which was formed in 1955 , and an annual carnival .

A public art programme started in 1999 from the marina development , as part of a planning agreement between the developers (Crest Nicholson and Persimmon Homes) and North Somerset Council . An art trail takes in 28 public art works around the marina and Ashlands development .

= = Twinned towns = =

In 1989 the town twinned with Den Dungen , a small town of approximately 6 @, @ 000 inhabitants about 3 miles (4 @. @ 8 km) from the city of ' s @-@ Hertogenbosch , capital of the Province of

North Brabant in the Netherlands . Den Dungen was a separate municipality until 1996 , when it was merged with Sint @-@ Michielsgestel .

In 1992 a further twinning arrangement was made with Schweich , the principal town in a municipality of some 20 @,@ 000 people , 6 miles (9 @.@ 7 km) from the Roman city of Trier . This municipality is in the Trier @-@ Saarburg district , in Rhineland @-@ Palatinate , Germany . It is situated on the river Moselle , about 6 miles (9 @.@ 7 km) northeast of Trier . Schweich is the seat of the Verbandsgemeinde (" collective municipality ") Schweich an der Römischen Weinstraße .

= = Notable people = =

Johnny Briggs , actor

George Wightwick , architect

Adge Cutler , popular singer

Eddie Large , comedian

Carol Vorderman , TV presenter

Chris Harris , pantomime dame , director and writer

Frederick Weatherly , song lyricist who wrote the words to " Danny Boy " and " Roses of Picardy "

Imogen Cairns , Olympic Gymnast

Geoff Barrow , singer of Portishead , moved to the town with his mother when his parents separated .