



## News from The Moors at Arne



### February 2026 update



Credit: Mark Wills Hi-Line

Welcome to the latest edition of the Moors at Arne project newsletter. The scheme is currently scheduled for completion in less than a year and is expected to open to the public in early 2027.

In the meantime, we thought you might like this incredible photo of a Dartford Warbler on site taken by ecologist Mark Wills.

Thanks for your continued interest in the scheme. We'll keep bringing you all the latest news from site as we approach the final stages of the project and always welcome your feedback and questions. Feel free to drop us a line using the contact details at the bottom of the newsletter.

### What's happening on site?

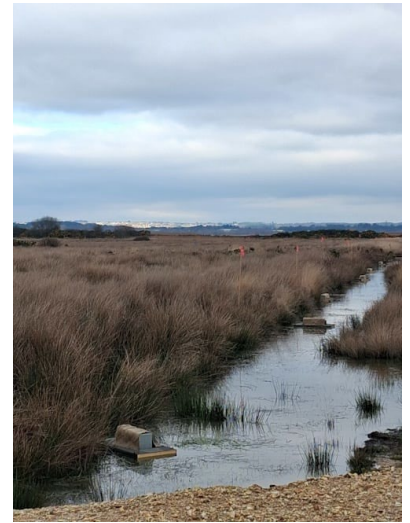
The construction programme is due to start again in April but in the meantime the team continue to carry out some permitted tasks out on site. Progress on two tidal exchange structures, for the saline lagoons, has continued this month. The pre-cast head walls have been installed on both structures and the pipes will be put in shortly.



The scheme will feature several footbridges where the permissive paths cross streams. You might have spotted some of the team working on the South side of Arne Road over the past few weeks. They have been busy constructing the foundations for one of the footbridges which will be installed soon. A second footbridge will be installed further into site as part of the footpath that looks out over the freshwater area and saline lagoons.

## Ecological updates

Water vole mitigation is now underway and will continue throughout spring. This activity is carried out under a protected species licence from Natural England which enables a team of specialist ecologists to humanely trap and move water voles to safer places before the intertidal area is created. Specially designed rafts are placed along the ditches on site as pictured here and are checked twice every day.



Credit: Mark Wills Hi-Line

The site continues to attract a wide range of bird species, such as the marsh harrier pictured here by bird ecologist Mark during over-wintering bird surveys.

These surveys continue to be an important feature of the project, ensuring we have detailed information on over-wintering bird locations around site to avoid any disturbance.

Nesting bird surveys will start again in the spring and as the weather changes we are starting to see the first reptiles emerging from hibernation.

## What's next?

Some of the nationally rare viper's-grass (*scorzonera humilis*) will be moved within the western freshwater area so it can continue to thrive. This work will be carried out under the guidance of a specialist botanist. The plant, pictured here, looks similar to the more familiar dandelion but is actually a protected species and forms a special part of the unique botany of Arne Moors.



From plants to plant...as we enter March there will be a little more activity as we bring in some more plant (the machinery type) to start gearing up for the final construction season of the project which starts in April. As always, our deliveries will follow the carefully planned construction traffic route, avoiding Wareham town centre and Nutcrack Lane.

## 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](mailto:arne@kier.co.uk)