

Suttle Stone Quarries

Contract: Corfe Castle Pathway Refurbishment

Material: 8 tonnes of 20mm - Dust Limestone

Background:

The keep was built in the early 12th century for King Henry I, William the Conqueror's son. It was designed to be impressive. Standing 21m tall and on the top of a 55m high hill, made using Purbeck limestone.

In the 17th century, as the Civil War raged around it, the castle stood firm. After six centuries of keeping enemies at bay, an Act of Parliament was passed at Wareham to destroy the castle. Captain Hughes of Lulworth was given the job of demolishing it. His sappers dug deep holes packed with gunpowder to bring the towers and ramparts crashing down, resulting in the yawning gaps and crazy angles we see today.

After a brief period of confiscation, the castle was handed back to the Bankes family and remained in their ownership for three and a half centuries. In 1982 Ralph Bankes gave it to the National Trust along with the family's extensive holdings in Purbeck, their mansion at Kingston Lacy near Wimborne and its adjoining land. The Bankes estate was one of the most generous gifts in the Trust's history.

Overview:

Corfe Castle has a series of pathways running through the castle itself as well as the castle grounds. To keep these pathways safe for visitors and to avoid damage to the ground they are covered with a layer of shingle. Due to the elevated position of the castle these pathways need to be re-laid every couple of years as the rain causes the shingle to move leaving the pathways bare.

Due to the age of the castle and that it is accessed by two very old bridges, it made the delivery of the material quite complicated!

Our driver, Tim delivered the bags using the HIAB. Usually the bags would each contain 1 tonne of material,



but for this delivery each bag was made up to 500kg and delivered to the start of the bridge. This was so that the tractor could then take one bag over at a time, because the lorry would have been too heavy for the bridge, whereas the tractor can safely travel on this first bridge. However even the tractor can not travel over the second.

For the second bridge, the material will then be transported by a dumper, before being transported again, manually in buckets by volunteers to access the top of the castle.



Figure 1: The area before the main castle that requires more shingle



Figure 2: The pathways approaching the castle



Figure 3: The pathways in the castle ruins



Figure 4: The bags on the bridge having been unloaded from the HIAB and waiting for the tractor.



Figure 5: The lorry getting into position to unload.



Figure 6: The bags in front of the castle having been dropped off by the tractor.