

Charmouth Parish Council

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Privately Arranged (Not for Profit) Fossil Walks – Policy Statement

1 Introduction

This policy statement defines the Parish Council policy about private groups arranging not for profit fossil walks on the Foreshore in Charmouth.

2 Definition of 'Not for Profit'

For the purposes of this policy statement the term 'Not for Profit' excludes:

- (i) Organised on the basis of 'gain' or 'loss', whether by way of exchange of cash, other monetary order, credit, cheques, debits, sponsorship, gifts or any other form of exchange;
- (ii) The raising of funds whether money, gifts or other reward for Charities or other like organisations; or
- (iii) Where the cost of the fossil walk is included within a trip cost that includes other events, including travel.

Nevertheless the term 'Not for Profit' does not exclude:

- (a) School parties,
- (b) Groups of university students undertaking field trips, or
- (c) Family groups.

3 Background

Charmouth Parish Council owns the foreshore and unusually the foreshore between the mean high water (MHW) and the mean low water (MLW) from its parish boundary with the town of Lyme Regis in the west to the parish boundary with the parish of Stanton St Gabriel in the east.

The Foreshore Committee has previously considered this matter and agreed that although the Parish Council, as the land owner, has a duty of care to those who use the foreshore, it was of the opinion that to attempt to introduce a policy statement would be:

- (i) Difficult to enforce as although the foreshore, in law is private land, it has unrestricted public access;
- (ii) Difficult to enforce because of the informal manner that such group arrive at the foreshore; and
- (iv) Possibly incur adverse reaction as the policy statement would be seen as possible over-regulation and possibly protectionist of the commercially operated guided fossil walks.

4 Policy Statement

The Parish Council has no policy to restrict access to the Foreshore at Charmouth for 'Not for Profit' fossil walks, although if asked, groups will be directed to consult the Fossil Code (available at the Heritage Centre) and also the tides for the time of the visit.

Approved by Council: June 2017