



News from The Moors at Arne



October 2026 update

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Moors at Arne coastal change project.

The project has reached a key milestone recently. The new intertidal habitat which the scheme was designed to create, is now starting to establish. Read on for a full update on this and the other latest news about the project.

First breaches complete



In order to create the intertidal habitat that the scheme has set out to achieve, several openings or 'breaches', are being made in the existing harbour facing embankments. This will allow the tides to flow in and out of the site. The first two of these breaches have now been created. The special freshwater areas behind the intertidal area are protected by the new larger set-back embankments we have built.

The first two breaches are positioned in the central and eastern sections of the old harbour embankment which runs along the northern edge of the site. The breaches were excavated on the neap tide to ensure a gradual ingress of water into the site.

The remaining breach is expected to follow in October. There is a specific reason for breaching in two phases. The second phase of inundation, at Turners Cove, is likely to be more dominant as there is an existing channel in this location. By opening up the central and eastern breaches slightly earlier on, the new channels in these locations will have more of a chance to establish.

Over the next few weeks, it is possible that water levels might look slightly higher than expected. Once the final breach is made, the draining down of water will become more effective. We will be closely monitoring to ensure suitable creek establishment in the central and eastern area of site before proceeding with the final breach and we have contingency measures in place in the event of heavy rainfall during this time.

You may have seen reports of floating vegetation material from the project in Poole Harbour. We are actively managing the situation with specialist equipment and the Environment Agency are continuing to monitor suspended sedimentation levels in proximity to the site. If you have any concerns please report to the Environment Agency's incident hotline 0800 80 70 60.

What's happening on site?

The team have installed some finishing touches to some of the structures around site. Rock armour has been added around the new flow control structures, including the Furzebrook outfall as pictured here.

The purpose of these stones is to help protect the structures' longevity from erosion by moving water once the intertidal area is created. This is similar to what you might see along the coastline around sea defences such as seawalls and outfalls.





We have continued to construct permissive footpaths.

A permissive footpath is a path on private land that a landowner voluntarily allows the public to walk on. It is not a public right of way. The paths will link up to the Hyde's Heath trail enabling visitors to walk between Arne Moors and the main RSPB reserve.

The footpaths are being built from material sourced from within the site and will provide over 3,500m of new permissive walking routes for the public to enjoy when the scheme opens next year.

We have also been installing more fencing like the sections pictured above.

Along the seaward edge of the new embankments, a small temporary bank or bund has been engineered from compacted earth. This has been designed to offer temporary protection to the vegetation on the embankments whilst it continues to establish. The bund is expected to erode over the next few years once it has served its purpose of protecting against wave action.



Work is underway to deliver the final stages of the project. We have stockpiled some of the topsoil from out on the wider site to use when we come to resurface the compound area once the site cabins have been removed. This field will be returned to grassland as part of the project's planning conditions.

Ecological updates



Credit: Mark Wills Hi-Line

The ospreys have been visiting regularly and bird ecologist Mark took this fantastic shot of one of them flying over site with a mullet.

As the new intertidal area starts to establish, we are already starting to see a wide range of species enjoying the new habitat.

Working with the community

You might remember the discovery of a bronze age wooden spade on the site back in 2024. This was a key highlight of the archaeological excavations that took place here at Arne Moors.

The spade is currently with Wessex Archaeology being preserved and they recently issued a short video about it which you can view [here](#).



Credit: Wessex Archaeology

What's next?



Some bits of kit and equipment are already starting to leave site. Now that we have completed most of the turf translocation and foreshore works, the wooden bog mats, pictured here being loaded onto a lorry, have left site. Over the coming few weeks and months, we will start to remove more of the construction infrastructure from the site, including machines and cabins, in a phased way to minimise disturbance.

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