

CHRISTCHURCH HARBOUR ORNITHOLOGICAL GROUP



PRESS RELEASE

24 March 2007

Floating Haven for terns in Christchurch Harbour

Christchurch Harbour Ornithological Group (CHOG) and Friends of Stanpit Marsh (FOSM) have sited a floating island in Christchurch harbour, hoped to attract terns and give them a safe breeding haven.

The tern island, supported by Bournemouth and West Hampshire Water (who own the waterway), and constructed by Dave Taylor of CHOG, was taken to Christchurch slipway by car and then towed past Christchurch Quay on Saturday morning - no easy operation. As Dave said "It has been many years since any serious initiative to improve breeding habitat on the Christchurch side of the harbour, and CHOG would like to thank Bournemouth and West Hants Water Company, in particular, for their assistance and support of this exciting project. We all hope that by the end of April, there may be terns using the island and breeding again in Christchurch Harbour."

Sandwich, Common and Little Terns all occur in the harbour and have tried to nest in the past but they face a lot of pressure from predators, disturbance and tides and sadly have not been successful. Similar tern islands have been successfully used along the coast at Hayling Island and it is hoped that this practical conservation measure will once again attract these graceful seabirds to breed in Christchurch Harbour

Notes for Editors

1. There are 5 species of terns that regularly breed in the UK – Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Sandwich Tern, Little Tern and the rarer Roseate Tern – all are summer visitors to the UK. Although all of these occur in Christchurch Harbour only Common, Sandwich and Little Terns are regular in the Summer.
2. CHOG is an organisation dedicated to wildlife recording and conservation in Christchurch Harbour

Please visit www.chog.org.uk

3. Images of Terns are available for use with this press release if required.

For further information please contact:

Chris Chapleo on 07973 548134 or e mail chris@chapleo.fsnet.co.uk

Dave Taylor on 07970 221549 or e mail david@dhtaylor.fsnet.co.uk