



News from The Moors at Arne



April 2026 update



Welcome to the April edition of the Arne Moors project community newsletter. The 2026 construction phase is now underway with lots to report on this month as we approach the final stage of the project.

With the embankments and structures almost complete, the focus is on preparing the intertidal area for breach. The photo above shows the new eastern embankment with the Special Area of Conservation behind it. This embankment will protect the special freshwater habitat when the controlled breaches are made in the existing harbour facing embankment to create the intertidal habitat area later on this year.

What's happening on site?

A new footbridge is being installed near Sunnyside car park this week. The team have prepared the abutments ready for delivery of the bridge itself as pictured here. This will form part of the permissive walking route which is set to open when the project is complete. The path will enable visitors to walk to the site through the fields to the south of Arne Road instead of on the road to reach the scheme.



Further footpaths are due to be constructed over the coming months in preparation for welcoming visitors to the site.



Further turf translocation is underway as pictured here. This involves moving slabs of priority grassland habitat turf from a part of site which is going to become intertidal, into the new western freshwater area. This is important, as some of the most biodiverse grasses on the site are within the intertidal area so by moving them and their top soil, this important habitat and botany can continue to thrive.

On a site of this scale, there is an on-going need to manage vegetation to ensure works can progress. Recently, the team rose to the challenge of mowing sloping embankments by using clever piece of kit called a 'Roboflail', which can be controlled remotely from a safe distance.

Ecological updates



Credit: Ben Limburn - ARC

A complex plan of wildlife mitigation is well underway with a particular focus on the area of site which will become the new intertidal habitat.

Sand lizards, adders, common lizards, grass snakes and slow worms are being moved from the footprint of the intertidal area to suitable receptor habitats. Each species has different requirements and the receptor location varies accordingly with factors such as existing population, food and predation risk taken into account.

Whilst some species are relocated to different areas on the wider site, others are released to carefully managed and approved receptor sites. This work is carried out by trained ecologists and in the case of the sand lizards, a protected species licence is in place.

At this time year, we are taking particular care to avoid disturbance to any nesting birds. With several known nests on the site, we are taking an adaptive approach to the works in order to avoid disturbance. This means that sometimes works may need to happen in a slightly different order but it's all in a days work for our super team here at Arne Moors!



On the subject of birds, it's not every day you see a white tailed eagle up close but this one visited the site recently to check in on progress. Ecologist, Mark was lucky enough to spot it and capture the moment on camera.

Community updates

Local residents may have noticed some large machines being delivered to the site over the last week.

This plant is going to be used to excavate the channels or 'breach creeks' which will eventually connect up to the breaches that will be made in the existing harbour facing embankment to create the intertidal habitat.



These creeks will help determine the flow of seawater across the intertidal habitat.

The excavated material will be reused within site to fill in some of the existing ditches once ecological mitigation is complete in these areas.

What's next?

Over the coming months, the main areas of focus will be excavation of the breach creeks, completion of the permissive walking routes and installation of fencing.

We will keep you posted on progress and as things develop and always welcome your feedback and questions on the project.

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