



Dorset County Council working in partnership
Access - Conservation - Information - Recreation - Tourism

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Dorset County Council
and the RSPB working
in partnership at Avon
Heath Country Park:



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Rangers

- Educational group visits
- Camp bookings

Telephone (01425) 478082

Visitor Centre

- Event details and bookings
- General enquiries
- Booking the barbeque area
- Friends of Avon Heath membership

Telephone (01425) 478470

Café

Telephone (01425) 471641

Friends of Avon Heath

Avon Heath has a well supported volunteer group who help keep the Park such a special place. Members of the friends group help in the visitor centre, provide valuable practical expertise and contribute to the heathland management.

Membership benefits include a free car park permit, a 10% shop discount card, a free events guide and newsletter. Further details and an application form are available from the visitor centre.

Special Notes

- Park vehicles do use the tracks and obviously caution should be used on any site where work is taking place.
- No barbeques (unless booked through the Visitor Centre and lit on the designated site).
- No fires. Due to the high fire risk in the park, fires are NOT allowed anywhere on the park.



Avon Heath Country Park



Welcome to Avon Heath

North Park

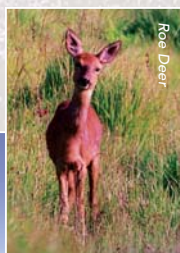
The ideal place for your first visit. A large pay and display car park gives access to all facilities including visitor centre, café, children's play area, toilets and telephone. There is plenty of room for picnics. Four waymarked trails of between 3/4 mile and 2 1/2 miles offer a chance to explore. Another walk starts from Birch Road car park. It is a little over a mile long and passes two 'Park Art' sculptures.

The large areas of heathland are scattered with trees, while purple banks of flowering heather provide a stunning sight in the summer. You may also be lucky enough to see some of the rare birds and reptiles that make this heath their home.

Local walkers and cyclists have direct access to the park via the Bridleway Bridge over the A31 dual carriageway.

- Visitor centre for:-
 - Family activity trails
 - Regular events
 - Countryside shop
 - Giant chess and draughts
 - Tourist information
- Waymarked trails
- Educational groups welcome
- Friends of Avon Heath membership
- Picnic areas and BBQ hire
- Children's play area
- Café for hot and cold refreshments
- Camping facilities for scouts/guides or similar groups
- Toilets and telephone

Wasp spider (Argiope bruennichi)



Roe Deer

South Park

From the car park there are three waymarked trails to follow between 3/4 mile and 2 miles in length.

As in North Park there is a mixture of heathland and wooded areas but here there is more of an open feel. There are extensive views across to the coast and beyond to the Isle of Wight, while inland a panorama of North Dorset can be seen.

South Park is connected to North Park by a bridleway of about 1/2 mile.

Matchams View

This relatively small area provides superb views across much of the River Avon as it winds its way southwards to Christchurch.

A waymarked trail of just over 1/2 mile takes you through tall conifers. Of particular interest is the embankment where the original railway from Ringwood to Christchurch (and later Bournemouth) once ran.

Who we are

Avon Heath Country Park takes its name from the very special heathland habitat. This could once be found extensively in Dorset but has reduced in area by 85% over the past 200 years. Considerable conservation work goes on, involving the RSPB, to restore the heathland and enhance its value for wildlife.

The Dartford Warbler and Nightjar are just two of the internationally rare species that make Avon Heath their home. The Park is also a wonderful place for people, where visitors are welcome to explore and enjoy.

Where we are

Just in Dorset, 2 miles west of Ringwood on the A31 dual carriageway. Turn off at the Woolsbridge roundabout.



Stonechat



Round-leaved Sundew



Bee Orchid





Avon Heath Country Park

A guide



North Park



Walking

Avon Heath Country Park offers a range of trails through the woods and heathland suited to people of all abilities. These include:

- Activity trails for families
- Surfaced routes with gentle gradients
- Winding sandy tracks for the more adventurous

Cycling

Individuals or small groups are welcome.

- Please keep to main tracks
- Please be aware of other park users and animals
- Please keep your speed down and give way to walkers

Car Parking

The car parks on North and South Park are pay and display. A season ticket is available for regular users obtainable from the Visitor Centre.

Grazing

Grazing is a traditional method of managing heathland. Today animals are still kept on parts of the Park where they help to keep scrub regrowth under control. This benefits the heathland wildlife which flourish in the sunny open conditions.

Dogs

Well behaved dogs are welcomed on the park.

- Please keep your dog on a lead in and around the visitor centre/café area
- Please keep dogs off the children's play area and green by the café
- Please clean up after your dog. There are dog bins in all the car parks
- Please respect other visitors as some may feel uncomfortable with dogs
- You may be requested to keep your dog on a lead in some areas during the nesting season

There are areas of private property on the park. Please respect their privacy.

Matchams View

Avon Heath location map



South Park