

PRESS RELEASE

31 MAY 2008



‘DORSET SEARCH AND RESCUE’ AND ‘DORSET SEARCH DOGS’ FIND MISSING 90 YEAR OLD MALE.

Dorset Search & Rescue (DorSAR) and Dorset Search Dogs supported by searchers from neighbouring Wiltshire Search & Rescue (WILSAR) celebrate the successful find of a missing 90 year old male who disappeared from his home address in LONG CROSS near SHAFTESBURY on the Dorset / Wiltshire border late evening on 30th May 2008.

Dorset Police requested the assistance of the Volunteer Search Teams shortly before 0400 hours on 31st May 2008. By 05:20hrs personnel from DorSAR and WILSAR were deploying in the vicinity of the missing gentlemans home, whilst the Dorset Search Dog unit was despatched to further investigate a potential sighting reported in the early hours of the search.

Search Dog Charlie, a four year old border collie, with handler Matt Cooke and Andy Edwards supporting, were tasked to search an area of woodland adjacent to the Shaftesbury Road. Very soon into the search Charlie started to show some considerable interest.

Matt Cooke, Dog Handler and Chair of Dorset Search Dogs comments, “It was a very misty morning with a slight northerly breeze. Within 10-15 minutes of commencing our search Charlie was determined to head south. It was very obvious that he had picked up on a scent by the way his nose was sniffing the air, he was moving a long distance away from me and he kept returning to me to alert that he had found a scent by barking at me.

“We had great difficulty heading in the direction that Charlie wanted to go due to very dense vegetation and a dangerous road. I immediately radio’d through to DorSAR my observations along with information that there were signs of some recently trodden vegetation in the area. Unable to travel any further south to follow up on the lead, we continued to clear our allocated area.”

With a total of 12 volunteers working together with the police, shortly after 08:20hrs one of the personnel from WILSAR radioed in to report that he had located the male, just South of where Charlie showed so much interest.

Bob Knott, President of Dorset Search and Rescue takes up the story “As Search Manager I was liaising with the Police Search Advisor to task the voluntary resources of the three organisations to systematically clear the immediate search ground, which allowed Police resources to focus on potential targets outside of the initial search area. Having cleared the immediate vicinity & the previous potential sighting, the teams were being tasked into the nearby fields where the gentleman was located. Once he was located DorSAR Medics in the teams emergency response vehicle were despatched to assist.

The elderly gentleman was found alive but disorientated. He had been walking for quite some time, with his shoes bogged down in heavy clay before slipping over & becoming unable to stand again. Andy Edwards said “The male was warm considering the conditions.”

The gentleman was assessed & stretchered to the roadside where he was handed over to South West Ambulance NHS Trust paramedics and transferred to hospital for observations.

The nearby TESCO’s at Shaftesbury provided a cooked breakfast for all the rescuers and search dog Charlie enjoyed his EUKANUBA dog food, kindly donated by Procter & Gamble.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR:-

- Dorset Search dogs was established in June 2006 and is an entirely voluntary organisation supported by generous donations from members of the public. The volunteers currently consist of Police Officers, prisoner officers, teachers and coastguard personnel. Both Dorset Search Dogs and DorSAR rely heavily on donations to continue with the work they do. We always appreciate any help we can get with promoting this via the media. (You can donate to Dorset Search Dogs online – link below)
- Search Dog Charlie previously received national media coverage following his find of a missing 77 year old female from FERNDOWN on 9th December 2007.
- Dorset Search Dogs website is www.dorsetsearchdogs.org.uk and has strong affiliations to the Hampshire based team www.lsdsonthern.org.uk. (Photo’s can be used from these sights if necessary)
- The dogs train at least twice a week to remain competent at what they do. It takes 12-18 months from the start of training for a dog to be assessed and deemed operationally ready.
- Dorset Search Dogs are called out by the request of the Police and neighbouring Lowland Search Dog units to assist their searches.
- Dorset Search Dogs has one operational dog with another three in training. Although we are not in position to take on any more dogs at the moment, we are always on the look out for volunteers to go out and hide for us and/or to assist us on operational searches. Those interested can email info@dorsetsearchdogs.org.uk

- Donations are gratefully received via contacting us on email or via our website.
- Dorset Search Dogs has recently received a large supply of EUKANUBA dog food from Procter and Gamble in Bournemouth.

- Dorset Search & Rescue was founded in 2004 & is a registered charity
- DorSAR & WILSAR are both members of the Association of Lowland Search & Rescue (ALSAR) and the South West England Rescue Association (SWERA)
- ALSAR teams regularly work closely with each other on larger search operations & train to the same standards
- Donations are always gratefully received in order to ensure that the team can continue to support the statutory emergency services in search & rescue operations. They can be made online by visiting our website www.dorsar.org.uk
- Bob Knott's email address is president@dorsar.org.uk
- New members are always welcome, visit the website for more details