

Minutes of a Meeting of the **COASTAL CHANGE & BEACH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
held at the Town Hall, Swanage, on **WEDNESDAY**
1st NOVEMBER 2023 at **2.15 p.m.**

In Attendance: Councillor M Bonfield – Chairman

Ms B Betts – Environment Advice Team, Dorset Council
Mr B Compton – Ocean Bay watersports
Mr R Eatwell – North Beach representative
Mr E Fox – RNLI
Mr S Hill – Swanage Boat Hire
Mr M Jones – Swanage NCI
Ms J Lane – Cumulus Outdoors
Mr P Loudoun – Seaweed concession representative
Mr A Mears – Wessex Water
Mr M Penny – FCERM Team, Dorset Council
Mr H Potter – Swanage Pier Trust/Swanage Sailing Club
Mr D Roper – Swanage Angling Club
Mr K Sheppard – RNLI
Ms R Tanner – Land & Wave
Mr C Wiggins – Beach concessions representative

Also Present: Councillor T Foster – Town Mayor
Dr M Ayres – Town Clerk
Mrs K Court – Administration Officer
Mrs E Evans – Democratic Services Officer
Mr C Milmer – Visitor Services & Business Development Manager
Ms G Percival – Assets and Compliance Manager
Mr C Spark – Boat Park Attendant

There were two members of the public and one member of the local press present at the meeting.

Public Participation Time

The following matter was raised during public participation time:-

- A comment was made regarding the condition of the steps to Sheps Hollow, which had collapsed. In response, the officer from Dorset Council's FCERM team reported that a grant had been requested from the Environment Agency, and an update would be provided to a future meeting.

1) To review the Terms of Reference and to incorporate Swanage Coastal Change Matters

Further to Minute No. 1 (b) of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting, held on 21st June 2023, consideration was given to a suggested minor amendment to the wording within the Terms of Reference to include a key item from the Swanage Coastal Change Forum, which had recently been incorporated within

the advisory committee. It was suggested that the *impacts of climate induced* coastal change be included in the wording.

It was therefore proposed by Mr D Roper, seconded by Mr R Eatwell and AGREED:-

TO RECOMMEND: That the Town Council approves the minor amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee's Main Objective/Remit, as follows:

Main Objective/Remit: To advise the Council on measures required to provide a safe, clean and well-maintained beach facility, compliant with the European Blue Flag criteria. Also to provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss matters relating more widely to the management of the *impacts of climate induced* coastal change in Swanage and Durlston Bays and make recommendations to Council accordingly.

2) **Apologies**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Cllr C Finch, Cllr C Tomes, Mr R Marsh (Marsh boats), Mr T Greasty (Designated Bathing Zone representative), Mr D Picksley (Environment Agency), Mr R Waitt (Planet Purbeck), Mr I Brown & Ms K Jury (Swanage Coastguard), Mr G Richardson (RNLI) and Mr M Turnbull (Former Chairman, Swanage Coastal Change Forum).

3) **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Coastal Change & Beach Management Advisory Committee held on 21st June 2023**

Proposed by Mr D Roper, seconded by Mr R Eatwell and AGREED:-

That the Minutes of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 21st June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

4) **Dorset Council's Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) Team update including the following projects:**

a) **Swanage Town Centre Coastal Protection Scheme**

It was reported that the Environment Agency had confirmed the approval of an additional £151k of funding to widen the modelling scope of the Swanage Town Centre Coastal Protection Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to identify options that are feasible and sensible within the townscape.

b) **Beach Renourishment scheme**

It was stated that an initial meeting had been held with Natural England on 1st November and it was anticipated that the selection of a preferred option would be provided within a few weeks. It was suggested that previous predictions may have been overly pessimistic. It was noted that the groynes may be acting more effectively than anticipated. The beach levels have lowered from their summer profile in some locations, however, the levels were still above action level and underpinning of the sea wall was not visible. It was noted that continuous monitoring would proceed throughout the winter.

c) **North Beach Cliff Management Strategy**

It was reported that the North Beach Cliff Management project commenced on 2nd October 2023, and the strategy would cover a 3-year period. The initial site

inspection was scheduled for w/c 30th October 2023 and the Swanage Landslide group would meet again on 7th November 2023.

d) Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP) project

An overview of the aims of the programme was provided and included:

- Promoting adaptation actions to help communities transition away from the eroding coastline, finance and funding solutions, adaptation planning mechanisms.
- The programme aims to include the testing of innovative practical coastal transition actions in areas at significant risk of coastal change e.g. north Swanage.
- A reduction in risk to communities and to support communities to respond and adapt.
- To inform both national policy and local interventions in other locations.
- The project delivery was anticipated April 2024 – March 2027.

5) Swanage Green Seafront Stabilisation and Enhancement Scheme (Sandpit Field, Weather Station Field and Spa Beach Hut Area) – Public engagement

It was noted that the public engagement for the Swanage Green Seafront Stabilisation and Enhancement Scheme had closed on 31st October 2023 and an update would be provided to a future meeting.

6) Commercial Opportunities on Seafront – Update

It was reported that a pack detailing the concession opportunities on Town Council owned land had been released and the expressions of interest deadline was noted as 31st October 2023. The expressions of interest received would be reviewed by the Property Panel, and it was anticipated that a report would be presented to the Full Council in December.

7) Seaweed and beach raking – Update on year and future considerations

An update was provided regarding the seaweed collection and beach raking provision during the 2023 season. It was reported that an invasive species of Japanese weed had been discovered in the bay, which had caused issues for small watercraft and entangled some bathers.

It was noted that should the removed seaweed not be used on agricultural land, as it was currently, it would be deemed a waste product and accrue a high charge for disposal. Alternative options were discussed, such as pushing the seaweed back into the sea or leaving it on the beach, as was the policy adopted in other areas.

8) RNLI Lifeguards - Update on year and future considerations

Further to Minute No. 8) of the Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting held on 8th February 2023, a discussion ensued around the current RNLI Lifeguard provision and the future service. The current costs were noted as circa £29K for the year 2023/24 and would increase to circa £32K for 2024/25 to cover the period from the May half term until the Folk Festival around 8th September. It was noted that the service provided was valuable to the community, as reflected in the emergency on the beach in the summer. Various options were discussed which included, a reduced time period of RNLI lifeguard provision and a suggestion was made as to whether businesses or the community could part-fund the service. An offer from the outdoor activity companies to consider the provision of training and lifeguard service in the future was noted.

It was acknowledged that there needed to be a balance between the safety of beach users and the cost of service provision. An update would be provided to a future meeting of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee, following

discussion at the next Tourism and Local Economy Committee meeting being held on 22nd November 2023.

9) One off budget proposals for 2024-25

The VSBDM reported that there were currently two proposals for one-off budget expenditure in the next financial year: repairs to the staging for the private site beach huts and the replacement of the posts for the beach regulation signage along the seafront.

10) Update from the Visitor Services and Business Development Manager

The VSBDM provided an update which included:

- **Beach Huts** – It was reported that there had been an increase in longer lets and the Shore Road beach hut bookings were currently at 65% capacity.
- **Boat Park** – The boat park had seen a relatively quiet year, due to poor weather conditions. This had impacted the daily launch income which was down by 10% on the previous year. The storage income remained strong and the boat park was currently full (34 on the waiting list). Advertising at the boat park for marine related commercial activities had commenced and attendees were encouraged to contact the VSBDM should they be interested. The improvements to the boat park included: a dedicated boat park telephone number, better access to the water, better administration processes, better customer service and staff presence and jet wash facilities. It was noted that improvements to signage were being considered.
- **Planet Purbeck Beach Tour** – During the middle of September the Assets and Compliance Manager and the VSBDM led a group on a beach management tour which had proved useful and a future tour was planned for April 2024. The invitation would be extended to the CCBMAC members.
- **Water Quality** – During the bathing season two days had been affected by poor water quality. Out of season there had been 11 alerts over seven days, to date. A business plan was being developed by Wessex Water cover the period 2025-30. An unprecedented amount of investment was being put into improvements to the sewage network, following new legislation around the quantity of overspills permitted in a year.
- **Events** – It was reported that 2023 had been the biggest year for events to date. 2024 will see even more events, which will include two more events on the beach, Coastal Barbarians Rowing Regatta on 27th April 2024 and the Studland Sim Run on 15th June 2024.
- **Wave Barriers** – The “Flooding Swanage with Art” project will launch on Friday 3rd November 2023 at 4 p.m. in The Square, Swanage. Thanks were given to Sara Parker and the Dorset Coast Forum team for the work on this project.

11) Updates from representatives/organisations

- **Environment Advice Team Manager, Dorset Council** – It was reported that the Studland and Swanage water safety group now included 15 different organisations, and by working together the reported number of jet ski/watercraft incidents had been significantly reduced. The boat patrols in Studland and Swanage bays had assisted in combating speed on the water and provided advice. It was noted that the group would revisit the pleasure craft by-law and an update provided to a future meeting.
- **Beach concessions representative** – Thanks were given to the response of the emergency services and Tourist Information staff in dealing with an incident on the beach in the summer. Thanks were also offered to the Beach Buddies for their work in keeping the beach clean.

- **Seaweed concession** – Thanks were offered to the seaweed concessionaire for maintaining the condition of the beach to a high standard.
- **Wessex Water** – It was reported that a business plan (2025-30) to implement improvements to the sewage system was in progress. It was anticipated that 2024 would see a year of discussion with Ofwat, DEFRA and the Environment Agency in order to implement changes which would reduce the overflow spillages. An update would be provided to a future meeting. It was noted that a storm overflow newsletter was available to interested parties.
- **Swanage Pier** – It was noted that there had been a change of operator at the café situated on the Pier.
- **Ocean Bay watersports** – The weather had not been ideal for the launching of watercraft and some advice had been given to sea swimmers who were unaware of their lack of visibility to other water users.
- **Land and Wave** – Business had been steady in term time, however there had been a number of cancellations due to the poor weather. There had been some vandalism to the changing rooms at Ocean Bay with bottles left on site. The winter training programme had commenced.
- **Swanage Coastwatch** – It was reported that the incidents were reducing following the summer season. National Coastwatch were undertaking a coastal water safety programme.
- **Cumulus Outdoors** – Bookings had been down slightly on the previous year. The company was happy to build relationships and work together.
- **Swanage Angling Club** – It had been a quiet year with many competitions cancelled due to the poor weather.
- **North beach representative** – Thanks were given to the Town Council for the continued maintenance of the Burlington Chine toilets.
- **Swanage Boat Hire** – Some water safety issues had been reported, however, it was acknowledged that the increase in quantity of the 5 knot marker buoys and the fact that they had not moved position, as had been the case in previous years, had proved beneficial in reducing speed in the bay. It was requested that consideration be given to the installation of bins for people accessing the sea by water, as boats accumulated rubbish whilst at sea and needed a hygienic way to dispose of waste. In response, it was noted that this would be included on the next agenda for the Environment and Green Spaces Committee meeting.
- A further comment was made regarding the waste left following an event at PAG. In response, it was stated that the bins may not have been positioned in a prominent position and the Dorset Waste services collection days may not have coincided with the event.

12) Items of information and matters for forthcoming agendas

- a) Ocean Origin – Seaweed Farming in Kimmeridge (short presentation)
- b) Motion for the Ocean
- c) Coastal Resilience Study – Update

It was reported that a grant had been applied for, approximately two years ago, to fund a resilience study to investigate options for coastal protection for a rise in sea levels. It was suggested that a group work together, consisting of STC and other interested parties, to discuss potential solutions and next steps. It was agreed that this item would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Coastal Change and Beach Management Advisory Committee meeting being held in February 2024.

13) Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as Wednesday 7th February 2024 @ 2.15 p.m.

The meeting closed at 4.10 p.m.

2023 RNLI LIFEGUARD SERVICE MONITORING REPORT

Swanage



Lifeguards



SUMMARY 2023



107
Patrol Days



856
Patrol Hours



5,141
Preventative
Actions Delivered

This report outlines the provision of the RNLI Lifeguard services on behalf of Swanage Town Council, Dorset.

The management team providing the service on behalf of Swanage Town Council consisted of Ed Stevens (Regional Lifeguard Lead), Kester Sheppard (Lead Lifeguard Supervisor) and Ethan Fox (Seasonal Lifeguard Supervisor).

Through a preventive and pro-active approach, consistent patrolling, engaging with the public and by working with local RNLI Lifeboat crews, we have provided an integrated and effective prevention and rescue service.

93

Incidents

133

People
Aided

1

Lives
Saved





Training

The RNLI provided comprehensive training for all East Dorset Seasonal Lifeguards that was carried out by Lifeguard Supervisors & RNLI Lifeguard Trainer/Assessors over a face-to-face learning induction programme.

In addition to this, throughout the season the Lifeguards were required to maximise their allocated 20 minutes per day fitness training and complete a 400m timed swim (under 7mins 30secs) and 200m run (in under 40 seconds), this was revalidated every 3 months.

This ensured fitness standards are maintained. Locally based scenarios, beach familiarisation and ongoing rescue / first aid training was also carried out on the beach and in the sea.

Operations

Operating from Swanage Lifeguard Tower, the lifeguard personnel numbers were declared daily to HMCG by our Local Operations Centre based in Poole. The Senior Lifeguards declared staffing levels, equipment, and standard hours of operation each day.

95% of the Lifeguard teams work is preventative, however there were incidents where the Lifeguards had to intervene. Please see the Service Reporting Data for a detailed breakdown.



Education

RNLI Lifeguards delivered 5,141 preventative actions to beach users in Swanage in 2023, such as advising beach goers to swim between the red and yellow flags and highlighting potential dangers on the beach.

Lifeguards also delivered beach safety education talks on the beach to school goers, including some of the local schools on class field trips to the beach.

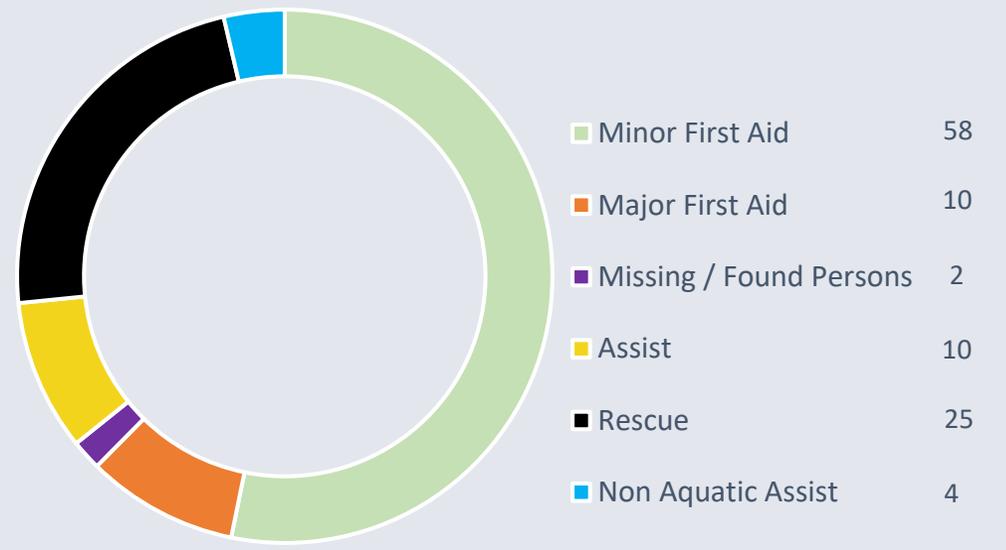



93
 Incidents


133
 People Aided

1
 Lives Saved

Incidents



Some of the incidents that occurred during the 2023 season are summarised here as well as operational statistics. Overall, lifeguards dealt with fewer incidents than in previous years, believed to be a reflection of the weather this season, and also the reduced numbers of beach users on average days.

The Lifeguards in addition to the above also dealt with a wide range of other incidents including but not exclusive to, missing and found persons, minor first aids and assisting swimmers.

Through proactive patrolling, beach education and by working closely with local RNLI Lifeboat crews, HM Coast Guard, and other agencies we have strived to Educate, Influence and Supervise to ensure the beach is both safe and enjoyable. The Swanage Lifeguard team again followed best practice and guidance throughout the 2023 season to protect both the welfare of themselves and others, whilst also striving to provide an integrated, seamless, and cost-effective rescue service in the town.

Service Reporting Data

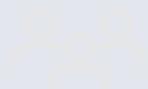
Swanage - 2023

Lifeguard Incident and Incident Actions

Year	Total LG Incidents	Total Aided	Lives Saved	Rescue	Assistance	Cas care	Minor FA	Search	Missing/ Found	Non Aquatic Assist	Near Miss	False Alarm	Anti Social Behaviour	Animals	Other	Total Preventative Actions
2023	93	133	1	25	10	10	58	0	2	4	18	3	0	0	0	5,141

Swanage - Historical Data

Year	Total LG Incidents	Total Aided	Lives Saved	Rescue	Assistance	Cas care	Minor FA	Search	Missing/ Found	Non Aquatic Assist	Near Miss	False Alarm	Anti Social Behaviour	Animals	Other	Total Preventative Actions
2022	223	247	0	20	29	8	185	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	10,401
2021	131	136	0	4	9	7	116	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,074
2020	77	82	0	10	3	3	64	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	8,776
2019	109	116	0	5	11	7	91	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	8,716
2018	47	48	0	1	1	0	44	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	11,656



Swanage

Main Season



27/05/2023 –
14/07/2023



2 x
Lifeguards

Peak Season



15/07/2023 –
03/09/2023



3 x
Lifeguards

Main Season



04/09/2023 –
10/09/2023



2 x
Lifeguards

As the statistics on the previous page show, the 2023 season had a reduced number of incidents and preventative actions carried out by the lifeguards. This appears to have been largely led by the less than stellar weather experienced this summer. Below is an extract from the Met Office's "Seasonal Assessment – Summer" for 2023.

"Overall, this was a warm and rather wet summer. The lion's share of fine weather - warm, dry, and settled with high pressure established - occurred during June, which was the UK's warmest and provisionally fourth sunniest June on record.

In contrast, July and August mainly comprised unsettled weather. July in particular was very cool, dull and wet with the jet stream displaced to the south and a succession of low pressure systems bringing more than twice the normal rainfall to some areas. The month included a succession of particularly disappointing wet weekends with low pressure dominating, and the UK provisionally had its sixth wettest July on record.

While August was something of an improvement on July, with temperature, rainfall and sunshine nearer average, the weather nonetheless remained often mixed. August included two named storms, Antoni and Betty, bringing unseasonably wet and windy weather.

*Of the UK's top-ten warmest summers, summer 2023 was the wettest. While the rainfall pattern was variable, for many areas this was a rather wet summer overall . . . It was a sunny summer for many northern and eastern parts of the UK but rather dull across parts of southern England" **

Unfortunately for beach users, much of the poor weather was during the Peak season (please see dates to the left), which would have accounted for a large portion of preventative actions and interventions shown during the 2022 season, for example.

The hot days that were during peak season proved to be as busy as ever in Swanage, with the lifeguards providing high levels of preventative actions and education to beach users.

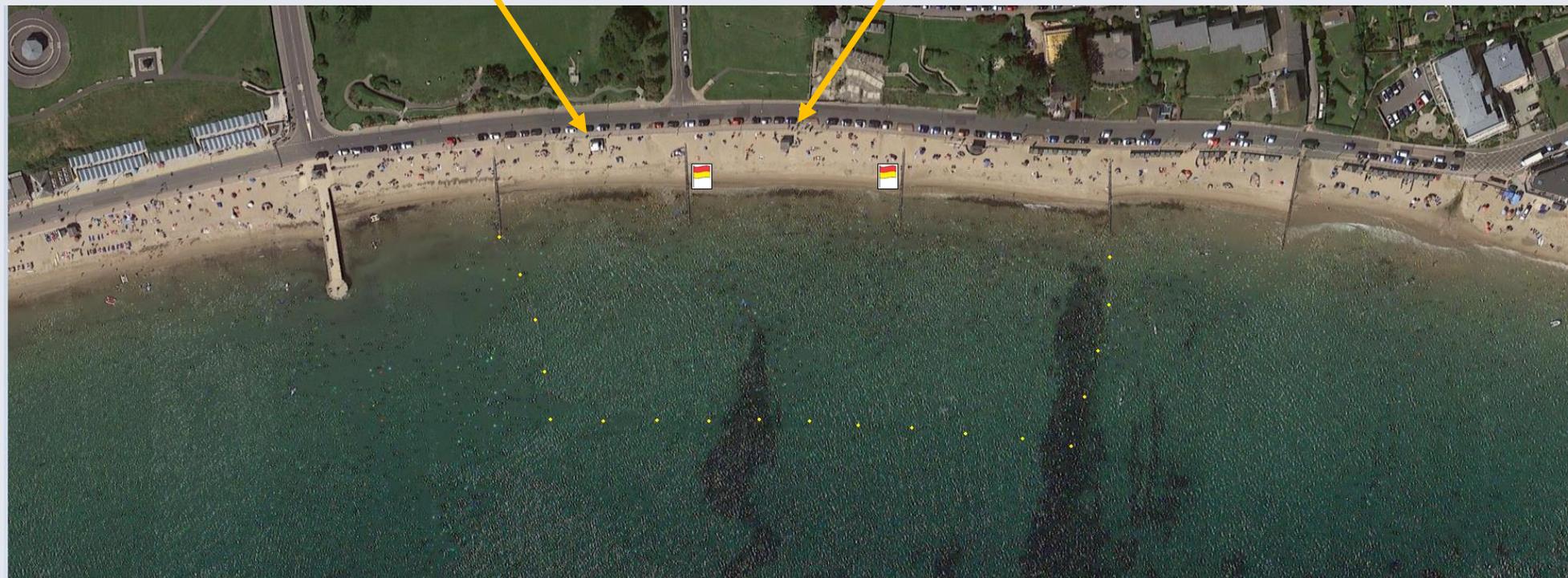
* Source – MetOffice.gov.uk

2024 Recommendations

- We would recommend the consideration of moving the lifeguard unit (BLU) to a location further North, where the current empty ice cream hut is situated (if this is opened moving forward, it could be placed where the BLU is currently situated). This would put the tower in the centre of the buoyed swimming area, and also in-between the red and yellow flags. This would reduce the tendency for members of the public to swim outside of the flagged area, as they often choose to swim in front of the lifeguard tower. This would also have the added benefit of centralising the BLU closer to the middle of the beach section between Banjo Pier and Ocean Bay. This would improve observation towards the North, based on the shorter distance between the BLU and edge of the observed area, whilst still providing sufficient cover to the South up until Banjo Pier. Please see photo below.

Current BLU Location

Proposed BLU Location, for consideration





Report Appendix

Definitions of search and rescue criteria

Rescue – where a lifeguard responds to a person at risk, and physically returns them to shore or transfers them to another craft.

Major First Aid – where a lifeguard treats a patient who is at risk due to sickness or injury, and has called in external assistance.

Assistance – where a lifeguard aids a person in the sea who is at little risk, but if left, would be at risk later.

Search – an organised search with other SAR units for a missing person either at sea or on land – includes body recovery

Near Miss – any occurrence where a person might have been harmed or injured, but it was avoided by chance rather than an intervention

Life Saved – if the lifeguard had not intervened, a life would have been lost.

Preventative Action (PA) – an action conducted by the lifeguard team to prevent persons coming into contact with harm including; PA / Tannoy announcement, moving flags, displaying safety signage, educating beach users.

SWANAGE CENTRAL BEACH

Beach Management Overview – January 2024

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 Steam 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 watercraft free bathing zone	From mid-May 2023 to early/mid-September 2024
2. RNLI Lifeguards	From 25 th May 2024 to 8 th September 2024 7 days per week - 10am to 6pm every day
3. Swanage Information Centre	Open all year – 7 days a week during the summer This acts as the beach management office

4.	Beach Huts	Huts on the beach are privately owned. Those on Shore Road/Spa are available for public hire from the Swanage Information Centre
5.	Public Conveniences	Open 7 days a week – 2 locations (Shore Road and Battlegate)
6.	Cold water Showers (free)	Located outside Shore Road toilets Operational from May half term to October half term
7.	Drinking water taps	6 taps are located along the sea front. A water refill point is located on the Hardstanding
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 Dogs are not permitted from 1 st April to 30 th September
9.	Deckchair, parasol and watersports hire concession	Located opposite the Swanage Information Centre – available 7 days a week in the summer, weather dependent
10.	Ice Cream concessions	The Council operates three concessions on or near the beach. Numerous other catering facilities exist near the beach along or in the town
11.	Shore Road (Closed Road)	Closed from 1 st May to 30 th September each year. Due to an experimental road closure order this will be temporarily closed until at least 30 th September 2024
12.	Punch and Judy concession	Mid July to end August, usually 3 shows every day
13.	Waste Management	Various bins and dog waste bins located along Shore Road. Collected 1 to 5 times a day depending on time of year, weather, visitor numbers and operational considerations. No recycling is directly provided although up to 10% of waste collected is extracted as recycling at the waste management centre
14.	Lifejacket lockers	Located near Stone Quay and Banjo Pier
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
17.	Defibrillator	Located outside Shore Road toilets and the Mowlem Theatre

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 daily (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

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 work to a shift pattern which is based on the weather, time of year and staff availability. For 2024, 2 members of staff are employed, all on a 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. A more limited service is provided over the winter.

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 – Others

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 mid-May and early September. Staff on duty range from 2 to 4 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.

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 anything more than very basic 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 and outside the Mowlem Theatre.

Risk Assessments

In addition to the RNLI Risk Assessment of Swanage Central beach, Swanage Central beach has its own water and land based 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 Swanage Information centre is open every day during the bathing season from 10.00am to 4.30pm weekdays and from 9.00am at weekends.

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 (9.00am at weekends) 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). All 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 1st May and 30th 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 as it decomposes it creates an unpleasant smell. 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 often 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 fill in larger holes that create a hazard and to create a flat surface and keep the beach tidy. The work is usually undertaken early in the morning.

Water quality

Water quality is tested weekly (in the summer) 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 or a risk of a potential incident is declared by the Environment Agency, warning signage is displayed by the Town Council at all entrances to Central Beach, along with red flags displayed by the RNLI Lifeguards. Further information can be found here: [Swanage Town Council - Beach & Bay](#)

The Council produces a document which details how the various agencies operate with regards to water quality in Swanage Bay. This can be found on the Town Council's webpage immediately above and anyone interested in water quality is encouraged to view this.

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. Between Easter and end September, beach cleaners patrol the beach every morning from early to mid-day. Seafront Advisors also undertake ad-hoc litter picks during their shifts to ensure a clean beach up to around 5pm. A '2-minute beach clean' board is available on the beach for customers to undertake their own litter picks. Additionally, the Town Council works closely with the 'Beach Buddies', a part of 'Litter Free Purbeck' who undertake regular voluntary beach cleans twice a week (Tuesday evenings and Sunday morning). These are supported by the Town Council 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 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.

Dorset Council collect waste every day during the bathing season and up to 5 times a day during the peak season. Bins are placed along the seafront and around 10% of street litter collected is recycled at the disposal centre. The Town Council support Dorset Waste Services where necessary through the use of the Seafront Advisors to maximise capacity within the litter bins.

Shore Road Closure

Shore Road is closed to vehicles between the Mowlem and the Clocktower between 1st May and 30th September each year. During 2022 and 2023 an experimental winter road closure was in place. Information from this experiment will be used by Dorset Council to make a decision on the potential future closure of Shore Road.

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. In addition from 2021, a bay advisory service has been funded by Swanage Town Council. This involves a local boat which regularly patrols the bay and provides advice and information to speeding craft. The contact for this service is held in the Swanage Information Centre.

Boats are not permitted to land or launch from the beach without permission. Any that do will be issued with a notice requiring the boat to be removed immediately.

Metal detecting

Metal detecting is allowed apart from between 9.00am and 6.30pm each day (1st May and 30th September). A licence is required which can be obtained from the Swanage Information Centre. There is no cost to this.

Events

A number of events during the year are held on the beach including, rowing regattas, triathlons, and environmental education events. All events are required to make an application through Swanage Town Council and to provide a risk assessment of their activities, an Environmental Impact Assessment and public liability insurance of at least £5m.

6. Accessibility

There are four slipway access points to the beach. Two beach mats are provided to allow wheeled users to access the beach. These are laid out for the peak season (mid-July to early September).

An accessibility audit was undertaken by the Town Council in 2022 and the actions from this are being incorporated work where possible.

The Beach Accessibility Statement can be found here:

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

7. Other Information

Swanage Seafront Masterplan

During 2023, a Swanage Seafront Masterplan was complete which sets out a vision for the seafront for the next 10 years or so. A public consultation was undertaken during 2022/23 and the document is the result of feedback from the community. The document can be found here:

[Swanage Town Council - Seafront Enhancements](#)

Green Seafront

The Town Council are developing plans to re-stabilise a large section of the seafront in the next few years. This work is known as the Green Seafront and will have a significant impact on the seafront, both in terms of the work being undertaken as well as for the future. The public were consulted on two options and at the time of writing this is being reviewed by the Town Council and next steps considered. Further information can be found here: [Swanage Town Council - Seafront Enhancements](#)

Beach Recharge

The Town Council are working with Dorset Council to identify if a beach recharge (where sand is brought to the beach to act as a coastal defence barrier) is required. As information is available this will be published by the Town Council.

Coastal Defence

The Town Council is working with Dorset Council to develop a coastal defence scheme along Lower High Street and including the area around the Mowlem Theatre. This is currently being modelled and when ready, proposals will be subject to public consultation. Further information can be found here: [Swanage Town Coastal Protection Scheme | Dorset Coast Forum](#)

8. Contacting us

Reporting a problem about the beach

Swanage Information Centre
The White House
Shore Road
Swanage
BH19 1LB
01929 766018
welcome@swanage.gov.uk
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 email: admin@swanage.gov.uk or write to the following:

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

The Town Councils Complaints Policy can be found on our website
www.swanage.gov.uk/Policies.aspx