



Litter Free Dorset – land, coast, and sea Annual Report 2022 – 2023



**A community campaign to reduce litter and waste
as well as improve water quality across Dorset.**

OVERVIEW

Litter Free Dorset – land, coast and sea (LFD) is a strategic approach to creating better quality local environments for everyone in Dorset, exploring and realising the social, economic and environmental benefits of reducing the impacts of litter in the county's towns, beaches and open spaces. We focus on reducing litter and waste at source as well as maintaining Dorset's excellent bathing water quality.

We aim to add value to existing efforts by taking a strategic, preventative approach to the countywide problem; working collaboratively with a local focus to create, implement and review tailored solutions to each community's issues around litter. It is important to coproduce projects to inspire ownership and community cohesion. LFD has a wealth of knowledge and experience of working closely with the communities of Dorset.

Collaborative working is at the core of what we do at LFD and our connection to both organisations and with the community puts us in a unique position to create a partnership with impact, legacy, and sustainability. Connecting with people through shared values, stories as well as love for Dorset is vital in reducing littering behaviour and consequently pollution.

Emma has done a fantastic job at leading the team this last year whilst Sophie has been on maternity leave. The team currently consists of Sophie as team coordinator, Emma and Eimear as project officers and we have recently welcome Em J as our new support officer.

This report will outline how Litter Free Dorset's objectives have been met this last year and evidence how collaborative working is continuing to create a partnership with impact, legacy, and sustainability.



Litter Free Dorset team:
Em J, Eimear, Emma and Sophie

As you know, we have been campaigning on the issue of disposable barbecues for several years now. Our campaign began with providing customer messaging on safe usage and disposal at point of sale; it has since developed into a call for customers to stop using them and for retailers to stop selling them altogether. We have seen considerable success in the last 18 months, with Southern Co-op, Waitrose, Aldi and M&S permanently removing disposable BBQs. We are also grateful to all the local retailers, caravan parks, and garden centres that have removed disposable barbecues from sale. They are helping to spread the simple message that Dorset does not do disposable BBQs.



Retailers are maintaining the line that there is consumer demand for disposable BBQs, and as long as they advise customers that they are recyclable, they aren't doing any harm to the environment. To emphasise just how difficult they are to recycle, in April this year we partnered with Southern Co-op to break down and recycle 8000 disposable barbecues – surplus stock from Southern Co-op after they removed them from sale. After months of planning, we were joined on the day by 80 amazing volunteers who broke down the stock in just a few hours. Following the Big Barbecue Breakdown, we were able to donate six tonnes of charcoal Briquettes to Swanage Railway for use on the Swanage Steam Train, meaning absolutely nothing went to waste. We were delighted to get great press coverage of the campaign, with BBC South Today and ITV Meridian both reporting on the event, plus local coverage from Swanage News, Blackmore Vale Magazine, Wave 105, and BBC Radio Solent. We have been fortunate to see fewer fires this year than in 2022; as such our campaigning is focussed on the environmental impact of disposable barbecues and we are maintaining pressure on the remaining big retailers – Tesco, Lidl, Asda, Sainsbury's – to do the right thing and remove disposable barbecues from sale.

Wessex Water is funding LFD to work at 38 different bathing water beaches between March 2020 – March 2025. The aim of the project is to create sustainable behaviour change and maintain excellent bathing water quality across Dorset's coast, working with community groups and members to facilitate action.

Church Ope Cove:

We have installed colourful artwork on the steps at Church Ope to remind visitors to take their rubbish home, as well as new bin messaging emphasising the excellent local bathing water quality rating.



Kimmeridge:

In July, we hosted the Litter Free Dorset Tappy Hour Cocktail Bar at Kimmeridge. Combined with new signage, the aim is to promote local refill facilities and encourage visitors to always bring a bottle when they are out and about, to help prevent beach litter and reduce single-use plastic.



Shore Road, Whitley Lake, Canford Cliffs and Branksome Beach:

This summer we have also visited beaches in Poole to launch our innovative solution to cigarette litter - the 'Buttholder' beach ashtray.

It is designed specifically to encourage responsible disposal of cigarette butts when visiting the beach. We have partnered with the RNLI, Easy Riders Surf Shop, Rick Steins Sandbanks and Branksome Beach Kiosk to distribute the Buttholders, as well as working with BCP Council to relocate cigarette ballot bins to Shore Road, Canford Cliffs and Branksome Chine. In addition, we partnered with local campaigner Liam Ulla, the Coacoara Foundation, and Poseidon Watersports to install new branded wheelie bins and signage at Whitley Lake, to raise awareness of the litter issues on the popular 'Kite Beach' and encourage visitors to dispose of their rubbish responsibly.



Improving Outdoor Spaces to Help Adults with Learning Disabilities or Dementia

The Reconnecting with Nature Spaces project aims to improve access or infrastructure for adults with learning difficulties and dementia in four outdoor sites across Dorset. Phase One of the project will see the first two locations (Weymouth & Portland) complete by October this year, with scoping work on Phase Two locations (Shaftesbury & Ferndown) already underway.

Location 1: St John's Gardens, Weymouth:

In October 2023, we had the officially launched the Park Community Garden in Weymouth. As part of the Reconnecting with Nature Spaces project, we have created an accessible gardening/growing space where group members are able to grow delicious vegetables and herbs for their families and the wider community to enjoy. The Park Community Garden will be cared for by the Green Fingers Group, who are a group of gardeners with learning disabilities from Volunteer Centre Dorset and stAbility. With the help of Weymouth Town Council and the Dorset Council landscape team, we installed accessible raised beds, seating, potting tables and reinforced grass in St. John's Gardens to create the community garden. We hope these facilities will help improve the lives of local people with dementia and/or learning disabilities by creating an accessible garden space and a chance to connect with nature. St John's Gardens is a little oasis of green where all members of the local community can come to meet, chat, grow, relax, share skills, and simply enjoy being outside. The plinths have been painted by local artist Claire Nuttall, with images of seasonal wildlife and quotes from the group members expressing what they love most about spending time outside in Weymouth. Our thanks go to Weymouth Town Council and Volunteer Centre Dorset for supporting the project.



Businesses #MakingTheChange for Dorset

2023 saw the launch of our Sustainable Business Network, so far we have hosted two Sustainable Business Network events. Our network launch event in January was held in Dorset Museum in Dorchester and we recently hosted our second network event at the brand new LUSH Green Hub in Poole. Both events were huge successes and provided a great opportunity to bring together Dorset businesses - who want to learn how to implement sustainable practices and make a positive impact in their communities.



Our next Sustainable Business Network event is in November at Hive Beach Café in West Bay. The free event will focus on food & drink packaging where we hope to inspire local businesses to #makethechange and move away from single-use packaging for good. Moving forward into 2024, Litter Free Dorset plan to integrate businesses into our core campaign work.

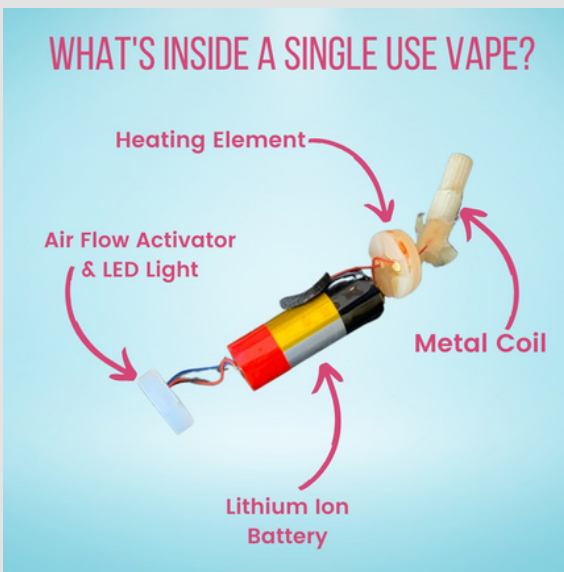
CAMPAIGNS

SINGLE USE VAPES

This Summer we visited vape retailers in towns across Dorset to promote vape recycling facilities. Many of the business-owners were unaware that vape recycling is available at HRC (council tips) and were happy to display our posters to help make their customers aware of how to best dispose of their vapes. Vapes can be recycled via large electrical retailers as part of their compliance with WEEE regulations; for example, Curry's offers a takeback scheme for small electricals and some Tesco stores have a drop-box for small electrical items.



We have been attending pop-up sessions at Fresher's Weeks and colleges across Dorset, helping students to understand the effects of single-use vapes on our environment, and how they can best dispose of their vapes. There are still questions around how waste contractors are recycling single use vapes we are working with the waste team to gather some insight on this. There is currently a government consultation out on single use vapes this closes on December 6th 2023.



EVENTS

Below is a list of some of the events / workshops we have attended and or facilitated in 2023.

January

- Sustainable Business Network Launch @ Dorset Museum
- Bridport Community Connectors workshop
- Reconnecting with Nature Spaces Community Workshops

February

- School Litter Project launch at Budmouth School and Atlantic Academy, Portland

March

- Vape campaign pop-up @ Arts University Bournemouth
- Campaign stand @ Parish & Town Councillors Conference
- Poole Grammar School International Student workshop day @ Swanage Beach & Poole Grammar
- Vape campaign pop-up @ Bournemouth University
- School litter workshop @ Atlantic Academy, Portland
- Bridport Community Connectors Panel Meeting

April

- Disposable Barbecue Recycling Bonanza! @ W&S Recycling, Poole
- ReThink Fashion Dorchester Launch @ Brewery Square
- ReThink Fashion Show @ Dorset Museum

June

- Wimborne Family Festival
- Year of the Coast Festival @ Nothe Fort

July

- Campaign stand @ Westival, Westmoors
- Refill Campaign pop-up @ Kimmeridge Bay
- Refill Campaign pop-up with Weymouth Town Council @ Weymouth Beach
- Beach Buttholders Launch @ Branksome Beach

August

- Beach Buttholders event @ Whitley Lake
- Campaign stand @ Melplash Show

September

- Campaign stand @ Kingston Maurward College Freshers Fair
- Bridport Water Week
- New Parent Workshop @ Bridport Children's Centre
- Bridport Community Connectors Water-saving pop-up @ Bucky Doo Square
- Campaign stand @ Swanage Waterways meeting

The forum has continued to meet online however we felt there had been some disengagement, so we sent out a survey to gather feedback on how the forum functions. Feedback was as follows:

- Groups highlighted the need for more support from Litter Free Dorset with local campaigns, social media promotion and general support and advice. Nearly 80% would be interested in taking part in more collaborative projects alongside LFD.
- Support with funding and equipment was suggested as well as the idea that LFD apply for larger amounts of funding which can be allocated to groups to deliver projects.
- Over 90% of you were interested in attending an in-person meeting. It was suggested to have an annual face to face meeting which includes networking time to allow groups to interact with each other and share ideas, or potentially have allocated time slots for each group to discuss their work.

We email monthly updates to Forum members to ensure we keep our partners updated on current projects, campaigns, job / funding opportunities and upcoming events.

Looking forward

We are currently planning for 2024. Our aspirations include the Sustainable Business Network growing in size and impact, creating more focused campaigns as well as working more closely with communities 'upstream' to have a more targeted 'source to sea' approach.

There will be an in person forum meeting in January for members to network and discover opportunities for more collaboration in Spring/Summer 2024.

Keep in Touch

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