



News from The Moors at Arne



January 2026 update

It's a new year and the fourth and final year of works here at Arne Moors is on the horizon. Most of the remaining features of the scheme will be completed between 1 April and 31 October this year with a few smaller permitted jobs already underway.

The key milestone this year will be the controlled breaching of the existing harbour front embankments to create the 78 hectares of intertidal habitat. Over time, this landscape will change as saltmarsh and mudflats develop, creating a haven for wading birds and wildfowl.

The images below show part of the exciting landscape change that is already happening in the western freshwater area, from the first drone flyover in June 2023 to the most recent one at the end of November 2025.



What's happening on site?

Construction of a tilting weir structure is underway. This structure will help to maintain consistent water levels in the new western freshwater area, and is independent from the variable tidal outfall level of the Furzebrook stream. The two control structures serving the saline lagoons will be completed over the next few weeks.



Vegetation management continues over the next few months. This is an important step to allow ease of access to key working areas at the start of the main construction phase. A compact machine called an AEBl is being used where possible as a lower impact alternative to larger machines.

Ecology updates



Over the next few months, the ecology team will be busy rounding up water voles and relocating them to carefully selected alternative locations away from the site. This is part of a detailed strategy which is being delivered under licence from Natural England.

This is essential because some of the places where water vole live on site will become intertidal. In order for the voles to continue to thrive they must be moved to suitable habitat with access to freshwater ponds, ditches and streams.

A little later in the year we will be doing some further work to ensure reptiles are safeguarded ahead of the breaches.

We are also continuing to monitor over wintering birds using site and working carefully to avoid disturbing them.

Working with the community



Some of the project team braved the cold to help Lewis Manning hospice with their charity Christmas tree collections.

Households made a donation to the charity to have their used Christmas tree picked up and responsibly disposed of. Together we collected around 50 trees in the Poole area and delivered them to the chipping hub. Great work team!

We have also attended two schools careers fairs this month showcasing the wide range of careers available in the industry. Careers fairs are a great way for young people to find out about a range of different roles that they may never have heard of before.



What's next?

Over the next few months the team will be preparing for the final stages of the project. This is going to be an exciting year when all the different elements of the scheme come together in preparation for the breaches. Once this is complete it won't be too long until the site can open to the public.



About the project

The Moors at Arne project is adapting over 150 hectares of land into a diverse wetlands habitat. This type of habitat is being lost in other areas of Poole Harbour due to 'coastal squeeze'. This is a term used to describe the effect of rising sea levels pressing against man-made structures such as flood defences resulting in a loss of intertidal habitat such as mud-flats and salt marsh.

Kier is the contractor delivering this project on behalf of the Environment Agency and its project partners, RSPB and Natural England.



Got a question for the project team?
Contact us via arne@kier.co.uk