



# Annual Delivery Report 2024 - 2025



# Contents

## **1. Introduction**

## **2. Background**

- 2.1. Staff Structure
- 2.2. Governance
- 2.3. The buffer zone
- 2.4. Monitoring

## **3. Plans and Strategies**

- 3.1. Interim strategy
- 3.2. Chesil and Fleet Recreation Mitigation Monitoring Strategy 2022
- 3.3. Natural England, Site Improvement Plan. Natura 2000

## **4. Finance**

- 4.1. Budget Overview

## **5. Core funded project updates**

- 5.1. Dorset Wildlife Trust Community Ranger Report
- 5.2. Wild Chesil Visitor Centre Report
- 5.3. RSPB little Tern Officer Report

## **6. Engagement and awareness raising**

- 6.1. RSPB Assistant Project Officer
- 6.2. RSPB Wardening Kit
- 6.3. Development of the 'Birders Code'
- 6.4. Litter Free Dorset Campaign
- 6.5. Dorset Dogs
- 6.6. Fleet Explorer

## **7. Infrastructure projects (delivered / in progress)**

- 7.1. Rights of Way Improvement – Tidmoor to Hive point
- 7.2. Wild Chesil Visitor Centre Low Roped Fence
- 7.3. Abbotsbury Boundary Fence
- 7.4. Boardwalk repair at Visitor Centre

## **8. Future project planning and updates 2025/2026**

- 8.1. Visitor Centre Car Park Improvement Project
- 8.2. Visitor Centre Bird Hide
- 8.3. Rights of Way Improvement at Ferrybridge



## 1. Introduction

To address the impacts of recreational pressure at Chesil Beach and the Fleet, the [Chesil and Fleet Interim strategy for mitigating the effects of recreational pressure on the Chesil Beach and the Fleet SAC, SPA and Ramsar](#) was prepared and adopted by Dorset Council and advised by Natural England. Further information regarding this can be found on [Dorset Council website](#).

## 2. Background

Under the Interim Strategy the Local Planning Authority collects developer contributions from developments within 5 km of Chesil and the Fleet European site (SPA and SAC features). These contributions are used to fund mitigation in the form of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and infrastructure projects.

In January 2022 a mitigation coordinator was employed for 1 day per week to coordinate the partnership, development of eligible projects, monitoring and project delivery. The Community Ranger and RSPB Little Tern Project Officer was recruited and funded in 2021. This seasonal RSPB role runs between April – September for the summer breeding season.

### 2.1. Staff structure

The core funded staff include; a mitigation coordinator managed by Dorset Council, community ranger managed by Dorset Wildlife trust and a little tern project officer managed by RSPB.

### 2.2. Governance

The steering group that advises and supports the Chesil and Fleet Partnership is made up of representatives from:

- Dorset Council Planning
- Dorset Council Environment Team
- Dorset Council CIL Planning and Finance
- Natural England Marine Advice Team Lead
- Dorset Wildlife Trust
- RSPB
- Chesil and Fleet Nature Reserve
- Portland Court Leet
- Crown Estates

An agreed Terms of Reference governs the group ([Appendix 9.1](#))

The governance outline ([Appendix 9.2](#))

### 2.3. The Buffer zone

In the interim period, Natural England have recommended the approach should focus on development within 5km of the Chesil Beach and the Fleet to ensure consistency with the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework.

### 2.4. Monitoring

Dorset Council do not currently have sufficient data to determine where visitors to Chesil Beach and the Fleet for recreational purposes are travelling from. A survey will be required in future to determine this fully.

## 3. Plans and Strategies

### 3.1. [Interim Strategy](#)

### 3.2. [Chesil and Fleet recreation mitigation monitoring strategy 2022](#)

### 3.3. [Visitor surveys and recreation impact assessment conducted in the spring 2022](#)

### 3.4. [Natural England, Site Improvement Plan. Natura 2000](#)

## 4. Budget Overview

Dorset Council collect SAMMs contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy from developer contributions collected from development within 5 km of Chesil and Fleet SAC and SPA sites. Projects are scored against a matrix and are then reviewed by the steering group.

Stakeholders are encouraged to make applications for funding by contacting the Dorset Council Mitigation Coordinator. All applications go through a rigorous process to ensure that they prove good value and achieve high standards of mitigation.

	Costs
Staff Costs	£86,467.06
Operations	£1,592.29
Project	£123,379.49
£-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£211,438.84</b>

## 5. Core funded project updates

### 5.1. **Dorset Wildlife Trust Community Ranger Report** ([See Appendix 9.3](#))

The Community Ranger ran a total of 12 events between April 2024 and March 2025, engaging 160 people. They conducted 60 patrols, 14 events, and 3 pop ups throughout the year. Their direct engagement prevented 6 disturbance events, 4 of which were with dog owners.

### 5.2. **Wild Chesil Visitor Centre Report** ([See Appendix 9.3](#))



The Visitor Centre is responsible for hosting the mitigation staff, providing line manger support to the Community Ranger and is a platform for engaging people with the mitigation messaging.

### 5.3. **RSPB little Tern Officer Report** (See Appendix 9.4)

51 nests and 37 fledglings were recorded. The team is made up of a Project Officer, an Assistant Project Officer and a team of volunteers who manage the site and conduct monitoring. 1400 hours of wardening effort was logged this season.

## 6. **Engagement and awareness raising (delivered / in progress)**

### 6.1. **RSPB Assistant Project Officer (in progress)**

The Assistant Project Officer (APO) assist the Project Officer with monitoring, site maintenance, volunteer management and public engagement. The external funding that was previously available to support this 5-month post is no longer available, so mitigation funding was awarded to cover 50% of the staff costs.

### 6.2. **RSPB Wardening Kit (delivered)**

The RSPB team required additional resources to maintain the fencing, signage and assist with getting kit onto site.

### 6.3. **Development of the 'Birders Code' (delivered)**

A workshop was delivered by the Community Ranger and the Mitigation Coordinator to engage local birders and develop a birders code. The workshop was a useful tool in discussing good practice with some very established local birders, Dorset Bird Club. The Chesil and Fleet Nature Reserve Wardens also attended in support of the Mitigation Team.



#### 6.4. Litter Free Dorset Campaign (in progress)

After a successful application for funding The Litter Free Dorset (LFD) team hosted a

workshop with the key stakeholders from the CAF partnership. In this workshop key issues were discussed and the final outcome was that the campaign should focus on Anglers. This is a user group that has been difficult for the community ranger to engage with so far and yet they have a big impact on the site. LFD have developed an Anglers map and reusable printed rubbish bag that will be given out for free initially.



#### 6.5. Dorset Dogs

We will be focusing on a dog walker engagement strategy is needed for 2025 which will review the different options we have to work with the dog walking community on the Chesil and Fleet.

#### 6.6. Fleet Explorer (for more detail see Appendix 9.3)

Mitigation funds were awarded for repairs/minor improvements to the boat and securely store it over winter in a local boatyard. This funding was agreed for a 5 year period and is in its second year. The Fleet Explorer engaged with 665 individuals this season.

### 7. Infrastructure Projects (delivered / in progress)

#### 7.1. Rights of Way Improvement – Tidmoor to Hive Point (delivered)

Multiple sections of this path were inaccessible throughout winter due to poor drainage, and this was causing people to walk along the shoreline disturbing the birds. The Dorset Council Rights of Way team led on the project, and we secured a small financial contribution from Southwest Coast Path Team.



### 7.2. Wild Chesil Visitor Centre Low Roped Fence (In progress)

See the Community Ranger report for update on this. ([Appendix 9.4](#))

### 7.3. Abbotsbury Boundary Fence (delivered)

The existing boundary fence was removed, and a replacement several meters to the east was re-built. Members of the public commonly come around the fence to access the Tank Teeth and pillbox, so moving it will negate this need for access. The addition of a new boundary fence would also show that this is a managed part of the Nature Reserve.



### 7.4. Boardwalk repair

Replace/repair rotten planks and uprights on the boardwalk beside the Visitor Centre.

## 8. Future Project Planning and Updates 2025/26

### 8.1. Visitor Centre Car Park Improvement Project

We are looking to improve and redesign the layout of the car park for visitors and nature. As the entrance to the Chesil and Fleet Nature Reserve, the car park should create a strong first impression—helping visitors immediately recognise that they are entering a unique and important place for nature.

### 8.2. Visitor Centre Bird Hide

This is currently in the pre-planning application stage. It will provide viewing over the Fleet mudflats, increasing engagement potential and helping deter recreational users from wildlife disturbance on the mudflats.

### 8.3. Rights of way improvement Ferrybridge

Currently footpath S1/74 is closed due a landslide and a diversion is in place. Due to the diversion being inland walkers are disregarding it, opting instead to walk either along the closed path or along the foreshore. We have anecdotal evidence that walkers with and without dogs are choosing to walk along the foreshore and causing disturbing to wildlife, including dogs chasing and dispersing numerous Oystercatchers and foraging birds. By assisting the Right of Way Team to reinstate and improve this section of the South-West Coast path we will be directly mitigating the impact of walkers of the foreshore.

## 9. Appendix

9.1. Terms of Reference

9.2. Governance

9.3. Community Ranger Report



9.4. Wild Chesil centre  
CAF report 2024-202!



9.5. CLT Annual Report  
2024.pdf