



Urban Heaths Partnership Heathland Mitigation Delivery Report April 2022 – March 2023



| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Introduction | 3 |
| 2 | Background | 3 |
| 3 | Co-ordination, management and core engagement of UHP | 5 |
| 4 | Education | 7 |
| 5 | Dorset Dogs Project | 11 |
| 6 | Firewise Project | 15 |
| 7 | Monitoring | 17 |
| 8 | Budget | 20 |
| 9 | Wardening | 21 |
| 13 | Further Information | 21 |
| 1 | Appendix 1 | 22 |
| 2 | Appendix 2 | 23 |

1.0 Introduction

The Local Planning Authorities continue to take a partnership approach to heathland mitigation. The Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020 -2025 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was prepared and adopted jointly between BCP and Dorset Councils with advice from Natural England. Further information regarding the SPD is available on the Dorset Council website: [Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework - Dorset Council](#)

Since 2014 the Urban Heaths Partnership (UHP) has delivered heathland mitigation on behalf of partner organisations under this and previous SPDs. Currently 10 partner organisations make up the partnership as below:

- ◆ Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust
- ◆ Bournemouth Christchurch & Poole Council
- ◆ Dorset Council
- ◆ Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
- ◆ Dorset Police
- ◆ Dorset Wildlife Trust
- ◆ Natural England
- ◆ National Trust
- ◆ Forestry England
- ◆ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

While reporting on delivery during 2022/23 this report also provides some data for comparison back to 2007.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Heathland SPD

Under the SPD the Local Planning Authorities collect developer contributions from development within 5kms of heathland sites. These contributions are used to fund heathland mitigation in the form of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Heathland Infrastructure Projects (HIPs) which include development of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).

The UHP team of core staff is responsible for co-ordinating and delivering elements of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM). This team continues to be employed by Dorset Council on behalf of the UHP – see Appendix 1, page 26 for team structure in place March 2023.

The wardening element of SAMM is delivered and funded by the Local Planning Authorities along with HIPs and SANGs.

This report concentrates on the SAMM elements of heathland mitigation delivered by the UHP Core Team.

2.2 Structure and governance of UHP

The current working and reporting mechanism for UHP is as follows, however a review of terms of reference for the UHP Implementation Group is planned following the outcome of the review of Heathland Mitigation delivery:

- **Heathland Mitigation Steering Group** - this Group has the key role of overseeing the delivery of Heathland Mitigation in Dorset, this includes:
 - Understanding and complying with current legal and planning policy related to heathland mitigation.
 - Establishing policies and practices to enable partner organisations to successfully sustain lowland heath habitat in the face of development pressure.
 - Reviewing the effectiveness of policy, practice, implementation measures and monitoring of heathland mitigation.
 - Suggesting improvement and changes to ensure that mitigation remains both current and effective.
 - Having oversight of a work programme for the UHP Team and the UHP Implementation Group.
 - Advising and identifying projects to deliver heathland mitigation.

- **UHP Implementation Group** - This Group Co-ordinates and oversees delivery of an agreed work programme for the mitigation required under the SPD for Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM), this includes:
 - Monitoring delivery of mitigation to better understand effectiveness.
 - Applying appropriate new technology to ensure that measuring and monitoring remain current.
 - Identifying supplementary funding opportunities to link with this work.
 - Implementing improvements and changes as recommended by the Heathland Mitigation Steering Group.
 - Researching and suggesting best practice to enable mitigation measures to deliver continuous improvement to partners.
 - Supporting Planning Departments by providing technical information relating to the SPD as required at Local Plan examinations, planning enquiries etc.
 - Ensuring that staff and financial resources are deployed effectively to deliver appropriate mitigation in line with strategic objectives.
 - Suggesting new projects

- **UHP Staff Management** - The core team is managed within the Coast and Countryside Service, with line management provided by the Environment,

Policy and Partnership Team Manager. The twelve members of staff are led by the UHP Team Manager

2.3 Area

The area that is covered by direct UHP mitigation support is over 2500 ha, however much of the education, engagement and project work provides consistent messages for a much wider area of heathland. Figure 1 gives an approximate percentage split of this heathland area between the current Local Authority Areas. Please note that this only includes areas/sites where UHP provide direct mitigation support.

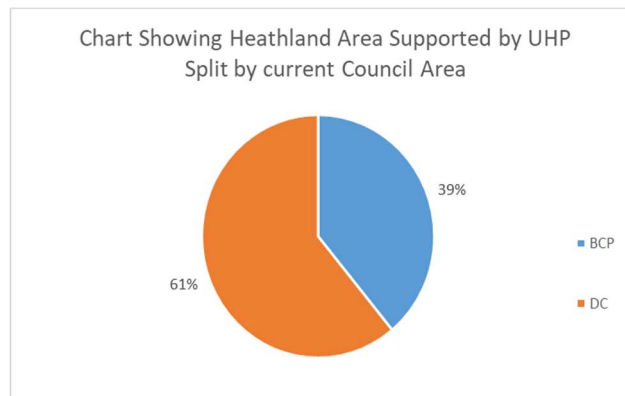


Figure 1 Chart showing heathland area by Local Authority areas.

2.4 Work areas of UHP

There are five main strands to the work of the UHP Core Team and they are discussed in detail in sections 3 – 7:

- Co-ordination and management of UHP
- Education and engagement
- Monitoring
- Dorset Dogs Project
- Firewise

3.0 Co-ordination, management and core engagement of UHP

3.1 Context and Aims of UHP Co-ordination, management and core engagement.

Key elements of coordination, management and core engagement of the UHP are to:

- Develop and monitor the implementation of the UHP Delivery Plan in line with the UHP Heathland Mitigation Strategy.
- Co-ordinate the UHP team delivery of SAMM elements in line with the approved budget. Appendix 1 shows the Core Team structure in place in March 2022
- Support co-ordination of the wardening element of SAMM across the area on all heathland sites.
- Monitor delivery of SAMM and report annually.
- Develop and deliver key messages through a range of media.
- Develop the Dorset heaths website working with the UHP team and partners.

- Build and develop strategic links with other mitigation delivering bodies.
- Develop strategic campaigns on behalf of partners.

3.2 Results of 2022/23 Co-ordination and management

During the 2022/23 financial year key work has:

- Provided costed options for future heathland mitigation SAMM delivery based on recommendations of the Dorset heaths long term analysis and evidence base report.
- Supported the Heathland Mitigation Steering group in discussion around recommendations for future delivery.
- Produced and monitored the UHP Delivery plan -agreed by the Implementation Group – to ensure delivery is on track.
- Coordinated 2 Implementation Group meetings and 6 Heathland Mitigation Steering Group - facilitated progress on delivery and budget reporting.
- Delivered 3 wider UHP team meetings - attended by the UHP Core Team and wider mitigation staff to maintain area wide knowledge is across all staff.
- Produced the UHP Annual Report for Financial year 2021/2022
- Facilitated Operation Heathland meetings on behalf of the partnership.
- Presented at the 2022 heathland Conference in Suffolk.
- Attended, alongside members of the team, the national Mitigation Meet up in Canterbury, sharing best practice around mitigation.
- Recruited 3 members of staff to the team and reviewed Dorset Dogs team structure after resignation of Dorset Dogs Officer.
- Organised Fire Training for partners with DWFRS.
- Secured 50% funding for Firewise project future delivery with DWFRS.



3.3 Results of 2022/23 core engagement

- **BBQ Campaign** - for the 2022 BBQ campaign the UHP team again worked alongside Litter Free Dorset in delivering the joint BBQ campaign. The focus for UHP was promoting the key BBQ/wildfire message to the public, putting up **60** banners located at high-risk sites strategically visible sites. **54** caravan and campsites were visited and provided with posters and leaflets. Social media - Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms were also used to promote the campaign. Members of the team also took part in the BBQ dismantle day organised by Litter



Free Dorset where 8000 disposable BBQs taken off the shelves by Co-op were dismantled and all components repurposed.

- **Heath Week** - is used as a platform to promote our messages using carefully planned events and activities, it is run in co-operation with Thames Basin Heaths and Pebblebed Heaths. The UHP Education Co-ordinator and Project Support Officer co-ordinated events and activities for the week 25th – 31st July 2022 including e a Nightjar walk, BCP Poole wardens and ARC staff pop-up events and Leif Bersweden and Lucy Lapwing ran a social media takeover. Face to face engagements reached **297** people and the social media reach across facebook, twitter and Instagram was **40,248**.

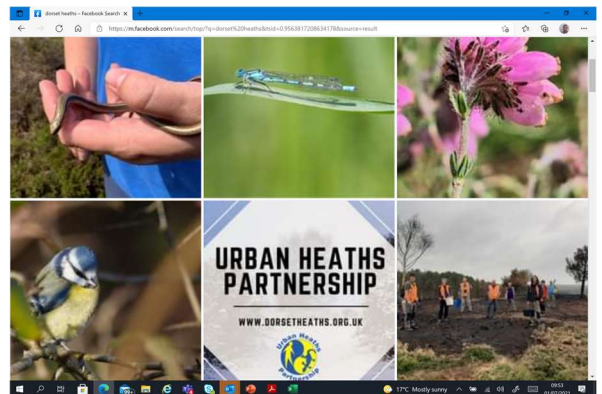


- **Heathland Life newsletter**- 2 newsletters providing information on events and heathland projects and staff were distributed to all BCP and DC Councillors and UHP Partners.
- **Engagement through website and social media** - social media channels continued to be used alongside the UHP website to promote and disseminate messages under the Dorset Heaths name. UHP run a Dorset Heaths Facebook, Instagram and Twitter platforms. The team provide a range of articles and posts that cover heathland plants and wildlife, campaign information, fires, and other pressure related stories.

Analytics For Dorset Heath branded social media (1st April 2022-31st March 2023):

- Facebook: **95,551** total post reach
- Instagram: **4141** total accounts engaged.
- Twitter: **122,410** impressions.
- Website: **3428** individual user sessions

These analytics include articles and posts put out under individual campaign titles.



4.0 Education – Schools programme

4.1 Context and Aims of UHP Education

The Education programme was delivered by the Education Coordinator and Education Assistant. The Education Co-ordinator also oversees the Dorset Dogs and Firewise projects.

The aims of UHP Education are to:

- Deliver a co-ordinated approach to education across the Partnership.
- Identify and contact Target Schools offering heathland related activities tailored to age and subject.

- Increase awareness of the importance of heathlands for their wildlife and biodiversity.
- Increase awareness of the consequences of heathland fires to the wildlife and the community along with other potentially damaging or antisocial activities.
- Encourage individual and community responsibility for the protection of heathlands for the future and provide a sense of ownership.

Target Schools have been agreed with partners as those to offer UHP education activities to as a priority. These are chosen mainly due to proximity to a heathland site and remained unchanged during this time period. See Appendix 2 for the 2022/23 target school list.

Covid 19

The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic have still been evident in education during this year, a return to normal has taken a long time for schools and their students, building relationships with teachers and schools again has taken considerable effort.

However, many schools have taken up sessions once again and this is reflected in the numbers of students reached which has returned close to pre pandemic levels.

4.2 Results of 2022/23 Education – schools programme

- **Arson Courtroom Drama (ACD)** – aimed at Key Stage 3 students was delivered in **10** of the 16 target schools which equated to engagement with **2161** year 8 students (aged 12 -13 years). It reinforces the importance of heathlands due to their wildlife and biodiversity and practically highlights the consequences of



heathland fires to the wildlife, people and the local community infrastructure. The sessions are fully interactive sessions with students acting out parts within a courtroom setting discussing the issues and crime. Getting back into some schools proved

difficult.

- **Interactive virtual Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) activity** -developed, for Key Stage 3 students, to educate about the dangers of Heathland fires to people and wildlife and test the skills and intuition of young people. Initially made available online for schools and individuals during Covid but during this year delivered as a lead session in 4 schools to **710** students.

- **Heathland related activities for Key Stage1 (Age 5-7) 2 students (Age 7-11)** – sessions were themed around getting out and about on the heath to excite students on the diversity and interest of the heathland habitat and wildlife. It was delivered to **2222** students and delivered wherever possible on a heathland local to the school.



- **Early Years Foundation Stage (Age 3-5)**- work has continued with this age group at Upton Country Park delivering ‘Roots and Shoots’ with SMILE Lone Parent Families community group and at Stour Valley delivering the Nature Tots Club. Activities delivered included: sensory nature trails, heath spotter trails, heathland animal talk, nature wreaths, nature bracelets. While activities are aimed at early years, children are always accompanied by adults allowing heathland messages to be delivered directly to parents/carers.. Roots and Shoots activities attracted approximately 8 children and 13 adults to each of the 9 activities provided – with an overall total of **72** children and **121** adults attending including 10% being new attendees each week. Nature Tots activities attracted an average of 15 children and 16 adults to each of the 32 activities - a total of **491** children and **516** adults attending sessions and again approximately 10% of these were new attendees each week.

- **Student engagement**- a total of **5379** school age students took part in activities or lessons with, figures 2 and 3 showing a comparison of the number of students engaged with over the last 9 years. Figure 4 shows the split of students engaged between BCP and Dorset Council areas.

| Year | 2014 -15 | 2015 -16 | 2016 -17 | 2017 -18 | 2018 -19 | 2019 -20 | 2020- 21 | 2021 -22 | 2022-23 |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| Total Students | 3843 | 4108 | 2927 | 5217 | 5942 | 5786 | 1040 | 3128 | 5425 |

Figure 2, Table showing total number of students engaged with over the last 9 years.

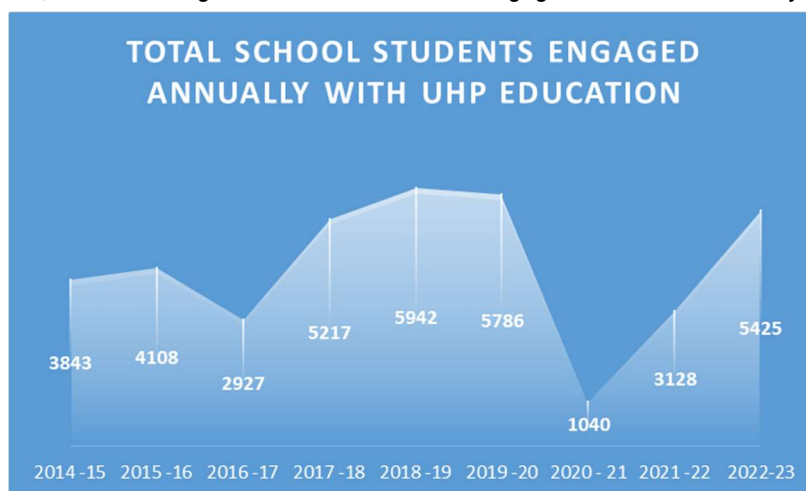


Figure 3, Graph showing total number of students engaged with over the last 9 years.

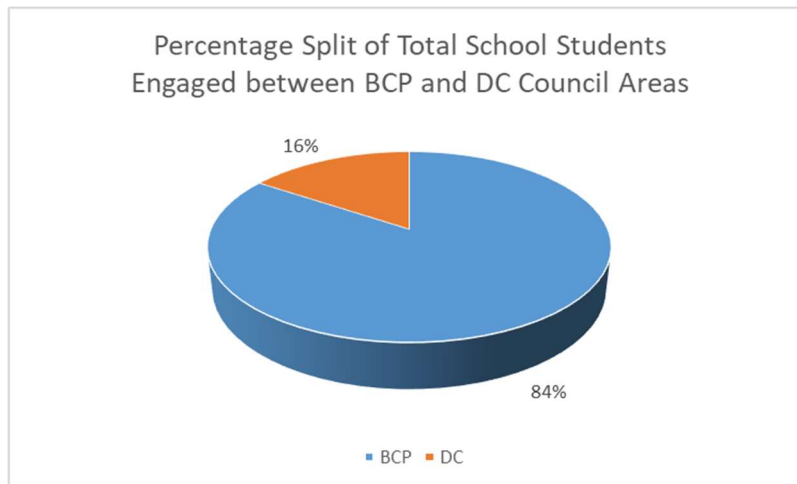


Figure 4 chart showing total number of students engaged with split as a percentage between BCP and Dorset Council areas.

4.3 Feedback on Education Delivery

“I just wanted to extend my thanks to you and your team for the sessions you delivered on Wednesday. The students gained so much from these and have continued their talks and conversations around the dramatisation of the session. Thank you once again and looking forward to working with you in the future.”
 Head of Secondary - Livingstone Academy

“Thank you so much for today! It was fantastic and the children were so engaged and enthused”.
 Damers School

“Just wanted to say thank you for all your hard work yesterday. The children had an incredible day and were buzzing about the experience and the learning”.
 Vice principal – Kinson Academy

“Urban Heath Partnership led our students on a fantastic morning visit to Canford Heath. They had planned various activities to help our students understand the biodiversity on the heath and the importance of looking after their local area. The students were fully engaged in looking at the very rare species on the heath (Sundew, Silver Studded Blue butterfly, and Heather) and learnt how to use a quadrat, working scientifically to sample the species of plants.”
 Vice Principal - Magna Academy Secondary School

“Wanted to say a huge thank you for today. You really helped to make it a huge success, the way you were with them and how you structured the sessions just helped to make it a hugely positive experience for us all. Thank you so much.”
 Ambitions Academies Trust.

5.0 Dorset Dogs Project

5.1 Context and aims of Dorset Dogs

The Dorset Dogs project was delivered by a Dorset Dogs Officer and Dorset Dogs Assistant (30 hours per week). However in July 2022, the Dorset Dogs Officer left leaving 3 months where only the Dorset Dogs Assistant with help from the UHP Manager was carrying out the delivery until a Project Officer was recruited and the Dorset Dogs Assistant promoted to Project Officer. This therefore affected engagement activities.

The aims of the UHP Dorset Dogs project are to:

- Raise awareness amongst dog owners and others of the important management issues and opportunities in relation to heathlands.
- Provide effective and consistent information on and off site for dog owners to support and promote responsible ownership and behaviour through targeted events, signs, leaflets, and online information.
- Provide support and advice to land managers on positive access management for people with dogs alongside effective engagement and education.
- Work across the project area ensuring that negative impacts are not transferred from one site to another; discouraging management that will displace problems elsewhere.
- Promote existing non-sensitive sites such as SANGs and areas where dogs are allowed off-lead.
- Support the development of new safe areas and SANGs for off-lead exercise, with involvement from the planning stage.
- Provide a broad and balanced coverage of dog owner-related issues, both positive and negative; avoiding a narrow focus to maintain the widest engagement.

5.2 Results of 2022/23 Dorset Dog Engagement

- **Bird nesting season campaign - 55** banners were put up on heathland sites across the partnership area promoting that dogs should be on leads when visiting heathland sites due to ground nesting birds disturbance from 1st March – 31st July, this was combined with a social media campaign.



- **Pit stops – 32** pit stops took place at a variety of sites. Pit stops are still an effective way to deliver on-site engagement as they provide an opportunity to discuss site issues face to face with visitors.
- **Park and Patrols – 37** Park and Patrols took place at a variety of sites, where the DD van is parked on or close to site with DD information displayed while the Officer walks around the site engaging with visitors distributing goodie bags which include DD and site information, dog poo bags and dog treats.
- **Guided walks – 4** delivered on Hengistbury Head and Avon Heath to test popularity after a gap of having none during Covid restrictions, these were combined with pit stops on 2 days with 2 walks run on each site on each day, a total of **61** people were engaged with at these.



Overall 1225 people were engaged with face to face and **682** Dorset Dogs goody bags were given out.

The split of these face-to-face engagement activities between BCP and DC Council areas is shown in Figure 5.

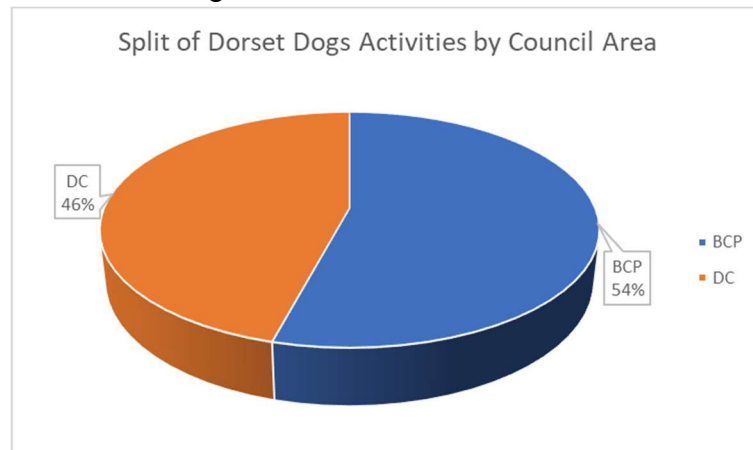


Figure 5 Chart showing the percentage split by Council area of Dorset dogs activities delivered April 2022- March 2023

Please note this chart does not include activities delivered at Hengistbury Head as part of the heathland mitigation funded dog project being delivered there. A separate report is available on work delivered through this project.

- **SCCAMP** (Southern Counties Canine Access Management Partnership) is a partnership formed at the end of 2020 between Dorset Dogs, Devon Loves Dogs, Heathland Hounds, Forestry England, New Forest National Park, South Downs National Park and Bird Aware Solent.

- **#followourlead - Summer Campaign** – to promote responsible dog ownership to visitors to Dorset, a series of 5 posters, encouraging visitors to follow the Doggy Do Code and target areas with high dog walking visitor numbers during the summer.
- **Liaison, Promotion and Advice** -The high level of engagement with Dorset Dogs has continued through this year including enquiries and liaison with land managers and staff, dog and countryside organisations, businesses and dog walkers. Dorset Dogs continues working closely with BCP supporting the Dorset Dogs Project Officer to deliver a specific dog related project based at Hengistbury Head.
- **Conferences**- In November a number of the UHP team attended the 'Engaging the Community in Nature Conservation Conference' in Canterbury hosted by Bird Wise East Kent. Anneke from Dorset Dogs spoke about the approach of Dorset Dogs and sat on the Discussion Panel In the afternoon Anneke joined Stephen Jenkinson in a workshop sharing best practice.
- **Sharing Best Practice** - Following on from the Conference the Dorset Dogs Officer delivered a presentation on the Dorset Dogs approach, ethos and work at an on-line event hosted by the RSPB and the National Trust on recreational disturbance. The event had more than 360 participants in attendance. The Dorset Dogs officer in partnership with Stephen Jenkinson from Access and Countryside Management Ltd delivered training to staff of Thames Basin Heaths Partnership and South Downs National Park in March.
- **Dorset Dogs Seminars- Two seminars were run:**
 - January 2023 - 'Managing Dogs in the Countryside' seminar for UHP partners and land managers Dorset Dogs work with. Presentations from Stephen Jenkinson and Footprint Ecology, a guided walk and an update on Dorset Dogs work. Discussion and workshops looked at how we can better work together and the development of an action plan.
 - March 2023 - 'Managing Dogs in the Countryside' seminar for landowners, land managers and rangers from organisations outside of Dorset. It followed the similar format to the previous seminar. The workshop sessions facilitated by Stephen Jenkinson.
- **Dorset Dogs Website** continued to be an invaluable tool for sharing information including the constant changing covid-19 information, promoting responsible dog behaviour, promoting positive access for dogs and their owners and raising awareness of issues and opportunities for dog owners in Dorset's towns, coast and countryside. It also provides the opportunity to



engage with local businesses through its dog friendly and Wagipawdia pages, promote events and the Doggy Do Code.

For 2022/23 the website received **35,308** individual site sessions. This included: 64,300 page views, with 53,634 unique page view.

- **Social Media** Dorset Dogs uses Facebook and Instagram platforms, these have continued to be vital in disseminating messages and engaging with the public with continuing high numbers using these to find information.

Facebook analytics for 2022/23 include:

The total post reach for the year was **73,762**. Facebook followers reached 5,724 for the period. The highest reach was the announcement of the Dog Walker Trail and Dog Walkers Bench at Hengistbury head with 15.5k followed by the recruitment post for the K9 Firewise Patrol.

Other highlights include:

- An increase of 373 new followers (and 300 likes) over the previous year
- Facebook video views averaged around 240 views.
- An average of 12 posts added each month on Facebook, these detail engagement work and key messages.

Instagram analytics for 2022/23:

Dorset Dogs has also continued a strong presence on Instagram and has continued to increase the number of followers to **1,334** at the end of March 2023 with **2791** accounts reached during the period.

- **Membership** Through the website, people with dogs are asked and encouraged to join as members by signing up to follow the doggy do code. The numbers of members signed up to Dorset Dogs as of 31st March 2023 is **2488**. Figure 5 shows the number of members signed up at the end of each financial year from 2010 to 2023.

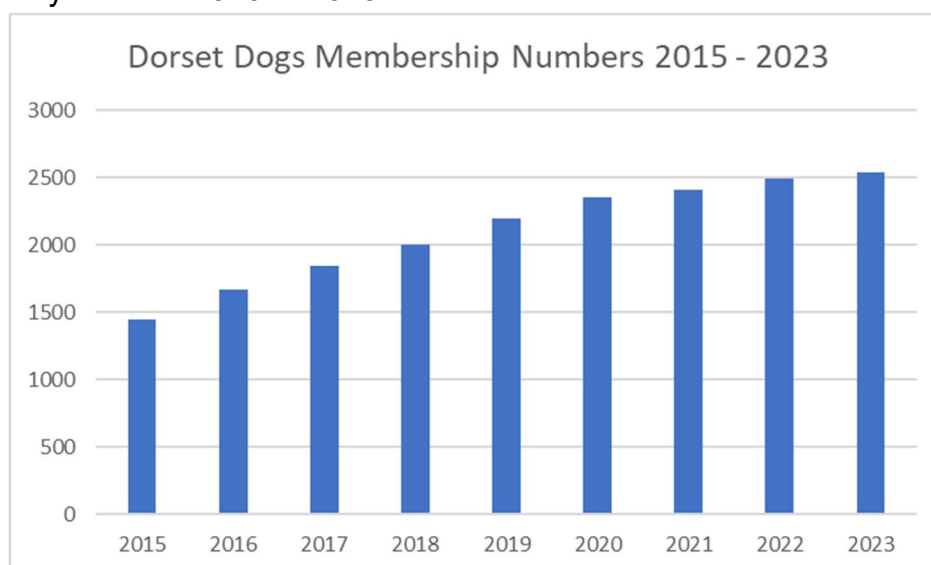


Figure 6 graph showing number of Dorset Dog members signed up to practice responsible behaviour and follow the Doggy Do Code between 2015 and 2023 (membership numbers as at 31st March each year).

- **Collaborative work** During the 2022/23 season a 2 day a week post continued the previous winters partnership between the Bird and Recreation Initiative (BARI) and Dorset Dogs to work alongside the BARI Coastal Engagement Warden.



The warden promotes the Coastwise Canines campaign and delivers on site engagement to champion positive behaviour for people with dogs on the coast and promote responsible dog ownership. The warden worked across Poole Harbour engaging site visitors, dog owners, local communities and land managers.

Dorset Dogs undertook the following:

- Planning and liaison with land managers
- Observing visitor behaviour, birds and disturbance by dogs
- Delivering key messages for Doggy Do Code.
- Attending and organising events, on site public engagement to raise awareness of pro wildlife dog walking.
- Using social media to promote the Dorset Dogs key messages.

Focus sites include: Whitecliff Recreation Ground, Baiter Park, Hamworthy Park, Ham Common, Lake Pier, Studland inner and outer harbour- Bramble Bush, Brands Bay and Shell Bay and Upton Country Park and Frenches Farm SANG.



Engagement - **282** people were directly engaged with via **19** Park and Patrols, **6** Pit Stop and **2** Events. Social media posts included 8 Facebook posts which had an **8,164** reach and 10,763 impressions and 10 Instagram posts which reached **2,230** accounts.

6.0 Dorset Firewise Communities Project

6.1 Context and aims of Dorset Firewise

The Dorset Firewise Communities Project started in January 2018 works to reduce risk of damage to homes from wildfire through knowledge and practical improvements to reduce hazards. Improving community cohesion and general wellbeing concentrating on building resilience against wildfire damage to residential properties in south east Dorset centred around communities on the urban interface with heathland sites. The project looks to deliver the following aims:



- Raise awareness of the consequences of wildfire and the risk to close by homes from embers.
- Make homes and communities more resilient to wildfire.

- Encourage communities to learn more about wildfire and their adjacent landscapes.
- Create a network of Firewise Communities that can support each other.

The Dorset Firewise Project Assistant works 14.8 hours per week with funding agreed until March 2024. Further information about Dorset Firewise is available at: www.firewiseuk.org

K9 Firewise Patrol is a joint partnership project between Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Firewise UK and Dorset Dogs. The volunteers regularly walk on the heath with their dogs looking out for any signs of fire or suspicious behaviour that may link to wildfires. The volunteers receive a one-hour induction, looking at some basic ecology of the heathland, things to look out for, what to do if you see a fire and some basic safety reminders. Individuals then sign an informal agreement, confirming their attendance and public liability insurance of their pet dog. After each walk, we ask the walkers to complete the online logging tool to help us monitor the scheme.



6.2 Results of 2022/23 Dorset Firewise Project

- Following fire on Canford Heath Firewise information leaflets were delivered to **200** homes in conjunction with DWFRS.
- Following fire on Dewlands Common Firewise information was delivered to **25** homes.
- Firewise information and leaflets have been distributed at local community events and pop up events in partnership with Dorset Dogs including Upton Country Park, Canford Park SANG, Thorncombe Woods, Studland, Tadnoll Heath and Ferndown Common. Approximately **260** leaflets handed out.
- Attended Fire Station open days at Westbourne and Christchurch fire stations, **380** leaflets handed out and many people engaged with.
- Firewise information dropped to local campsites again this summer (**54** addresses)
- Presented at Annual Neighbourhood Watch conference to promote project.
- Attended Wildfire conference in Belfast promoting project.
- Meetings with London, South Wales and Essex Fire services regarding role out of Firewise.
- Input into white paper around wildfire preparedness.
- K9 Firewise volunteers undertook **373** patrols amounting to **386** volunteer hours, including on the following heathland sites: Canford Heath, Upton Heath, Avon Heath, Ferndown, St Catherines Hill, Holt Heath.



- Information continues to be posted on-line and on Facebook especially throughout the wildfire season, the post reach for the period was **19,105**.

7.0 Monitoring

7.1 Context and Aims of UHP Monitoring

The aims of UHP Monitoring are as set out in The Revised Monitoring Strategy for the Dorset Heathlands SPD (Fearnley and Liley 2014), adopted as part of the SPD. They are to:

- Organise the collection and collation of different data sets to be analysed by Footprint Ecology and stored by DERC as part of the Monitoring Strategy.
- Support and advise partners as required in monitoring of Heathland Infrastructure projects (HIPs) including new access management projects or Suitable Alternative Greenspace (SANG) development.
- Organise and deliver monitoring for HIPs and SANGs as requested by partners.

A review of the Monitoring Framework was carried out by Chris Panter (Footprint Ecology) and Rachel Pearce (UHP) as requested by the Implementation Group in 2016/17. Monitoring continues in line with this report. The report is available on request.

7.2 Methods and results of monitoring

Monitoring is currently conducted using various methodology including:

- **Car Park Counts** - Car park transects provide a robust comparison between car parks over time across the heaths and related sites. This survey method involves 5 or 6 UHP and Partner Mitigation staff recording the number of cars parked at agreed car parking sites across the area. These range from small informal car parks or laybys, through to large car parks accessing or adjacent to heathland sites and a handful of “honeypot” sites. All data was collected and passed to Footprint Ecology for analysis and reporting.
- **People Counting Sensors** - Remote people counting sensors are installed at entrances across a range of agreed sites. They count the number of passes either by using heat sensing beams that are broken when people pass or pressure pads in the ground that record passes when stepped on. The data provides trends of visitor numbers.

The sensors include pyros, long-range pyros, pressure slabs and one induction loop (used to record bicycles).



The number of project and SANG sensors will continue to vary as new SANGs are created and other mitigation project monitoring is carried out. The Monitoring Warden collected data from the sensors and maintained them. This included regular checks and repairs or replacement, due to malfunction, vandalism or theft. Data is collected approximately every three/four months, downloaded and checked before sending to Footprint Ecology for analysis and reporting.

- **Incident recording – Dorset Explorer** - The Monitoring Warden coordinated reporting and recording of any illegal or destructive activities which will impact of the heath. 'Incidents' are recorded by mitigation staff and officers on the Dorset Council's 'Dorset Explorer' system and cover a range of activities including fires, motorcycles/off-roading, fly tipping and vandalism. Fire data is gathered to record the number of fires and area of damage to the heathland SPA. Other incidents such as motorbikes on site, fly-tipping and drones on site for example are recorded to inform and focus the resources for SAMM delivery.

7.2 Results of 2022/23

- **Car park count surveys - 12** Co-ordinated car park counts were organised by the Monitoring Warden. The car park surveys are carried out over 2-hour periods, either between 7 - 9am, 10am - 12pm or 2 - 4pm on a variety of week, weekend and Bank Holiday days spread across the year.
- **People Counting sensor monitoring - 24** core heathland sensors and **38** others have been maintained throughout this year. **33** other sensors are used for monitoring at SANG sites, Heathland Infrastructure Projects, and at different visitor attractions. Data collection continued throughout the year unaffected by the pandemic restrictions.
- **Incident recording (Fires) –** Figure 7 shows the number of fires recorded on heathland sites across Dorset from 2007/08 – 2022/23 financial years. There was an average of 123 fires per year over the first eight years of the recording period and 87 for the last eight years of the period. This shows a decrease of 70% between the two periods.

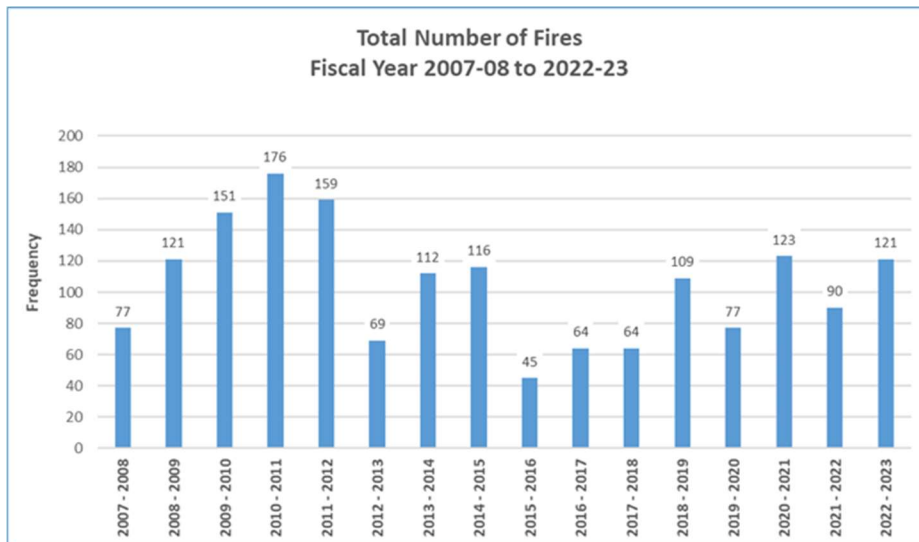


Figure 7 shows the number of fires recorded on heathland sites across south east Dorset from 2007/08 – 2022/23.

Figure 8 shows a large increase in area burnt in 2020/21, due to the Wareham Forest fire which was over 180 hectares in size. This was thought to have been started by disposable a BBQ. There is evidence from wardens and DWFRS that the number of campfires and BBQs on site have increased significantly, an increase in small fires may be a result of this.

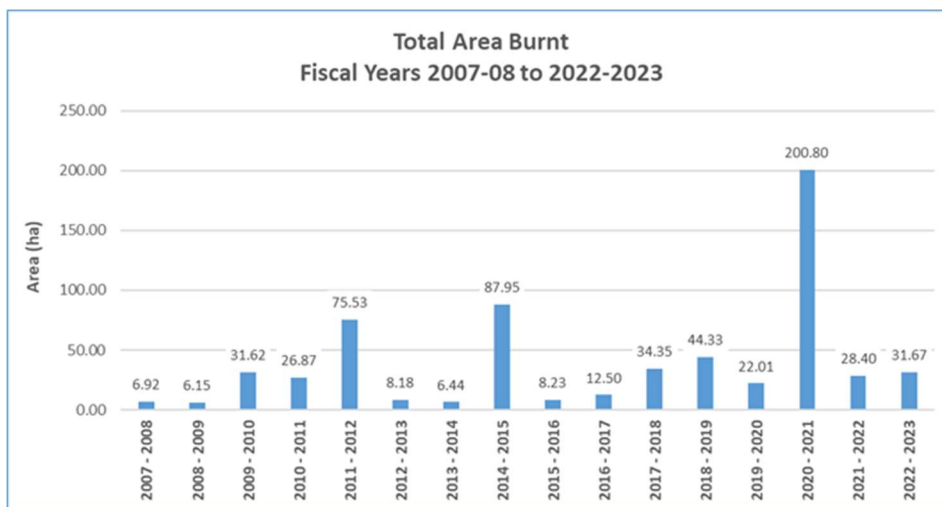


Figure 8 shows the total area of heathland burnt across south east Dorset from 2007/08 – 2022/23

The full 2022 UHP Monitoring Report produced by Footprint Ecology which reports on and summarises data collected will be available online from the UHP Website <https://www.dorsetheaths.org.uk> or from the UHP Office once completed.

- **Monitoring of SANGs** - Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) are new or enhanced greenspaces of a quality and type suitable to be used as mitigation for development likely to affect the Dorset Heathland European and internationally protected sites. They are designed to absorb recreation

pressure that would otherwise occur on these fragile sites. SANG monitoring methodology follows principles set out in the Dorset Heathlands SPD and may include onsite tally counts, onsite interviews, installation of automated people counters and car park monitoring in line with the Dorset Heathlands Monitoring Strategy. Advice and consultation regarding SANG monitoring and project monitoring has been given to partners, ecologists and developers working with SANG development within the project area and work with partners and developers continues. During 2022/23 monitoring of SANGs have taken place at:

- Purbeck Park project (HIP)
- Slop Bog, Riverside and Woolslope SANG joint surveys (HIP)
- Dogdean SANG
- Verwood Ringwood Rd SANG
- St Leonards SANG
- Bernards Mead HIP
- Upton Country Park (Phase 2 Round 2)
- Canford Park SANG (Phase 1 Round 2)
- Riversmeet SANG (Round 2)
- Bytheway Field SANG (Round 3)
- Upton Country Park (Round 1 Phase 3)

7.3 Wildlife Monitoring - Monitoring of 3 key heathland indicator bird species, Dartford Warbler, Woodlark and Nightjar is commissioned annually by UHP and carried out by the RSPB. The UHP Annual Monitoring Report includes results from these surveys.

8.0 Budget

The agreed budget for the Core Team for the 2022-2023 financial year was £314,648 including monitoring costs (figure 9), this budget is split between the two Unitary Councils from developer contributions collected from development within 5Km of any heathland site. Dorset Council contributes 27% plus hosting costs and BCP Council contributes 73%.

| Monitoring Revenue Expenditure 2021/22 | Amount |
|---|-----------------|
| Footprint Ecology | £5,200 |
| Dorset Environmental Records Centre | £3,500 |
| Dorset Explorer GIS maintenance | £2,000 |
| Bird Surveys | £11,000 |
| Total | £21,700* |

Figure 9– monitoring delivery costs for UHP 2022 -2023.* Total split equally between the Local Authority Partners

9.0 Wardening

The wardening element of SAMM is delivered by the Local Authority partners with Mitigation Staff employed within their own teams where possible.

A Service Level Agreement is in place between the Local Planning Authorities to agree a consistent approach to the wardening element of SAMM. The agreed key elements include:

- Provision of a presence on heathland sites within the Local Authority area including those managed by partners and privately-owned sites to encourage appropriate behaviour and signpost users to alternative open spaces. This may include patrols, educational visits and on-site activities or events where appropriate.
- Attendance, where deemed appropriate and resources allow, local community events to promote responsible use of heathlands and alternative open spaces.
- Respond following agreed Partner or UHP protocol to fire incidents and assist DWFRS and Dorset Police at incidents as necessary.
- Support where necessary and resources allow, the UHP Education team in delivering the agreed heathland education programme.
- Support where necessary and resources allow, the UHP Monitoring Officer and Warden in contributing to data collection as defined in the Monitoring Strategy for Dorset Heathlands and recording incidents on Dorset Explorer.
- Provide reasonable support for staff working in other areas during emergencies or high incident occurrences.
- Maintain communication with partner staff to ensure consistent service delivery across Partnership area.
- Progress reporting of work to the UHP Team Manager to allow annual reporting to the Dorset Heathland Mitigation Steering Group.

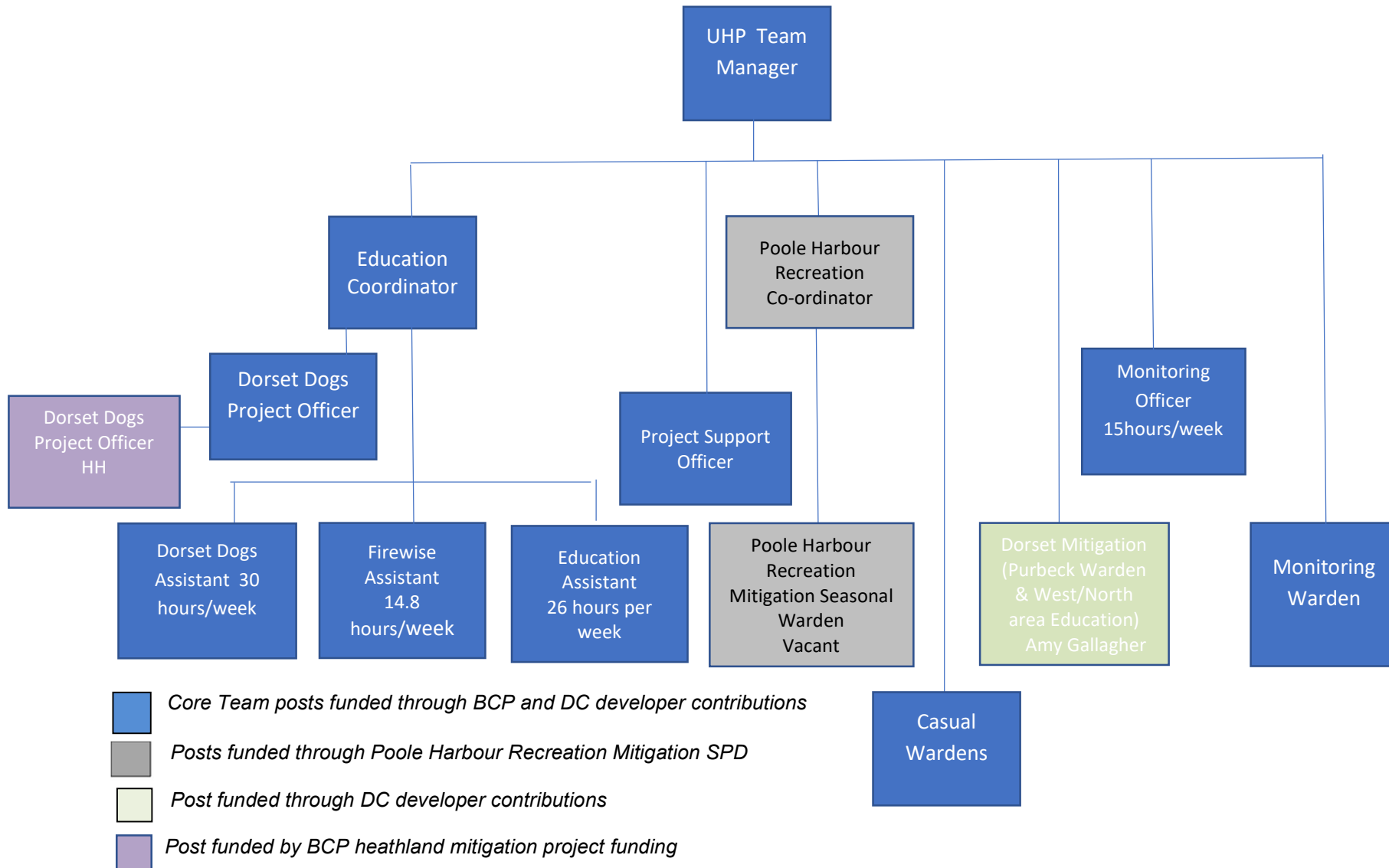
10.0 Further Information

Further information on any of the work within this report is available on-line at:

Website: www.dorsetheaths.org.uk

Email: urbanheaths@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 1 –Urban Heaths Partnership Staff Structure as of April 2022



Appendix 2 - UHP Education Target Schools 2022-2023

List showing the UHP target schools as agreed by the Partnership.

| School | Local Authority for School | Activity: HHA=Heathland Habitat Awareness. ACD= Arson Courtroom Drama |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Heathlands Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Kingsleigh Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Christ The King | BCP | HHA |
| Elm Academy - Leaf | BCP | HHA |
| Kinson Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Bourne Academy | BCP | ACD |
| Oak Academy - Leaf | BCP | ACD |
| Glenmoor Academy | BCP | ACD |
| Winton Academy | BCP | ACD |
| | | |
| Hamworthy Park Junior | BCP | HHA |
| Broadstone First | BCP | HHA |
| Canford Heath Junior | BCP | HHA |
| Merley First | BCP | HHA |
| Manorside Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Talbot Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Bishop Aldhelms Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Haymoor Junior | BCP | HHA |
| Upton Junior | BCP | HHA |
| Broadstone Middle | BCP | ACD |
| Carter Community | BCP | ACD |
| St Aldhelms Academy | BCP | ACD |
| Magna Academy | BCP | ACD |
| | | |
| Highcliffe Primary | BCP | HHA |
| Highcliffe Comprehensive | BCP | ACD |
| The Grange | BCP | ACD |
| Twynham | BCP | ACD |
| | | |
| Ferndown Middle | DC | ACD |
| Lockyers Middle | DC | ACD |
| West Moors Middle | DC | ACD |
| | | |
| Sandford Primary | DC | HHA |
| Lychett Minster | DC | ACD |
| The Purbeck | DC | ACD |
| | | |