

FAMILY MOVED
FROM WALES - HAWAII - KIM WILCOCKS - INCINERATOR SPEECH

I was born and grew up on Portland. I had an idyllic childhood, surrounded by an amazing natural environment. The high streets were jam packed with shops, we had ~~many~~ thriving industries and a multitude of different careers opportunities on our doorsteps. *many more*

Government's decision to close the naval base and HM Osprey in the 90s changed all of that. 4,500 jobs gone. A loss of £40 million to the local economy. A combined impact that has been equated to 3-4 pit closures. Imagine what that did to this community? Lost pride. Lost hope. Families broken up as our young people ~~were~~ *(were forced to leave)* in search of a decent future.

And what real investment has there been since then? Very little! Another coastal town forgotten. Left so far behind that we now have the lowest, social mobility in the country, the highest child deprivation rates in the county and significantly higher than average levels of death due to cancer, respiratory disease and coronary heart disease. The Social Mobility Commission actually described this area as having been, "left behind economically and hollowed out socially," with residents having some of the worse life chances in the country.

How can we even consider an incinerator given this reality. A development built to destroy – that would actually pump out harmful micro-particles directly on to a community where 50% of its residents are already weighed down by chronic health conditions.

We are sitting on one of the most stunning places on the planet. A central focus for the Jurassic Coast, World Heritage Site. Home to species found nowhere else on earth. Protected and scientifically important areas in every nook and cranny. ~~And~~ around the corner, we have the potential of Eden – Portland. A visionary project that would transform this area (and Dorset) for the better and for the long-term. Real investment, real career opportunities, real hope for this community.

Think about it for second. Eden or an incinerator? Is there really even a debate to be had?

If you say yes to the incinerator you are putting all of this at risk, condemning our island and its community to further decline. You are basically telling ~~us~~ us that we mean so little you are prepared to risk our health, our wellbeing, our livelihoods and our future. And for what?

We don't need this incinerator. Nowhere needs an incinerator. They offer no tangible benefits and there are better alternatives. Government's own statistics show that the higher the waste incineration rate, the lower the recycling rate. Waste incineration also produces larger quantities of greenhouse gases. Only yesterday, COP28's first global stocktake acknowledged that global greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut by 43% by 2030. This development opposes all of those things and it does so knowingly, without any form of guilt or care.

Powerful can candy coat it in any way they want, but this development is really only about two things – greed and money. The same two words that continue to dominate and destroy communities, the world over. Something has to change!

Sir, please will you be the person who stands up and says no, enough is enough – the time for incineration is over. Someone who has the vision, courage and morality to support what is right now and for the future. Please give this island and this area the chance it deserves.

to ~~stop~~ STOP THE EXPLOITATION OF THIS COMMUNITY