



# ISLE YARNS

## A Natural Fibre Company case study



### Jurassic yarns for all seasons

THE HOLE FAMILY lives on the Jurassic coast of Dorset. They've been farming their land on the Isle of Purbeck since 1962 and there are three generations currently working on the farm.

It's a mixed farm in that there are herds of beef and dairy cattle along with flocks of Poll Dorsets, Suffolk and North Country Mules.

Dorset's are a versatile breed and can lamb at any time of the year, unlike most others which naturally lamb in the spring.

In 2015, Sue Hole set up Isle Yarns which operates alongside G.W.R. Hole & Sons, the home farm business partnership.

With around 1300 sheep on the land there's always a good selection of fleece for the yarns which are a blend including fleece from pedigree Poll Dorset ewes.

These sheep produce a strong, bouncy fibre which, when spun, traps the air and makes for a warm garment.

After shearing, Isle Yarns farm fleeces go to the NFC ([www.thenaturalfibre.co.uk](http://www.thenaturalfibre.co.uk)) mill to be washed, spun and dyed using mineral dyes approved by the Soil Association.

Dorset sheep produce a 'downs' type of wool, known for its density and springiness.

To add softness, but still retain the rustic nature of the wool, Isle Yarns are blended with Dorset X Swaledale X Bluefaced Leicester.

The yarns can be woollen or worsted spun. Woollen spinning allows the fibre to wrap round itself.

This effectively traps the air in the centre, making the yarn 'bloom' after its washed.

When worsted spun, all the fibres are carded to align, giving a smoother, soft-feeling yarn which has a good drape.

The blended yarn takes dye clearly. All the colours, which include Newfoundland, Barnleaze and Metherhills, take their names from the fields where the sheep graze.

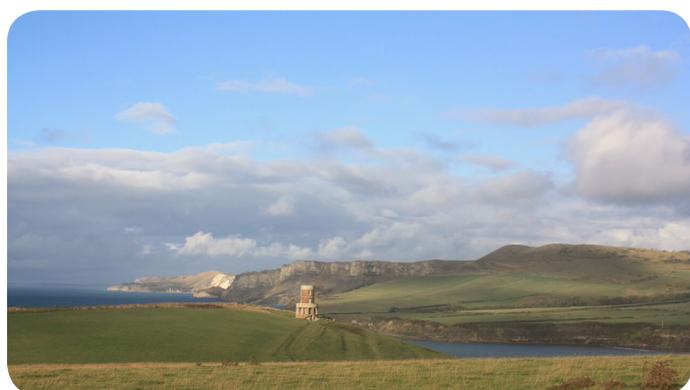
The finished product is stretchy, so blocking will allow for slight size adjustments.

Isle Yarns are available in a variety of colours all of which are carefully selected to reflect the Isle of Purbeck, which takes on striking colour changes as the seasons and the weather change.

As all the fibre comes from Bradle Farm, the yarn can be traced back to its source. The colours are named after the fields on which the sheep graze.

Isle Yarns has been working alongside Indie Designers to produce some patterns written specifically for the yarn.

These make the most of the warm bulk of the yarn and its stitch definition as well as showcasing how well the colours work alongside one another, both in dyed and natural shades.



**Website:** [www.isleyarns.co.uk](http://www.isleyarns.co.uk)

**Address:** The Diary House  
Bradle Farm, Bradle  
Dorset BH20 5NU

 IsleYarns