

Case Study: Dorset's Natural Capital at its best

An urban living landscape: The Great Heath



Lead Partner: Dorset Wildlife Trust

Other Partners: Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, The Erica Trust, Borough of Poole, Poole Harbour Commissioners, Dorset County Council, Christchurch & East Dorset Councils and Bournemouth Borough Council (project concluded prior to council reorganisation).



Upton Heath © Tony Bates



Area Map © Dorset Wildlife Trust

Project Summary

The Great Heath is a diverse landscape of heathland, woods, wetlands and farmland, interwoven with the conurbation of Bournemouth, Christchurch, East Dorset and Poole. It once covered most of south-east Dorset, from Purbeck to the New Forest.

A partnership was formed by Dorset Wildlife Trust when a significant area of The Great Heath came up for sale by the Canford Estate, to secure these wildlife habitats and green spaces. Work took place between 2014-2018.

The Great Heath sites include heathland, wetland, woodland, meadow, marsh and harbour. The area stretches from Lytchett in the west through Upton, Corfe Mullen, Broadstone and Ferndown to Parley in the east.

Quote

"A real turning of the tide for Dorset heathland. So much special wildlife protected and so many people inspired!"

Lesley Haskins, The Erica Trust

Funders and Supporters

The Great Heath Living Landscape project was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Erica Trust, Colin Panter, Natural England, the Brockington Legacy, The Fine Foundation, Dorset Wildlife Trust members and the local community, including many volunteers.



Male Sand Lizard © Andy Fale

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Volunteers © Jez Martin

Project aims

Conserve - Secure nature sites for wildlife and people through land purchase.

Enjoy - Improve connections to the countryside through a network of connected sites with high-quality access and interpretation.

Learn - Provide new opportunities for people to learn about wildlife, enjoy the area and play a part in its conservation.



Holes Bay © DWT

"I want to be able to pass on a Living Landscape for my grandchildren." Denise Cuthbert, Upton

More information

Website: www.thegreatheath.org
www.dorsetlnp.org.uk/case_studies

2020

Outcomes

- 3 new Nature Parks created - a Nature Park is a public expression of the intention of the partnership to work together to manage the area for its special features and value to people and wildlife.
- 589 hectares of land secured for wildlife and people.
- 23 sites with new interpretation and improved access.
- 386 events held attended by 18,54 people.
- 29 schools, business and community groups received wildlife gardening advice.
- 329 volunteering events - 19,104 volunteering hours.
- 1192 students contributed to the project.
- 26 people completed the AQA course to become Wildlife Champions.
- 64 children with special educational needs or behavioural issues engaged.
- Over 4000 records received for 32 species as part of the Species of the Month campaign.
- 109 gardens awarded a Wildlife Gardening plaque.

How partnership working benefited the project

By working together with many different organisations, communities and individuals, the project has enhanced the profile of the area. It has stimulated more people to get out and learn about, conserve and enjoy their local environment.

