

## **Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting - Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

### **Agenda Item 5) Beach management proposals for the summer season 2021**

# **Swanage Beach Management – 2021**

There is currently an expectation that the 2021 season will be extremely busy with a high level of visitors. This is likely to have an impact on the beach and the town.

However, ultimately there is very little that the Town Council can do on its own, other than to work closely with the relevant agencies such as the emergency services and Dorset Council. Arrangements will be made to ensure that a flow of information between groups will be effective and timely to the best ability of all involved.

The usual arrangements that the Council has in place for the beach can be viewed in detail in the attached 'Beach Management' document, which was produced for the first time this year for the Blue Flag Award and I hope proves useful for members of this committee.

For 2021, it remains unclear what may be feasible, pending any relaxation of the Covid-19 restrictions, however, all being well we anticipate the following:

- Seafront Advisors will be recruited between April and July. A total of 4 will be employed on varying hours. They will cover the Boat Park and Beach as well as the Town as part of the new 'Town Ambassador' role. Additional hours have been budgeted to ensure that no reduction is made to beach and Boat Park hours.
- The watercraft free swimming area will be situated in the bay during week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021.
- RNLI Lifeguards will commence patrol on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May (May Half Term) and finish on 12<sup>th</sup> September (Folk Festival Weekend).
- The Green Seafront campaign will be promoted, to encourage the use of the green areas, to ensure social distancing is maintained as much as possible.

**Culvin Milmer**  
**Visitor Services Manager and Business Development Officer**  
**February 2021**

# SWANAGE CENTRAL BEACH

## Beach Management – January 2021

### 1. Introduction

Swanage Central beach is owned and managed by Swanage Town Council for the benefit of the community and visitors. We are very proud of our beach and indeed have consistently been awarded the Blue Flag and Seaside Award since 2002. Swanage Central Beach runs from the Ulwell Stream by Ocean Bay Watersports up to the small slipway by the Mowlem.



### 2. Facilities

The following facilities exist on or near the beach.

Facility	Notes
1. Designated safe bathing zone	From mid-May to mid-September
2. RNLI Lifeguards	From mid/late May to early September
3. Swanage Information Centre	Open all year – 7 days a week during the summer
4. Beach Huts	Huts on the beach are privately owned. Those on Shore Road are available for public hire from the Swanage Information Centre
5. Public Conveniences	Open 7 days a week – 2 locations
6. Cold water Showers (free)	Located outside Shore Road toilets
7. Drinking water taps	6 taps are located along the sea front

8.	Dog Friendly Areas	Dogs are allowed on a section of beach known as Monkey Beach which is outside the Central beach – see map above
9.	Deckchair, parasol and watersports hire concession	Located opposite the Swanage Information Centre – available 7 days a week, weather dependent
10.	Ice Cream concession	2 concessions are available on the beach
11.	Shore Road (Closed Road)	Closed from 1 <sup>st</sup> May to 30 <sup>th</sup> September each year
12.	Punch and Judy concession	Mid July to end August, usually 3 shows every day
13.	Waste Management	Various wheeled bins and dog waste bins located along Shore Road. Collected 1 to 2 times a day depending on time of year. No recycling is directly provided although up to 10% of waste collected is extracted as recycling at the waste management centre
14.	Lockers	Lockers are currently being considered for the use of swimmers
15.	Lost and found	Lost and found children, adults or vulnerable people should be reported to either the RNLI Lifeguards or the Swanage Information Centre. Both organisations work together and have a robust procedure in place.
16.	Lifebelts	A number of lifebelts are situated along the beach front.

### **3. Staffing**

#### **Beach Staff – Swanage Town Council**

All Swanage Town Council staff are expected to present a high level of customer service and to be always polite and considerate. All new staff are provided with a comprehensive induction and a probationary period. Staff indicated below all wear a uniform relevant to their role and are covered by the policies and procedures for all Swanage Town Council staff. Seasonal recruitment for staff is generally undertaken during February.

#### **Swanage Information Centre**

The visitor services team act as the first point of contact for issues relating to the beach and are available between 10.00am and 4.30pm each day during the summer (note that the office is manned from 9.00am to 5.00pm each day and will respond to issues between these times). Contact 01929 766018 or [welcome@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:welcome@swanage.gov.uk)

#### **Seafront Advisors**

Patrol the beach during the summer (generally starting from mid-May through to early September). Responsibilities include advising the public with regards the beach regulations, providing a visible presence to beach users and supporting the duties of the Swanage Information Centre in both a reactive and proactive manner. Ad-hoc beach cleans are undertaken during the day as required. Seafront Advisors also include the role of Boat Park Attendant. Seafront Advisors work to a shift pattern which is based on the weather, time of year and staff availability. Usually up to 4 members of staff are employed, all on a part time seasonal basis. This is generally sufficient to provide cover on sunny days between 10.00am and 5.00pm.

### Beach Cleaners

During the summer, the beach is cleaned early every morning by a dedicated beach cleaner with support from the Town Councils Operations Team. This duty also includes a morning check of the beach for any hazards.

### Maintenance staff

The Council's Operations Team includes a range of staff who ensure that the beach facilities are maintained to a high standard. Much of the proactive work is undertaken during the winter with reactive work undertaken during the summer.

### Beach Staff – Other staff

### **RNLI Lifeguards**

Lifeguards are operated by the RNLI, under contract to Swanage Town Council. They operate 7 days a week between 10.00am and 6.00pm between end May and early September. Staff on duty range from 2 to 3 depending on time of year. Lifeguards provide a full rescue and first aid provision for beach users, although beach safety is prioritised over first aid.

## **4. Beach Information and Risk Management**

### **Beach Information**

A beach noticeboard is located outside the Swanage Information Centre and provides the following: tide times, Blue Flag details, first aid information and hospital location, water quality information and other useful beach related information.

### **Beach Hazards**

The beach is deemed to be relatively low risk; however, care should be taken at all time when used. Beach safety signs are displayed at all entrances with the following signs displayed on the main access points.

Number and postcode  
to be given and changed

Lifeboats

**SWE2 Swanage**  
BH19 1LA

999 in an Emergency,  
ask for Coastguard  
and state the above code

Beware of motorised craft	Beware of sailing craft
Keep clear of groynes	Do not use inflatables when windy
Do not dive or jump	Do not launch boats, including motorised craft and jet skis, from the beach
No dogs 1st May - 30th Sep except assistance dogs	Barbecues are not permitted

**Swanage Beach Map Key**

Drinking water taps	Swanage Information Centre
Beach swimming jetties	Swanage
First Aid and first aid kit	Lifeguard
Public toilets	Accessible beach access point
Tide gauge	Lifeguard station
Swimming area	Car park
Beach huts	Swimming equipment
Dog friendly zone	Play park
Change the dog friendly zone	Lifeguard's Lookout
Marking Beach dog friendly zone	South West Coast Path

**Lifeguard Service**  
Please look for the flags displayed on the beach

Swim in Lifeguard patrolled area	Do not use inflatables
Do not swim when red flags are present	

RNLI Lifeguards and the 'orange' Seafront Advisors operate on this beach during the summer season. Lifeguards on duty when red and yellow flags are flying.

**Beach Information**

**Blue Flag**  
A beach may fly a Blue Flag when it meets strict criteria dealing with water quality, environmental education and information, environmental management, safety and services. The Blue Flag is only awarded for one season at a time.

**Quality Coast Award**  
The Quality Coast Award demonstrates that the beach is well managed to suit the needs of a range of different users and that visitors will enjoy a high quality experience.

**Further Information**  
Swanage Town Council is the beach operator at this location. Regular feedback is vital to maintain standards. Please feel free to contact us at the Swanage Information Centre.  
Beach accessibility information can be found by contacting the Swanage Information Centre or:  
[www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-central-beach](http://www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-central-beach)

**Swanage Information Centre**,  
Shore Road, Swanage BH19 1LB  
Tel: 01929 766018  
Email: [welcomet@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:welcomet@swanage.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.swanage.gov.uk](http://www.swanage.gov.uk)

We would love to answer any questions you may have about the beach or events in the town or maybe we could just provide you with ideas to help you make the most of your time in Swanage.

**Beach Regulations**  
relating to the beach operated by Swanage Town Council

Boats or jet skis are not permitted to launch from the beach or to approach the beach from the sea	Rabies should be kept to a volume so as not to cause nuisance to other beach users
Horse riding or vehicles are not permitted	Barbecues are not permitted
No dogs on the beach from 1 May to 30 September each year (except assistance dogs)	Thank you for taking your litter home or disposing of it in the waste facilities available
Metal detectors may be used before 9am and after 6.30pm. Their use requires a licence which is free and obtainable from the Swanage Information Centre	

**Water Quality Information**

## First Aid Provision

Lifeguards provide a full rescue and first aid provision for beach users, although beach safety is prioritised over first aid. This service is provided from the Lifeguard kiosk on the beach. The Swanage Information Centre no longer offers first aid but can provide a range of services such as treatments for weever fish stings and plasters and bandages for self-application. A defibrillator is located by the Shore Road public conveniences.

## Risks/Risk Assessments

In addition to the normal RNLI Risk Assessment of Swanage Central beach, Swanage Central beach has its own Risk Assessments, available at the Swanage Information Centre.

## Emergency Procedures

Any emergency will start as an incident which is reported to the Town Council or RNLI Lifeguards, either during the day or out of hours.

While the Swanage Information Centre will be able to deal with many minor incidents on their own, it is understood that the role of the Swanage Information Centre is primarily to ensure that an incident is reported to the relevant authority, be this either the Operations Team or the emergency services.

The Town Council maintains a permanent presence near the beach through the Swanage Information Centre, which during the summer is open to the public from 10.00am to 4.30pm, 7 days a week (6 days in the winter). Each morning, a check of the beach is undertaken by beach cleansing staff and the beach is patrolled during the high season by Seafront Advisors (weather permitting). Beach staff have access to radios while on the beach. Between mid-May and early September, the RNLI Lifeguards maintain a presence (7 days a week, 10.00am to 6.00pm) on the beach, located in a kiosk at the northern end.

An incident would, in most cases, either be identified by beach staff on their patrols or reported to either the RNLI Lifeguards and/or the Swanage Information Centre by a customer.

The Incident Lead will instigate a procedure which ensures the appropriate actions are taken to deal with incidents.

### **Beach Regulations approved by Swanage Town Council - March 2019**

- Dogs are not permitted on the beach from: 1st May until 30th September
- Boats and personal watercraft are not permitted to launch from the Council-owned beach or to approach the beach from the sea at any time of the year unless by prior arrangements or in the case of an emergency.
- Metal detectors may only be used before 9.00am and after 6.30pm. Their use requires a licence. Licences are free and can be obtained from the Swanage Information Centre
- Horse riding and vehicles are not permitted on the beach
- Audio equipment should be kept to a volume which does not cause nuisance to other beach users
- Barbecues are not permitted on the beach
- Please take your litter home or dispose of it in the bins provided

## **5. Environment**

### **Dogs**

Dogs are not permitted on the beach between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> September each year. A dog friendly beach is provided at Monkey Beach, which is located between the Stone Quay and the Pier.

### **Seaweed and beach raking**

Seaweed is a natural product; however, it can restrict access to the beach and present a possible health hazard if large amounts are left to decompose. When large amounts of seaweed are deposited on the beach the Town Council will make a decision regarding its removal based on the following criteria: time of year, weather forecast, cost of removal, tide times and wind direction. Seaweed removal must be done at low tide and requires the closure of the beach due to the movement of heavy equipment.

Residents are encouraged to collect the seaweed from the beach as a soil improver for their gardens.

Beach raking is undertaken during the summer at regular intervals in order to create a flat surface and keep the beach tidy. The work is usually undertaken early in the morning.

### **Water quality**

Water quality is usually tested every 7-10 days by the Environment Agency and the results are added to the beach information board outside the Swanage Information Centre.

The information can also be found here [Bathing water profile \(data.gov.uk\)](#)

Spill and pollution alerts are monitored by Town Council staff and if an incident is declared, warning signage is displayed by the Town Council.

### **Waste management and cleaning of the Beach**

Swanage Town Council is responsible for the cleanliness of the beach and employs staff to regularly inspect and clean it. Seafront Advisors also undertake ad-hoc litter picks during their shifts. A '2-minute beach clean' board is available on the beach for customers to undertake their own litter picks. Additionally, the Town Council works very closely with the 'Beach Buddies', a part of 'Litter Free Purbeck' who undertake regular voluntary beach cleans.

These are fully supported and have the use of a beach hut located on the Hardstanding for the storage of equipment.

There are designated waste receptacles and regular waste collections from the wheeled bins located along the seafront. These bins are operated by Dorset Council. A small number of dog waste bins are also located at each end of the beach. It should be noted that dog waste may be placed within any bin and not just those specifically dedicated for this form of waste.

### **Shore Road Closure**

Shore Road is closed to vehicles between the Mowlem and the Clocktower between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> September each year.

### **Marine**

The marine environment is the responsibility of the Crown and Dorset Council. The beach is protected by a series of 'marker buoys' to indicate the 5 knot zone for boats and personal watercraft, including jet skis. If any boats or personal watercraft are seen to be causing a danger, this should be reported to the Police on 999.

Boats are not permitted to land or launch from the beach. Any that do will be issued with a notice requiring the boat to be removed immediately.

### **Metal detecting**

Metal detecting is allowed before 9.00am and after 6.30pm each day. A licence is required which can be obtained from the Swanage Information Centre. There is no cost to this.

## **6. Accessibility**

The Beach Accessibility Statement can be found here:

[www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-central-beach](http://www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-central-beach)

This is reviewed annually.

The Swanage Information Centre Accessibility Statement can be found here:

[www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-information-centre](http://www.accessibilityguides.org/content/swanage-information-centre)

## **7. Contacting us**

### **Reporting a problem / how to contact us**

Swanage Information Centre  
The White House  
Shore Road  
Swanage  
BH19 1LB  
01929 766018  
[welcome@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:welcome@swanage.gov.uk)  
[www.swanage.gov.uk](http://www.swanage.gov.uk)

Out of hours emergency contact is: 01305 221000

### **Complaints Procedure**

If you wish to make a suggestion, supply us with feedback, raise an issue or make a complaint, then you may direct correspondence to the above contact at the Swanage Information Centre or you may wish to write to the following:

Town Clerk  
Swanage Town Council  
Town Hall  
High Street  
Swanage  
BH19 2NZ

[admin@swanage.gov.uk](mailto:admin@swanage.gov.uk)

The Town Councils Complaints Policy can be found on our website [www.swanage.gov.uk/Policies.aspx](http://www.swanage.gov.uk/Policies.aspx)