

*This leaflet explains what a conservation area is and how it may affect you. It shows the boundary of one of the 33 conservation areas and points out some of the features which make it special.*

# Buckler's Hard



New  
Forest  
Conservation  
Areas

This secluded historic hamlet of 18th century cottages on the Beaulieu estate attracts a great many tourists. Terraced cottages line each side of the wide gravelled street leading down towards the river with the woods beyond. The taller west terrace is characterised by its row of hipped dormers and large shared chimney stacks, while the east row of mainly labourers' cottages has a much lower roofline. The character of both is dominated by the repetition of pairs of casement windows and the numbered simple plank front doors. The modern world does not appear to intrude onto the street frontage in spite of the conversion of several dwellings into visitor facilities. Recent restoration and extensions demonstrate the care that must be taken in the choice of architectural form, materials and details.



Old Slipway



An educational visit

In 1722 John, 2nd Duke of Montagu organised and financed an expedition to the West Indies with the intention of establishing sugar plantations on the islands of St Vincent and St Lucia. To support this he planned to build a major port greater than Lymington or Southampton called Montagu Town. Acres of forest were cleared and land was offered at a nominal rent for 99 years with three loads of timber to build a house. The expedition was a failure and by 1740 only six houses had been built. Then war with France brought about the need for a great many ships; Buckler's Hard with its gravel hard and sheltered position was in an ideal position to benefit and several ships of Nelson's fleet were built here.

The 19th century saw the decline of shipbuilding here due to competition with iron ship construction and the new cheap railway transport system. In 1894 the Gosport Steam Launch Company began running day trips to Buckler's Hard; the age of tourism had begun. For a short time during the two world wars naval boatbuilding returned. But today although popular with yachtsmen most visitors come by road which has involved the provision of large car parking areas which are carefully screened from the rest of the area.