

## A Brief History of Moors Valley



1984-5	East Dorset District Council purchases Kings Farm, an eighty-two acre dairy farm adjacent to Ringwood Forest. Construction of the Moors Lake and the first nine holes of the golf course are completed and the first section of railway track is laid by Narrowgauge limited.
1986	First warden appointed and the first visitors discover Moors Valley. Forestry Commission builds a car park. An 18th century timber barn is purchased from a farm at Eastern Royal near Marlborough and work begins to re-construct it at Moors Valley Country Park as the Visitor Centre.
1987	The Visitor Centre and tea room is opened to the public and the first events programme for the park is published.
1988	A second farm is purchased by East Dorset District Council making the total area of the park 250 acres. The golf course is ready for play and so the park is officially opened with a charity golf match on the 19th July 1988. The first schools take part in warden-led environmental activities.
1989	The East Dorset Countryside Management Service is set up to manage Moors Valley Country Park and other countryside sites owned by East Dorset District Council. A second lake, the Crane Lake, is constructed.
1990	The second half of the Barn is brought from Easton Royal and is added at right angles to the original part of the Barn to allow the tea room to expand and to house the Country Shop. New footpaths are built through the northern area of the Park.
1991	The Play Trail and Tree Top Trail in the Forest are opened.
1992	The second nine holes of golf are ready for play making it a full 18-hole course. The Look Out is built. Car parking charges are introduced.
1993	The car park is extended to cater for the high visitor numbers, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million in this year. A golf club house is built.

1994	The Castle and Sand Works play area is built, especially for toddlers. The junior area is refurbished.
1995	A new kitchen is built for the Tea Room; toilets are extended to incorporate baby changing facilities and family cubicles. A third wing of the Visitor Centre is built to house the Country Shop. An Information Point is opened in the Visitor Centre. The Cycle Hire Centre is opened in the Visitor Centre.
1996	A footpath with boardwalk is built to allow people to walk from the play areas and picnic area to the railway station in safety. 4 way-marked walks are completed.
1997	The Cycle Hire Centre and management of the golf course become directly managed by park staff rather than through private contractors. A toilet block is built at the railway station. Improvements to the golfer's car park are made.
1998	The Ants Nest Play Trail structure is completed. Moors Valley Country Park celebrates its 10th birthday.
1999	A new cycling for health initiative is launched at Moors Valley. Waymarked cycle trails are put in.
2000	Footpaths at northern end of the park are surfaced with tarmac to make them a better surface for walking on. A Moors Valley newsletter is produced for the first time. Wardens run over 150 events over the year. Stretch of the Moors River through the park is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by English Nature. Loggosarus and Snakes and Ladders play structures are removed from Play Trail and replaced by Snake and Ladders 2.
2001	A Forest picnic area opened. A walking for health initiative is launched. The Snake Pit on the Play Trail is refurbished. Park is closed for 6 weeks from Feb to March due to country wide outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.
2002	Car park charges are increased to £25.00 for a season ticket and max daily charge of £5.00 per car per day. The Magpie Slide is replaced on play trail by the Pond Maze. The fort in the junior adventure play area replaced with two giant wigwam towers.
2003	'Go Ape' high wire adventure is opened. The remaining Family Trail footpaths in the Park are tarmaced to make route more suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs and less liable to puddling in wet weather. Moors Lake and Crane lakes are dredged to remove the silt build up over the last 10-15 years.

2004	<p>Work to alter car park system begins.</p> <p>Tim Dixon – Countryside Manager since 1998 leaves to work for Essex Country Council. Head Ranger Clare Gronow takes over as manager.</p>
2005	<p>A new car park system comes into operation – pay for length of stay at end of visit rather than pay and display, with a number plate recognition system for annual permit holders.</p> <p>A takeaway sales point is opened at the front of the Visitor Centre.</p> <p>The family trail is replaced with The Nature Trail.</p>
2006	<p>More hardstanding car parking is provided in the main car park.</p> <p>5 permanent fishing bays are built on the west bank of the Moors Lake.</p>
2007	<p>Agreement reached to lease front entrance land – fences removed and area landscaped.</p> <p>Woodchip in the junior play area is dug out and replaced with new and new climbing boulder is added.</p> <p>A new dragonfly entrance sign is put in place.</p> <p>A new carriage shed at Kingsmere railway station completed.</p>
2008	<p>The infants play area is extended and a new piece of play equipment is added.</p> <p>The toilets at the Visitor Centre are extended and fully refurbished.</p> <p>The boarding on the boardwalk alongside the railway is replaced.</p> <p>Management of the golf course is transferred to an independent company.</p> <p>Moors Valley celebrates its 20th birthday.</p>
2009	<p>The Dingle on the Play Trail is replaced by a new structure – ‘Webs’.</p> <p>Activate 1000 project launched.</p> <p>New footpath built at Potterne Park to create all weather circular route around Potterne wood and playing fields.</p> <p>A new improved Moors Valley website launched.</p>
2010	<p>The zip wire and seating are replaced in the junior play area. The twin swings are replaced with a basket swing.</p> <p>Footpath improvements around the Park.</p> <p>The circular 7km ‘through the forest’ singletrack cycle route is completed and opened.</p>
2011	<p>The castle in the infants play area is replaced.</p> <p>A new improved Moors Valley website launched.</p> <p>The Moors Valley map is redesigned and separated into two map leaflets.</p>