

Coastal, open spaces, highways and car parks

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) Consultation

Consultation Document

BCP Council is asking for your views on the potential introduction of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in our coastal areas and some of our open spaces, car parks and surrounding highways within Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. This document is a summary of the proposals under consideration.

The consultation will start on 23 January 2023 and **close at 11:59pm on 19 February 2023**.

Following consultation, a full report on the findings and outcomes of the consultation will be considered and a decision made in the Spring.

What is a Public Space Protection Order?

A PSPO allows a council to restrict specified activities within a public area to tackle a wide range of anti-social behaviour issues. They are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a specific area that is detrimental to the quality of life of those in the locality. They impose a set of conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They are intended to help ensure that the majority of people can enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Why are we proposing to introduce PSPOs?

Our open spaces and coastal areas are special places enjoyed by residents and visitors. During the summer months, a number of negative behaviours presented by some individuals have impacted on our environment and the enjoyment of our beaches and open spaces by our visitors and residents. These behaviours have required significant additional resource to manage.

Our Seasonal Response Programme addressed issues as they emerged by increasing staff within key core services such as Community Safety Accreditation Service (CSAS) Officers, security, seafront and cleansing services, and targeting known hot spot areas with proactive security and staff presence.

However, without a PSPO in place it is difficult to deal with some of the anti-social behaviours that are regularly witnessed given the restricted enforcement options relating to current byelaws. The restriction of the current legislation offers limited prevention and impacts our ability to deal with the issues in real time. We currently cannot issue a fixed penalty for someone breaking a byelaw and as a result we can only address the behaviour by going through a lengthy and costly court process.

Following a review of the Seasonal Response challenges during 2022, a recommendation was made to BCP Council's Cabinet for the consideration of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), to ban certain behaviours at identified locations.

The PSPOs would be enforced by authorised officers who will receive additional training to enable them to enforce the PSPOs and issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

Summary of evidence

The council must have evidence of anti-social behaviour in a specific area to be able to introduce a PSPO. We believe we have enough evidence to introduce three PSPOs in our coastal areas, some of our open spaces and some of our highways and car parks.

Overnight sleeping in coastal areas, open spaces, car parks and surrounding highways

When people have stayed overnight on our beaches or car parks this has resulted in complaints of loud music, rubbish being left behind and, with no open or easily accessible toilet facilities, there are wider impacts of urination and defecation which require cleaning up before visitors arrive the next morning to enjoy a day out.

Open fires and barbeques in open spaces

During our increasingly hot dry summer months even the most carefully set fire can quickly get out of control and cause widespread damage. The ecological damage to nature and wildlife is also immeasurable. The damage caused can prevent the use of an entire open space area for months. Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service were approached on this proposal and welcome any actions which would reduce the risks of wildfires during high-risk times of the year.

Loud music in our car parks and coastal spaces

Last summer we had complaints from residents and visitors about some people playing loud music on the beach. Most of the incidents were by groups of people and were associated with other anti-social behaviours which leave other beach users feeling intimidated. These incidents mainly occurred in the afternoons or evenings and whilst most were resolved informally in some cases officers reported the music resumed once they walked away. Without firmer resolution powers these incidents continued to adversely impact the enjoyment of other beach users and residents who live near the beach.

Anti-social behaviour in coastal areas

We had some incidents of anti-social behaviour in our coastal areas last year which impacted on other visitors to the beach. The type of behaviour which would be banned under the PSPO proposal includes but is not limited to fighting, swearing, spitting and causing intimidation either by an individual or group.

Barbeques (BBQs) in coastal areas

We recognise that the beaches and coastal areas are enjoyed by lots of people who responsibly have barbeques every day. However, we have had some incidents of people burying hot coals or irresponsibly discarding of disposable barbeques which have caused injuries to beach users and damage to seafront bins.

We do not want to completely stop people from having barbeques on our beaches and coastal areas, but we need to ensure that we limit the damage and impact this activity has on beach users and services such as Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service and our seafront rangers during peak visitor times. We are therefore proposing to ban barbeques between 7am-6pm. After 6pm the risk of injury is reduced because there are less people on the beach, and the seafront officers can manage overseeing the safe use of barbeques and the responsible disposal of coals or disposable barbeques.

Open fires in coastal areas

Many of the open fire incidents seen last year were later in the evening and are associated with people intending to camp or sleep overnight on the beach. We are proposing that the PSPO would ban fires on the beach at all times.

Here is a summary of the evidence of complaints and incidents we received last year:

Incident reports	Number of incidents/complaints
Open spaces and heathland	
Incidents of campfires in open space (Ranger reports)	100 incidents (2022)
Dorset And Wiltshire Fire and Rescue attendance at wildfires in BCP area	231 incidents (2022)
Incidents of damage caused by BBQs and disposal	73 incidents (2022)
Unauthorised camping in open spaces	33 incidents (2022)
Car parks and highways	
People sleeping overnight in vehicles	56 incidents (April-August 2022)
Coastal areas	
Incidents of anti-social behaviour	69 incidents (May - August 2022)
Incidents of people sleeping overnight in tents	139 tent eviction notices (April to August 2022)
Complaints from the public about people sleeping overnight in tents	25 complaints (June-August 2022)
Fire incidents	217 fire incidents (2022)
Dorset And Wiltshire Fire and Rescue attendance at seafront fires in BCP area	37 incidents (2022)
Damage to seafront bins due to disposal of hot coals	20 incidents (2022)

Proposals

Before we make any final decisions, we are asking for your thoughts on the proposals. We are asking for your views on:

- whether you support or do not support the introduction of 3 PSPOs
- the proposed geographical areas where the PSPOs would apply
- the behaviours that would be restricted within that area
- the time when barbeques would be allowed in coastal areas and
- whether we should ban the use of disposable barbeques in coastal areas.

We are proposing three separate PSPOs which would cover different geographical areas and different behaviours. These are:

- **Open spaces PSPO**
- **Highways and car parks PSPO**
- **Coastal PSPO**

The draft PSPO maps showing the locations can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Here is a summary of each of the proposals below:

1.Opens spaces such as parks and heathland,

We are proposing the PSPO should be introduced in the following areas:

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|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Alder Hills | • Riversmeet SANG |
| • Alum Chine | • St Catherine's Hill |
| • Boscombe and Southbourne Overcliff | • Stanpit Marsh |
| • Boscombe Chine Gardens | • Stour Valley Nature Reserve |
| • Boscombe Cliff Gardens | • Talbot Heath |
| • Bourne Valley | • Turbary Common. |
| • Branksome Chine Gardens | |
| • Branksome Dene Gardens | |
| • Canford Heath | |
| • Durley Chine | |
| • Ham Common | |
| • Haskells Recreation Ground | |
| • Hengistbury Head | |
| • Kings Park | |

It is proposed that the following behaviours would be banned within the selected open spaces, parks, and heathland:

- a ban on overnight camping
- a ban on the lighting of any open fires
- a ban on lighting any barbeques.

2. Highways and car parks PSPO

We are proposing that a PSPO is introduced in some of the highways and car parks near our coastal areas. A detailed map can be seen in Appendix 1.

It is proposed that the following behaviours would be banned within the selected highways and car parks:

- a ban on overnight sleeping in vehicles
- a ban on playing loud music which has a detrimental impact on others
- a ban on acting in an anti-social manner which has a detrimental impact on others.

3. Coastal areas

We are proposing the following coastal areas should be included in the Coastal PSPO:

- Ham Common and Lake Pier Beach
- Hamworthy Park Beach
- Sandbanks
- Shore Road
- The Chines (Canford Cliffs to Durley Chine)
- Bournemouth Central beaches (West Beach to Boscombe Pier)
- Honeycombe Chine to Hengistbury Head
- Mudeford Sandspit
- Gundimore
- Avon and Friar's Cliff
- Highcliffe Beach.

The following behaviours would not be allowed within the coastal and beachfront areas:

- a ban on playing loud music which has a detrimental impact on others
- a ban on acting in an anti-social manner which has a detrimental impact on others
- a ban on overnight camping or sleeping with or without a tent or gazebo without the permission of the landowner
- a ban on lighting any open fires
- a ban on lighting any BBQs between 7am-6pm.

For more information on the proposals and to see maps of the proposed PSPO areas please visit: **haveyoursay.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/PSPO**.

When would the PSPOs be enforced?

It is proposed that, if introduced, the PSPOs would apply between 1 March to 31 October to address peak visitor periods.

How to have your say

Your views are important to us, and we want to hear from all those who live, work, or visit the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area and who could be affected by this proposal.

You can complete the survey and find more information at:
haveyoursay.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/PSPO.

We would recommend you look at the maps of the proposed PSPOs before taking part in the survey.

If you have any questions or require a large print copy of the survey or alternative language, please email asbteam@bcpccouncil.gov.uk giving your name, address, and telephone number.

The consultation closes at **11.59pm on 19 February 2023**.

Appendix 1: Copies of the proposed orders