

**Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council  
Dorset Council**



# **POOLE HARBOUR'S BIRD AND RECREATION INITIATIVE**

**Annual Delivery Report 2024 - 2025**

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## 1. Introduction

The Local Planning authorities are working in partnership to deliver the Poole harbour recreation mitigation. [The Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\) 2019- 2024](#) was prepared and adopted jointly between BCP and Dorset Councils and is advised by Natural England. Further information regarding the SPD is available on the [Dorset Council website](#).



## 2. Background

Under the SPD the Local Planning Authorities collect developer contributions from development within 5kms of Poole Harbour Special Protected Area (SPA) sites. These contributions are used to fund Poole Harbour recreation mitigation in the form of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Poole Harbour Infrastructure Projects (PHIPs).

In December 2020 a seasonal mitigation warden was appointed, followed shortly by the mitigation coordinator in January 2021. Subsequently in July 2021 the brand identity of Poole Harbour's Bird And Recreation Initiative (BARI) was established. In June 2022 the project recruited its first a full time Coastal engagement warden on a 23 month contract.

In July 2024 the Environment Mitigation Delivery Team (EMDT) was created. Bringing together the BCP/DC partnership officers for Nutrient, Heathland Air Quality and Recreation Mitigation. The Poole Harbour mitigation coordinator was appointed as Team leader.

The Coastal Engagement Warden role was upgraded to level 8 and made permanent in November 2024.

[EMDT VIDEO](#)



### 2.1 Structure and governance of Poole Harbour's Bird And Recreation Initiative (BARI)

#### Staff structure

The Environment mitigation delivery team leader is also the mitigation coordinator. Within the BARI team they line manage a permanent Coastal Engagement warden and a part time seasonal Dorset Dogs warden.

### **Governance**

The BARI team are employees of Dorset Council and managed by Urban Heath Partnership. The Steering group that advises and supports the initiative is made up of representatives from:

- BCP Planning
- BCP Environment team
- BCP CIL planning and finance
- Dorset Council Planning
- Dorset Council Environment Team
- Dorset Council CIL planning and finance
- Natural England Marine Advice Team Lead
- Dorset Heath Partnership (DHP) Team Leader – Chair



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

### **The Recreation Zone**

Poole Harbour mitigation is delivered within a specified recreation zone and funding is split between the current Local Authority Areas 85% BCP and 15% Dorset Council.

## **2.2 Work areas**

### **Coordination and Management**

The key elements of coordination and management include

- Developing and delivering projects with stakeholders (PHIP and SAMM)
- Developing and delivering key messaging (SAMM)
- Managing the delivery of SAMM through wardening, social media and strategic engagement
- Monitoring and reporting the results of mitigation projects

The wardening element of SAMM is delivered and funded by the Local Planning Authorities along with PHIPs. More detail on PHIP and SAMM delivery in sections 5 and 6.

## **3. Plans and Strategies**

- 3.1. [The Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\) 2019- 2024](#)
- 3.2. [Poole Harbour disturbance study. 2019. Footprint Ecology](#)
- 3.3. [Poole Harbour Aquatic Management Plan 2006 \(Amended 2011\)](#)
- 3.4. [Natural England, Site Improvement Plan. Natura 2000](#)

## **4. Finance**

Dorset Council will collect SAMMs contributions through CIL and BCP Council collects the SAMMs through planning obligations. The budget is split between the two Unitary Councils from developer contributions collected from development within 5km of Poole Harbour SPA sites. Dorset Council contribute 15% plus hosting costs and BCP Council contribute 85%.

BARI applies for project funding via proforma and matrix scoring that is then evaluated by the steering group. Final approval is secured through the BCP infrastructure improvement board and Dorset Council senior management via infrastructure and delivery planning manager.

Stakeholders are encouraged to make applications for funding through BARI for their own projects. Both go through a rigorous process to ensure that they prove good value and achieve high standards of mitigation.

#### 4.1. Eligibility

Internal and external applications must meet the criteria set out in the pre-application form. This ensures that:

- Projects are within the Recreation Zone as stated in the SPD
- Manages impacts on waders and wildfowl from recreational disturbance
- Contributes towards improving our understanding of the impacts of this adverse effect either directly (monitoring and surveying) or indirectly (monitoring the success of the project outcomes).
- Meets one or more of the strategic objectives as laid out in the Natural England Site Improvement Plan.

#### 5. Budget ([for detailed summary see Appendix 9.2](#))

Projects	£143,994.00
Other Expenditure	£88,769.07
Total	£232,763.07

#### 6. Engagement and Awareness Raising

##### 5.1 Coastal Engagement Warden (CEW):

([For full report see Coastal Engagement Warden Report appendix 9.3](#))

In total, 1514 people were engaged with over the period, with summer engagements totalling 800 and winter totalling 714.

A particular highlight for the team was delivering the Winter Walking Challenge. This project targeted walkers and was set up with the aim of highlighting inland sites to encourage footfall away from more bird sensitive coastal areas as well as educate participants of the conservation value of Poole Harbour. This was achieved within the premise of a walking challenge where participants took part in group training walks before completing a final longer walk. In total 62 people attended the walks.







## 5.2 Dorset Dogs Warden

*(Full warden report October 2023 - March 2024 see appendix 9.4)*



The role 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 works across Poole Harbour engaging site visitors, dog owners, local communities and land managers. The DD project officer also provides consultation to guide our resources and engagement.

The Dorset Heath Partnership summer warden had previously interviewed for the 2023/24 post and was scored very highly. She was interested in continuing her work within the team and it was agreed that we would continue her contract and change line management to the BARI team. This

was on the understanding she would be travelling abroad for 6 weeks of the post in November / December.

The warden worked extremely well with the coastal engagement warden and this was possibly the happiest year for the team than previous years due to the great dynamic between the wardens.

- *A total of 546 people were engaged with (382 dogs)*
- *11 Pitstops*
- *30 Park and Patrols*
- *Over 12000 interactions on social media*

### **5.3 Stakeholder workshop**

In January 2025 the BARI team invited 27 key stakeholders including land managers, conservation charities, and recreation organisations to a workshop to discuss bird disturbance, engagement, infrastructure projects, and monitoring of mitigation projects. The 2-hour workshop hosted at Brenscombe activity centre facilitated conversations between ecologists, birders, wildfowlers and county planners with the aim to hear about localised issues, share and develop ideas for future projects, and connect organisations. The team shared updates from the 2021 launch of BARI to its biggest infrastructure investment at Studland peninsular in 2024. New projects have stemmed from these valuable conversations with several underway.

## **6 Infrastructure Projects (delivered/ in progress)**

### **6.1 Turlin Moor saltmarsh zoning**

Working with BCP senior ranger and Lytchett Bay partnership we have zoned off a particularly sensitive area of saltmarsh within Lytchett Bay on the Turlin moor boundary.

Just up the shoreline from this saltmarsh spit is the Turlin Bird Screen which is being improved in partnership with the Parks foundation. Further on from this is the viewing platform. The whole area has a mosaic of habitats and has a good record of attracting migrants. Views from the screen itself look out at the bay, and exposed mudflats when the tide is low.

Previously a Redshank breeding site and currently a high tide roost for a small number of SPA species, this saltmarsh is infrequently accessed by dog walkers and anglers causing large amounts of disturbance to species that use it.

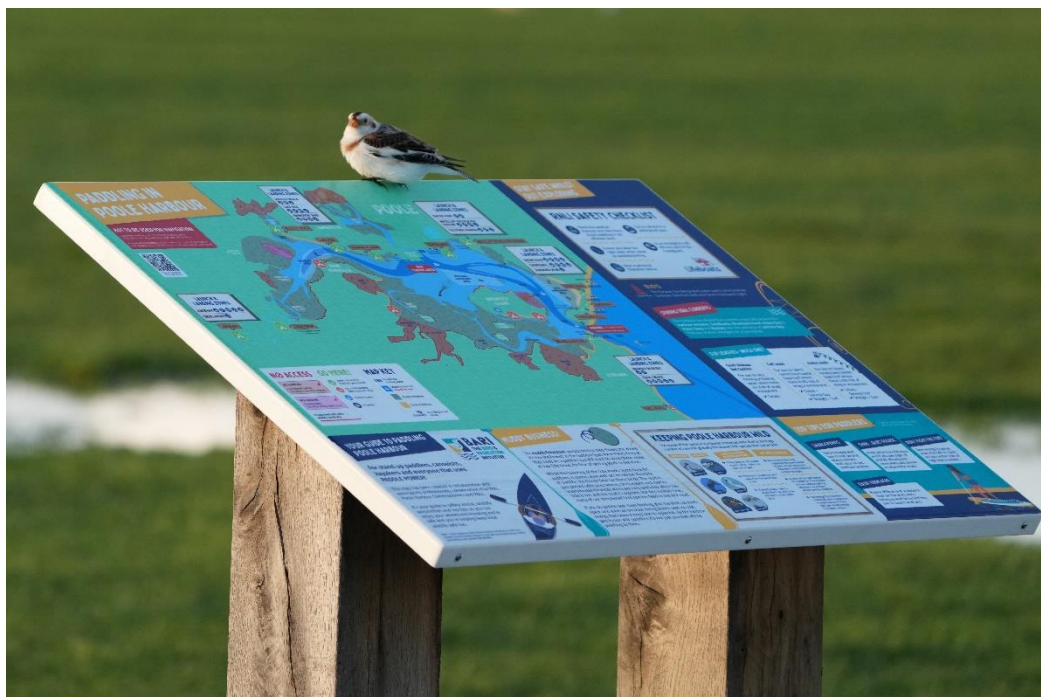
Alongside this we built links within the community working in partnership with Dorset Wildlife Trust's Wilder Communities Officer and The Parks foundation. More can be read in the Warden report (9.2)



## 6.2 Paddlers Map signs installed

Eight of the launch and landing sites now have the Paddlers map installed.

The Hamworthy sign received huge amounts of attention when a local birder posted a rare sighting of a Snow bunting enjoying it as a perch (photo credited to Calvin Carpenter).





## **7 Monitoring**

The five year disturbance survey and visitor surveys were due this winter and we contracted Ecological consultants Footprint Ecology to undertake the task. The data will feed into and guide mitigation delivery.

### **7.1 Visitor Survey ([Appendix 9.4](#))**

This was completed between October to March.

This was completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

### **7.2 Recreational Disturbance survey**

This was undertaken between October to March and the final report will be submitted at the end of April 2025.

## **8 Future Project Planning and updates 2024/25**

### **8.1 Brent goose protection at Baiter Park.**

Key stakeholders including Natural England and BCP ranger team, are concerned about the consistent disturbance that Dark Bellied Brent geese face on Baiter park, one of the busiest sites for dog walking in the harbour. We have met and discussed this on site and although the geese are currently resisting the disturbance Natural England advises that this may not be sustainable and mitigation should be put in place before they decide the habitat is unsuitable. The mitigation coordinator is leading the first phase of interpretation on site in preparation for winter 25/26 and more plans around potential landscaping the recreation ground to enhance areas of seclusion for the geese are being considered.

### **8.2 Holes bay dog fence phase 2 - Upton country park.**

This will be the second phase of installing discrete fencing along the shoreline of Holes bay to prevent access from dogs and people onto the saltmarsh. This proforma will be submitted in April 2025. This section will be longer and runs to their boundary, it also includes fencing along an important section that is a priority.

### **8.3 Viewing platform at Upton Country Park and strategic plan for Holes bay shoreline.**

This viewing platform is currently where the WeBs counts are taken, and due to the reeds obstructing the viewing area. This leads to surveyors climbing onto the benches to be able to do the count. The WeBs surveyor and friends of Holes bay contacted us to part fund the project and we have organised a stakeholder meeting booked in for April 28<sup>th</sup> where we will be discussing longer term strategic access at UCP and how it can deliver mitigation.

### **8.4 Blue lagoon high tide roost exclusion area dogs and kite surf.**

The blue lagoon is an important overwintering high tide roost and the mudflats support a number of waders.

Disturbance is happening from bait diggers, dog walkers and kite surfers. Bait diggers are unofficially parking at Salterns marina, climbing the wall and accessing the lagoon.

Anecdotally they are not back filling and cause disturbance. The dog walkers seem to be from the local flats and kite surfers have used branded kit which will allow us to do engagement and reinforce the rules. There are kite surfing restrictions in place in the lagoon. We are working with PHC, Salterns marina and the local kite surfing businesses to address these 3 issues.

### **8.5 Paintings by the prom**

We were contacted by Simon Matthews who is developing a project proposal to paint murals on 28 beach huts at Hamworthy Park. The project will deliver a creative and learning space that will improve the park user experience and enhance community cohesion. One of the (5) mural themes that will be featured is 'The Environment', and Simon contacted us to see if we wanted to be involved and the potential of mitigation messages being delivered through the artwork. If his Arts Council England funding application is successful we are keen to contribute both in time, artwork and funding towards it.

### **8.6 Coastwise canines page on website**

Dog disturbance is consistently a priority issue and the team want to do more to target this user group on top of the seasonal warden. A targeted page on the website will give our followers and those interested in our organisation a clear place to go to find the coastwise canine messaging. Dorset dogs have a page under 'partnerships', which has been important for sending people to find out more, but we would be able to spend more time developing this resource if it were also on the BIRDSOFBARI website.

## **9 Appendix**

9.1 [Terms of Reference](#)

9.2 [Finance top sheet](#)

9.3 [Coastal Engagement warden report](#)

9.4 [Dorset Dogs Warden report](#)

9.5 [Visitor Survey](#)